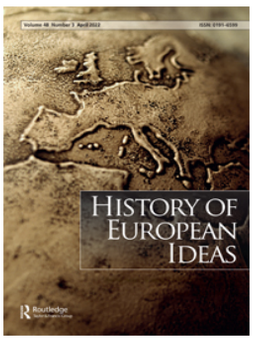

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Rethinking Constant's ancient liberty: Bosanquet's modern Rousseauianism

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ABSTRACT

Benjamin Constant was a vociferous critic of the political Rousseauianism that he saw underpinning French politics in the early nineteenth-century. Yet, his hostile reaction at the political level co-existed with a far more sympathetic attitude towards Rousseau's critical analysis of modernity. This article reflects on that combination through the dual lens of the influence on Constant's position of his ambivalent attitude towards Rousseau on the one hand and the modernisation of Rousseau undertaken eighty years later by the British idealist Bernard Bosanquet (1848–1923) on the other. Reading Bosanquet with Constant's criticisms of Rousseau in mind uncovers underappreciated dimensions of both Constant and Bosanquet's thought, and suggests ways to overcome the distinction between ancient and modern liberty that is often simplistically attributed to Constant. Section one introduces the topic. Section two analyzes Constant's dual attitude to Rousseauianism. Section three analyzes Bosanquet's modern Rousseauianism. Section four deepens this analysis by contrasting the theories of modern decadence developed by Rousseau, Constant and Bosanquet. It establishes that Bosanquet articulated key relationships that escaped both Rousseau and Constant, something that led him to see progressive possibilities in decadent societies that Rousseau and Constant neglected. Consequently, Bosanquet modernised Rousseau, while both addressing Constant's criticisms and avoiding Rousseau's shortcomings.

KEYWORDS

Ancient and modern liberty; Bernard Bosanquet; Benjamin Constant; British idealism; decadence; Jean-Jacques Rousseau

1. Introduction

Benjamin Constant's distinction of ancient from modern liberty has attracted much scholarly attention since he first drew it more than two-hundred years ago. In her most recent book *Rethinking Positive and Negative Liberty*, Maria Dimova-Cookson argues for the reformulation of our understanding of freedom via a melding of this aspect of Constant's thought with that of the British idealists.[1] This article will not revisit that fascinating analysis. Rather, it will consider Constant's relationship to a British idealist who receives only passing mention in Dimova-Cookson's book: Bernard Bosanquet (1848–1923). It will be shown that, while Constant endorsed elements of Rousseauian Romanticism in the aesthetic and personal spheres, he rejected it completely in relation to the principles of politics and society. In fact, it is no overstatement to say that his liberal conservatism was driven by his profound concerns regarding the continuing effects of the Jacobin settlement

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on post-revolutionary French society and especially on its public culture.[2] Specifically, Constant traced France's continuing instability to its obsession with an ancient, Rousseauian conception of political liberty that he saw as unattainable in the modern world. It is noteworthy, therefore, that Bosanquet's *Philosophical Theory of the State* (1899) developed precisely the thing that Constant repeatedly claimed was impossible: namely, a reformulation of political Rousseauianism that would enable modern political societies to flourish.[3] It will be shown here that reading Bosanquet's political philosophy with Constant's criticisms of Rousseau in mind uncovers underappreciated dimensions of both Constant and Bosanquet's thought, and suggests ways to overcome the stark distinction between ancients and modern liberty that frequently is attributed somewhat simplistically to Constant. In a sense, one can retain much of the cream of Rousseau's thought in the modern world without any of the shortcomings identified by Constant.

To begin see how this is possible, section two sketches Constant's attitude to political Rousseauianism (hereafter, referred to simply as 'Rousseauianism'). Section three outlines the core structure of Bosanquet's modern Rousseauianism. Section four deepens this analysis by contrasting the theories of modern decadence that were developed by Rousseau, Constant and especially Bosanquet. It establishes that Bosanquet articulated key distinctions and relationships that escaped both Rousseau and Constant, which enabled him to see progressive possibilities in the lives of decadent societies. As such, Bosanquet was able to modernise Rousseau, while both addressing Constant's criticisms and avoiding Rousseau's shortcomings.

2. Constant's anti-Rousseauianism

Constant was profoundly ambivalent about Rousseau. In his unfinished magnus opus on religion, he described Rousseau as 'complicated', expressing 'a thousand contradictory thoughts' which Rousseau 'combined … in confused and discordant ways … he shook everything, not because he wanted to destroy everything, as some have said, but because everything seemed to him out of its proper place.'[4] Rousseau's 'prodigious force' levelled the existing structures of 'human existence … But he was a poor architect, and he could not construct a new edifice from these scattered materials.' Constant held that 'Only destruction resulted from his [Rousseau's] efforts, and from the destruction a chaos that still bears his mark.'[5]

Constant attacked Rousseau frequently in his writings.[6] He began the 1806 draft of his *Principles of Politics Applicable to All Representative Governments* (hereafter 'the *1806 Principles*') with a sustained attack on Rousseau's 'eloquent and absurd [political] theory' and the associated theories of his acolytes. Yet, Constant's critique was not total. He accepted what he saw as Rousseau's 'first principle', that political authority could be derived only from the general will of the governed community.[7] However, he rounded on Rousseau's 'second principle', which Constant characterised as 'the supposition that society may exercise over its members an unlimited authority and that everything the general will ordains, is rendered legitimate by that alone.'[8] Constant countered that although the extent of government's true authority (rather than the authority it merely claimed and maybe even enforced) derived from the general will, that authority was limited by the rights individuals possessed independently of their social memberships.[9] Individual pre-social rights had priority over the dictates of the general will.[10]

Similarly, in his 'Spirit of Conquest and Usurpation and their Relation to European Civilization' (1814), in addition to targeting Rousseau directly, Constant rounded on the historian, philosopher and radical Rousseauian political theorist Abbé Gabriel Bonnet de Mably (1709–85). Mably's radicalism found its political expression in Jacobinism. Repeating his attack from the *1806 Principles*, Constant argued that Rousseau, Mably and the Jacobins 'had mistaken authority for liberty.'[11] He continued: 'They believed everything should give way before collective authority, and that all restrictions of individual rights would be compensated by participation in the social power …. They made a duty out of what ought to have been voluntary.'[12] To justify this perilous theory, the Jacobins substituted an imagined golden age of 'the free states of antiquity' for modern national

experiences, traditions and customs that had taken generations to emerge. The Jacobins took imaginary dictates of the ancient republics to be France's modern 'general will', which they then argued should form the fundamental basis of the modern French constitution and laws.[13] In so doing, Constant objected, these Rousseauians were building modern France on rotten foundations. He renewed this attack the following year, in the 1815 edition of his *Principles of Politics Applicable to All Representative Governments* (hereafter, 'the *1815 Principles*'). He argued, among many other things, that Rousseau had failed to resolve a crucial problem of *The Social Contract*; namely, that the dictates of the general will could be carried into effect only if their execution was delegated to a section of the population. Despite Rousseau's 'horror' at this fact, Constant believed that, of necessity, delegation opened the general will to the pollution of vested interests.[14]

Constant developed this claim still further in his famous 1819 lecture on 'The liberty of the ancient compared with that of the moderns'.[15] The lecture's guiding purpose was to show that the loss of ancient realities made ancient liberty impossible in modern France. Echoing his observations in the *1806 Principles* and 'The Spirit of Conquest', Constant argued that the modern world had witnessed the gradual dominance of private pleasures over public duties, the replacement of war by commerce, the ending of slavery, massive population growth, and the creation of a system of representative government in place of the chaos of direct democracy. These changes had led citizens to retreat from extensive public participation into private pleasures. Consequently, where the ancients had prioritised 'active and constant participation in collective power', modern liberty 'must consist of peaceful enjoyment and private independence.'[16] It was primarily for this reason that Constant thought the goals of Rousseauian politics to be unachievable in Bourbon France, and why he believed attempts to institute Rousseauian programmes of political action threatened to undermine peace and the other achievements of the modern age.

Interestingly, Constant appealed to the notion of a 'general will' frequently in his own writings. However, under this label he conflated two very different concepts which Rousseau had kept carefully distinct. He interpreted Rousseau's general will as being simply popular consent to the polity's constitutional principles. Rousseau had insisted however, that there were two meanings to phrases such as 'what a society desires.'[17] On one hand, members of society considered as separate individuals might happen to endorse the same principles and goals, although on possibly very different grounds (depending ultimately, say, on the specifics of their respective particular interests). This was a 'will of all.' On the other hand, loyal members of a coherent community would share the same conception of the common good with which they identified their own good. This was Rousseau's conception of the general will. Constant conflated these two distinct senses – the coincidence of private wills and the shared will of loyal citizens – in both the *1806 Principles* and the *1815 Principles*.

There was a second sense in which Constant's theory differed from that of Rousseau. He railed against those such as Abbé Mably and the agents of the Terror who used arbitrary force to coerce other members of their community into acting virtuously.[18] Constant regarded this stratagem as both self-defeating and immoral. He went further, arguing that all attempts to coerce others into the performance of moral actions and the development of moral habits through the enforcement of settled laws and the associated threat of punishment destroyed any remaining opportunities for virtuous action. Individuals could act virtuously only to the extent that they were free from interference by the state or community. The unfettered collective political agency of the community – an undiluted mode of ancient liberty – could only hasten the degeneration of modern civilisations; it could not reverse it. Hence:

> Our [Rousseauian] reformers … proposed to a people grown old in pleasure, to sacrifice all these pleasures. They made a duty out of what ought to have been voluntary … . The slow and gradual effect of the impressions of childhood, the direction taken by the imagination over long years, appeared to them acts of rebellion … . Nevertheless, all their efforts collapsed constantly under the weight of their own extravagance … . The nation did not feel that ideal participation in the abstract sovereignty was worth what they were suffering.[19]

In other words, Jacobin attempts to impose communal liberty onto modern citizens undermined the latter's capacity for what Constant called in a slightly different context 'rest, industry, domestic happiness, private virtues', 'intellectual progress', and a free religious and spiritually-enriching life.[20] Only with a modern, bourgeois constitution that instituted limited government and commercial freedom could contemporary citizens flourish.[21] Moreover, contrary to Rousseau's trenchant critiques of commercial society, Constant held that international business and trade had broadened citizens' minds, thereby helping a common culture to emerge between countries and encouraging citizens to appreciate the world beyond their national boundaries.

Compared to the very different perspectives of contemporaries and near contemporaries such as Hegel and Proudhon, Constant showed a marked complacency regarding bourgeois society, with its engrained hierarchies of poverty and domination.[22] Some of the benefits imposed on the conquered populations of Europe might be properly labelled Jacobin and, indeed, fundamentally Constant interpreted the Napoleonic Wars and government in these terms.[23] Yet, some of the other, possibly more significant, innovations included precisely the sorts of commitments that Constant saw as forming the heart of modern liberty, not least the protection of private rights afforded by the Civil Code.

The picture was complex. For example, Constant insisted that to some extent moderns should interest themselves in representative politics. Hence, he ended his 1819 lecture by extolling the need for citizens to keep themselves informed on political matters, to express their views on political matters, to prepare to take up public office, and to vote. Constant saw legal and political institutions as central to the development of this modern public spirit.[24] The legislator created and enforced a system of laws that would help to 'achieve the moral education of citizens' by protecting the private sphere, which Constant styled as 'respecting their individual rights, securing their independence, [and] refraining from troubling their work.' In short, Constant sought to reinvigorate public discussion and the body politic more generally, as a counter-weight to modernity's tendency to denude the public realm. In this limited sense then, Constant sought to bring about what Alan Kahan has called in a slightly different context (elsewhere in this special issue), '[t]he subtle return of the ancient.'[25]

Yet, one must be very careful here. The political liberty that Constant sought was far less ambitious than that sought by the Rosseauians. It required a system of representative government and the enfranchisement of property owners alone, whereas not least in *The Social Contract* Rousseauian ancient liberty was based on direct democracy in legislation and the equal participation of the whole population in the common affairs of the community. Constant's recommendations were a world away from those of the undiluted 'ancient liberty' of the Rousseauians. Associated with this circumspect praise for the modern age, Constant condemned Rousseau's idealisation of pre-commercial society. In Fontana's words, Constant and the other 'theorists of commercial society thought the slavery of [artificially-created] needs an acceptable and fruitful bondage when compared with other traditional forms of oppression.'[26] Other writers of the time were much less sanguine about this trade-off, of course.

Moreover, British idealists such as Edward Caird believed that one could reconcile what was in effect Constant's liberties of the ancients and moderns, but in quite a different way to that suggested by Constant.[27] Caird's route was to modernise Hegel. His fellow British idealist Bernard Bosanquet held to much the same view and route. However, Bosanquet better effected a precise and sustained reconciliation. Hence, the analysis considers Bosanquet now.

3. Bosanquet's modern Rousseauianism

As noted earlier, Bosanquet was a great admirer of Rousseau. Even the significant flaws that he highlighted in Rousseau's works were, for Bosanquet, often as much the result of the fertility of Rousseau's mind as they were of less excusable faults.[28] His seminal 1895 essay 'The Reality of the General Will' was an explicit attempt to modernise Rousseau's position.[29] He went so far as to use a quotation from *Emile* as the epigraph of *The Philosophical Theory of the State*: 'c'est le

peuple qui compose le genre humain; ce qui n'est pas peuple est si peu de chose ce n'est pas la peine de le compter' ['It is the people who compose humankind. What is not the people is so slight a thing as not to be worth counting'].[30] Bosanquet's admiration for Rousseau did not mean Bosanquet saw himself as either a romantic or a radical. Indeed, whereas in 1819 Constant railed against the Rousseauian underpinnings of the French Revolutionary declarations, in 1899 Bosanquet thought them 'exceedingly moderate and even conservative in tone.'[31] Unlike Constant, Bosanquet welcomed Rousseau's intellectual debts to 'the crude traditions' of 'the ancient city-state' with its 'brilliant individuality.'[32] He saw it as a tradition that ran through Rousseau to the French Revolution, 'Kant, Fichte and Hegel,' and ultimately to Bosanquet himself.[33] This belief was reflected in Bosanquet's writings. Like many British idealists, he was a classical scholar whose writings on Plato are still recommended university texts, as well as being a political philosopher, theorist and social reformer.[34]

Nevertheless, Bosanquet's modernised Rousseauianism worried otherwise-appreciative British idealists such as J. H. Muirhead, who speculated that Bosanquet might have failed to recognise the extent to which 'the enormously complicated circumstances of modern industrial life' differed from the much simpler conditions of the 'northern village' in which Bosanquet had spent his childhood (Rock, Northumberland).[35] This allegation has been repeated recently.[36] Hopefully, it will become clear by the end of this section that these critics' concerns are misplaced.[37]

One can begin to appreciate this fact by taking the same starting point as Constant: the difference between the ancients and the moderns. Bosanquet contrasted these ages frequently in his writings. Consider the opening sections of a pair of political theory lectures entitled 'The Duties of Citizenship', which he delivered to the Women's University Settlement in Southwark, in 1893. The first lecture had two main sections, entitled 'The Ancient City' and 'The Modern Wilderness of Interests', respectively.[38] Bosanquet began by outlining the ancient world's lack of modern complexities around divisions of work from leisure, town from country, government from citizenry, as well as the absence of sub-polis organisations. Poleis were small by modern standards, most citizens possessed economic resources that were sufficient to ensure their survival, and heavy labour was undertaken by slaves rather than by machinery as in the modern age.[39] Citizens had four main areas of concern: the private sphere ('the care of their family, their property, and their livelihood'), their military duties ('the need of civic self-defence, and perhaps the desire of aggression' through irregular militia service), their governmental and judicial duties, and their need for public 'enjoyment and distinction', both 'bodily' and 'intellectual'.[40] The private sphere occupied much less of their attention than it did for modern citizens, and there was less separation between the private lives of citizens than was found in the modern age. 'We who stand here to-day,' Bosanquet wrote, '"have in a large measure created our country's greatness"; that is how an Athenian spoke. No modern assemblage of persons can unite in words like these.'[41] The demands of citizenship encompassed everything one did. It was a world of 'common dangers, common responsibilities, common enjoyments, and common ambitions.'[42] The ancient citizen gained a sense of worth from fulfilling these duties and being recognised as doing so. Only in this way, the ancient Greek believed, could 'the nature of a human individual unfold its capacities and become the most and highest that it has in it to be.'[43]

If the world was simple and solid for ancient Greeks, it was much less so for modern individuals. The world had become much more complex and citizens far more distinct from each other. Moderns lacked both empathy and the ancient sense of moral clarity and devotion, having retreated into family life or 'the world of business and pleasure.'[44] They were divided by class and tended to neglect the needs of their fellows and their responsibilities to the wider 'human community'.[45] The modern conception of citizenship was, then, thin and only weakly authoritative. Communal duties usually extended only to voting in general elections, with the occasional interest in municipal politics and 'a striking crisis.'[46] This is not say that Bosanquet thought every modern individual should abandon communal life nor must they devote themselves to politics. Community-engagement enriched their experience and character. It made them capable of finding a definite sense of their own individuality and worth. Nevertheless, Bosanquet insisted on the need for balance.

> Our aim is not to expand direct public or political action over our whole lives – that would narrow our lives, not widen them – but to understand our whole lives in the light of citizen ideas, in the light of a common good. This, as I said, is hard in the modern world. And the fact that it is hard is the reason why it is necessary.[47]

There was no single manner in which all modern individuals should broaden their 'citizen ideas' and thereby to broaden their lives. Some citizens would engage in politics, far more would not. The latter might work directly to help the disadvantaged but Bosanquet argued that often it was more effective to pursue a less all-encompassing route: for example, one might be 'a successful employer of labour who has a decently human relation to his employees.'[48] Bosanquet's only general recommendations were that each person should become acquainted with the aspects of the broader communal life which their own lives touched. Even in their private or merely semi-public lives, they should seek to improve the conditions and opportunities of those around them: 'If we were bedridden our whole life long, it would still make a difference to others whether we spread around us a sensible and unselfish or a selfish and frivolous atmosphere.'[49] Bosanquet's ideal of modern citizenship was more modest, restricted and personalised than the ancient ideal. As he observed at the close of another address: 'Nearly all mankind rest in unvisited tombs, and leave behind them a common undistinguished work, and it is the value of this general life that we have been trying to appreciate and aspiring to share.'[50]

It will be remembered that Constant's main recurring criticism of Rousseauianism was that the latter submerged the individual within the collective. His worry was that Rousseauians held the individual's beliefs and interests should be forced to coincide with those of the community. Such coercion could take the form of compulsory education programmes, enforced religious observance, or even punishment. Bosanquet expressed much the same concerns regarding Rousseau's position, although with the crucial caveat that Bosanquet believed 'Rousseau clearly points out that *force* gives *no right*.'[51] (Given what he wrote elsewhere however, Bosanquet seems to have believed that 'force' referred strictly to direct coercion, but not to education and so on.)[52] Taking these caveats into account, it appears that on balance both Constant and Bosanquet interpreted Rousseau as a social holist and condemned him for being one.

Bosanquet built his alternative relational theory on his idealism: 'the human world', he argued, was constituted by ideas that individuals had about each other and their relationships.[53] Hence, he lamented the ease with which critics neglected the roles played by mind in this regard. In his 1886 essay 'On the True Conception of Another World,' Bosanquet distinguished the role thought played in the natural world (the realm of flora and fauna, the laws of astronomical motion, and so on), from its role in the human world, that is 'the world of morals, of art or politics'.[54] In the first case, when improving, the person's mind came to *recognise* pre-existing distinctions and affinities. In that sense, the person came to *know* the world. In the second case, the person's mind used its own concepts, distinctions and affinities to interpret sense data and, in that way, to *create* the human world. In Bosanquet's words, the human world was 'causally sustained' by the person. To the extent that the person's mind merely endorsed existing socially-privileged concepts, distinctions and affinities, it *re*-created that world. To the extent that it critiqued and reformed them, it destabilised and reformed the world.

Rousseau held that the clarity and authority of the general will would be damaged by the existence of sub-community level or 'partial' associations.[55] By contrast, Bosanquet saw the general will emerging as the principle that harmonised relationships between such associations.[56] A society could satisfy its members only where it accorded with a harmonising principle, even if its members were not conscious of it doing so. Bosanquet found the need for such harmonious relationships lying deep within human nature. The natural world and the human world were satisfying to a 'conscious intelligence' to the extent that they formed a systematic whole; that is, to the extent that they were understood as being complete and coherent arrangements of concepts, distinctions and affinities. Failing to appreciate the mind's role in the creation of the human world encouraged misunderstandings regarding the character of this harmony, or 'unity' as the idealists tended to call it.

'What is this unity?', Bosanquet asked. 'Is it visible and tangible, like the unity of a human body? No, the unity is "ideal"; that is, it exists in the medium of thought only; it is made up of certain sentiments, purposes, and ideas.'[57] Even though ideal, the human world provided the texture of the person's self-understanding, of their character and of the environment in which they acted.[58] Indeed, elsewhere Bosanquet described 'this nisus towards a whole – to adjustment, to seeing things as harmonious' as '[t]he essence of thought.'[59] The worlds of thought and by extension of practice were, therefore, expressions of human 'sentiments, purposes, and ideas,' that is of one's own humanity.[60]

Bosanquet saw something similar at work in Rousseau's political theory. Hence, in *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, he characterised Rousseau as a 'philosophical jurist,' akin to Hobbes, Grotius, Montesquieu and Kant. As such, Rousseau 'divined under the forms of power and command, exercised by some over others, a substantive and general element of positive human nature, which … [he] attempted to drag into light by one analogy or another.'[61] Regarding his own theory, Bosanquet argued also that every person was drawn to create ideal unities that expressed their natures: meaning that 'Mind and individuality, so far as finite, find their fullest expression as aspects of very complex systems. This is the law, I believe wholly without exception, for every higher product of human soul and intelligence.'[62]

Bosanquet expanded on the personal dimensions of this process in *The Philosophical Theory of the State*. An illuminating way to approach these dimensions is via his analysis of will, which he presented explicitly as a development of Rousseau's distinction between 'the Will of All' and 'the General Will.'[63] Bosanquet distinguished between three perspectives: one focused on what he called the Actual Will, another on the Real Will, and the third on the General Will.[64] The Actual Will was the will as the agent experienced it in its most immediate form: the will that he felt drawing him to one course of action or another, without reference to a wider conception or a more systematic sense of the good of life as a whole. Once the individual started to think in these broader terms, he came to evaluate his Actual Will and to revise it so as to better enable him to realise his conception of a good life. Bosanquet called the resultant revised scheme of aims and motives 'the Real Will.' The agent might have revised his Actual Will to eat a whole chocolate bar in light of our broader goal of losing weight; hence, his Real Will was to resist the chocolate bar. Yet, Bosanquet argued, as he began to reflect on his wider aspirations and the good which they presupposed, he found himself increasingly drawn to consider his relationships with other people, and ultimately with the broader community. In this way, he came to recognise that his will was bound up with the good of the community as a whole. Hence, by reflecting on the common good of the community with which he identified himself, he came to recognise that his Real Will derived its meaning and validity from its relationship to 'the General Will' of the community with which he freely identified himself.

Following Rousseau then, Bosanquet understood the individual as a rational, self-determining but communal being. Consequently, he endorsed a conception of liberty that extended beyond the idea of personal freedom as simply the absence of external interference. Liberty was self-mastery, and the self was socially constituted. Restraint and compulsion could then be justified, but only to the extent that they guided the individual towards their Real Will and from that towards their General Will: that is, towards the will that best accorded with the individual's own fully thought-out idea of their 'best life.'[65]

The danger was that one moved from this idea to the belief that a citizen could not be oppressed under a democratic system because he had been party to making the laws. This move concerned both Constant and Bosanquet deeply: 'Rousseau in some moods was the victim of this fallacy,' Bosnaquet observed, 'and it is widely triumphant to-day.'[66] Allegedly, Rousseau failed to fully identify and differentiate the forces at work within complex societies. This concern underpinned Bosanquet's complaint that 'Rousseau's attempts to explain the action of a collective mind … constantly [descended] … into the advocacy of a soulless *régime* of mass meetings.'[67] In other words, Constant was correct: Rousseau's theory fell victim to its social holism. However, rather than abandoning social and political Rousseauianism as Constant had, Bosanquet responded by developing a

more pluralistic conception of community, one that he hoped would avoid the dangers of mass society, whether that be in ancient or modern forms.

To achieve this transformation, Bosanquet shifted from a holistic social ontology to a relational organicist version.[68] For present purposes, the crucial point is that instead of seeing society as a homogeneous, Rousseauian entity, Bosanquet conceived the healthy community as an internally-differentiated network of persons and institutions, each with its own desires, interests and perspectives, although each was underpinned by meanings and values that were shared by all institutions` (which Bosanquet called 'dominant ideas') within various domains of thought and activity.[69] He labelled the more restricted ideal unities that constituted the self-contained larger and more complex human worlds 'institutions'.[70] These institutions had the character of 'facts' when they were recognised socially, 'ideas' in that they were constituted by members' shared beliefs, and 'purposes' when justified by their roles in achieving certain goals.[71] Consequently, each of these unities was an 'ethical idea', which provided an option, a vehicle, and a context through which the person could fulfil their innate drive to act rationally 'in the face of needs, pressures, facts, and suggestions which arise in what we call our surroundings'.[72] The person retained their uniqueness because, although being simultaneously social and constitutive of his identity, the perspectival nature of knowledge ensured that institutions 'reveal a different quality [to every mind]; as every tone of a landscape elicits its peculiar shade of feeling, which but for it might have remained latent for ever.'[73]

Bosanquet claimed that to the extent a person pursued in practice a diverse and coherent world of meanings and values, they constituted what Hegel had called an 'individual'.[74] Yet, again like Hegel, Bosanquet insisted that none of the empirical persons with whom we interacted in our particular worlds in practice were individuals in Hegel's sense. Partially, this imperfection arose from the limitations of their respective reasoning and affective powers, and partially it was a consequence of the limitations of environments (or 'worlds') and the actions they performed within them. Yet, there was no escaping the fact that each person felt their own innate existential drive to act rationally and to make their lives a coherent enterprise.[75] Consequently, every person 'is always a fragmentary being, inspired by an infinite whole, which he is for ever striving to express in terms of his limited range of externality.'[76] In contrast to the wider whole, he was a 'finite centre' of experience and action ('you and I, here and now', borrowing Rawls' phrase).[77] Hence, 'self-transcendence' was the instinctive goal of every human being because 'no finite being can be completely equal to any situation.'[78]

Bosanquet argued that, to the extent the community embodied these higher values in a coherent form, it constituted a 'concrete universal.'[79] However, he did not thereby ignore the ontological centrality of the agency of particular human beings. He insisted that a vibrant community could exist only to the extent that actual citizens approached the ideal of virtuous finite centres and interacted with each other as such. Citizens approached this ideal to the extent that they were self-disciplined, self-assertive, and oriented to a higher cause; namely the manifestation of higher goods. Citizens were able to achieve these ends to the extent that they made careful use of their reason and judgement to contribute to communal endeavours that served to instantiate higher goods.[80] In the process, they would spiritually enrich the community as a whole. Yet it is vital to appreciate that throughout his argument, Bosanquet held that finite centres and communities possessed only derivative value.[81] They gained their worth solely from the system of values (not least beauty and truth) which they served to instantiate.

In short, Bosanquet combined a relational organicist ontology with a form of normative holism. In other words, he held that communities were constituted by the intersubjective recognition embedded within the interactions of its members, but that ultimately these interactions were important only to the extent that they manifested intrinsically valuable networks of higher values. Hence, a finite centre (you or I) could achieve its best self only when it oriented its life to the service of concrete manifestations of higher values such as beauty, piety and truth in the collective life of the community.[82] Given the limitations of particular finite centres, these higher values could be realised only within a coherent and vibrant community taken as a whole. Other British idealists

rejected this move, as arguably did Rousseau himself. Green was emphatic: 'To speak of any progress or improvement or development of a nation or society or mankind, except as relative to some greater worth of [individual] persons, is to use words without meaning.'[83] However, Constant's theory of history was akin to that of Bosanquet. For example, in the posthumously published manuscript 'Le règne des hommes est passé' he wrote: 'It is obvious to any attentive observer that the means to glory and personal power have diminished and are continuing to diminish with each passing day; that individuals are losing their prominence as generations perfect themselves; and that equality is becoming greater as mankind lifts itself up, and because it does.'[84] Reacting to this passage, Hofmann notes 'the degree to which the ideas of "perfectibility," "equality," and "effacement of the individual" were compatible in Constant's mind', and like Holmes he cautions against overstating Constant's individualism.[85] Constant saw progress as being an increasingly collective achievement, which swept individuals towards their improvement *en mass*. This is not to say that Constant was happy about this fact; as Hofmann observes, 'He was a "perfectibilist" as well as an anxious liberal.'[86]

Bosanquet had no such concerns regarding the mechanisms of progress. Similarly, he was sanguine about the fact that his move from the Real Will to the General Will weakened the public-private distinction. He held that in the course of pursuing their own private interests, finite centres tended to develop a concern for the good of their local communities and ultimately of the community as a whole.[87] A rational person could not find true pleasure and satisfaction by working merely for one's private interests. The liberty of the moderns was simply one part of a wider personal freedom that necessarily entailed sustaining one's wider community, which Constant labelled 'the liberty of the ancients.' Yet, life required balance, and Bosanquet was emphatic that one should not denigrate the private sphere. Nevertheless, echoing Constant's distinction between the liberty of the ancients and the liberty of the moderns, Bosanquet held that it was essential for the moral progress of both the finite person and the community that the state did not overprotect finite centres. This point becomes clear as the discussion turns to the idea of 'decadence', in the next section.

4. Bosanquet and Constant on the progressive possibilities of decadence

Rousseau remains famous for his scourging attacks on bourgeois societies of the type lionised by Constant. In Rousseau's eyes, such societies promoted selfishness and the destruction of virtue. They alienated people from themselves and each other, hiding a vapid individualism behind masks of faux enlightenment, sophistication, and civilisation. Even though bourgeois societies were very busy, with much discussion of the latest advances in literature, science and the arts, in reality the public sphere was denuded and the collective life of the community was largely destroyed. Individuals were reduced to mere subjects, rather than also being citizens.[88] For Rousseau, commercial society brought not international peace, but social disorder at home and wars abroad. It propagated a supine and degraded population. It was characterised, in other words, by selfishness and cruelty. It was the archetype of a decadent society.

Constant was alive to this danger. Indeed, Pierre Manent has gone so far as to remark that, at least in relation to their respective positions on human perfectibility in the private sphere, 'Constant [was], in important ways a follower of Rousseau.'[89] Hence, for all of his concerns about political Rousseauianism, Constant incorporated elements of ancient liberty into his conception of the good life for modern citizens. He saw much truth in Rousseau's accusation that bourgeois societies tended to be degenerate and alienating. Indeed, he consistently presented modernity in a manner that strongly echoed Rousseau and, as becomes clear shortly, anticipated Bosanquet. Commenting on the posthumously published fragment 'Le règne des hommes est passé', Hofmann notes Constant's recurring fear for the degrading effects of modern life: 'selfishness, calculation, self-interest, and utilitarian thinking will likely take the place of generosity, self-denial, sacrifice and civic virtue', Hofmann observes. 'Here we detect a faint Rousseauian note: progress yes, but at what price?'[90]

In the *1806 Principles*, Constant contrasted the youthful naïve vitality of the ancients with the weary sceptical maturity of the moderns: 'The moderns have lost the ability to believe for a long time and without analysis. Doubt is endlessly at their shoulder. It weakens the force even of what they do take on.'[91] Where the ancients relied on imagination, the moderns relied on reason. Consequently, while institutional change would alter the character of an ancient society rapidly, only the gradual alteration of habit could improve modern societies, all other means provoking resistance and ultimately violence. This scepticism of the moderns helped to explain their retreat into the private realm and the weight they placed on civil freedoms and calm independence from government and each other. Modern life was characterised by the existence of 'obscure ranks of the blind, submissive populace', who prioritised 'safety and individual freedom' over 'the public interest' and sought '[p]eace, calm, and domestic contentment'. These were core elements of 'the present-day spirit of the human race.'[92] Constant acknowledged rather than welcomed this state of affairs, throughout his mature writings.[93] So, as noted above, he condemned the moral corruption of those who sought to propagate 'prejudices to frighten [modern] men, greed to corrupt them, frivolity to stupefy them, coarse pleasures to degrade them, despotism to rule them, and, of course, positive knowledge and exact science to serve the despotism more adroitly.'[94]

Yet, still Constant rejected political Rousseauianism. He insisted that nowadays ancient elements of the good life could be enjoyed only by private individuals acting in the private sphere. All attempts to enhance those elements using political means had led to tyranny and the destruction of the very values the state sought to promote. It was for this reason that he believed the contemporary state should be both inspired and bounded by the demands of modern liberty alone.

Constant called for political freedoms in a representative system to be supplemented by robust civil freedoms that protected the independence of modern citizens against oppressive rulers. This combination would secure 'the eternal rights of justice, equality, and safeguards', as well as modern imperatives to 'respect … the habits and affections, in a word … the independence of individuals' that had arisen through 'the progress of civilization.'[95] Order was essential. For example, wealth provided 'new means of leisure and enlightenment and consequently new motives for morality' to those who had earned or inherited it, as their upbringing had 'schooled [them] to the imperatives of power and riches'.[96] Yet, forced redistribution would corrupt the poor, who 'could use [wealth] only deplorably and coarsely'.[97] Such coercion was destructive in the modern age, where 'individual relations are made up of fine nuances, changeable and elusive, which would be distorted in a thousand ways if one tried to give them clearer definition.'[98] He continued:

> Public opinion alone can affect them. It alone can judge them because its nature is the same. Times of civil upheaval, I must confess, are particularly unfavourable to the power of opinion, which is a kind of moral sense which develops only in tranquillity. It is the fruit of leisure, security, and intellectual independence.[99]

How does Constant's analysis of the decadence of modern times compare to Bosanquet's analysis? Like Constant, Bosanquet saw the general trend of social change as being progressive while also being subject to temporary reverses. At the social level, Bosanquet argued, 'the concrete and the real' were inherently prone to cycles of decadence, birth, vibrancy, routine and decline.[100] He distinguished four key elements to the first of these phases in his 1901 essay 'Some Reflections on the Idea of Decadence'.[101] First, for decadence to exist, the preceding period must have contained what he called a 'prime': that is, 'a great achievement' in which a significant proportion and section of the community participated. The second condition was that the prime was no longer sustained (something that might have come to pass 'for any number of reasons') even though 'its tradition and its fragments remain and in some way influence the world'.[102] Bosanquet argued that, thirdly, gradually the 'tradition' and 'fragments' lost the meanings that they had when part of the prime; but nevertheless these traditions and fragments were still revered within the community. Fourthly, these fragments were re-appropriated for new circumstances, and in the process were accorded meanings and significances that had no necessary links to the original prime.[103] In other words, Bosanquet saw decadence as a process of what we would now call 'creative destruction':

> This then perhaps is the characteristic note of a decadence; the meaning of a great past being forgotten, but its tradition respected, and worked out by fragmentary applications which end in new forms, and which produce material for another age of supreme insight and creation.[104]

Decadence was akin to a dialectical process, whereby genealogical confusions were transformed into more coherent personal and social structures. In Raymond Geuss' words, 'History is a continuing series of transformations in which the old is not simply obliterated and utterly deleted, but is taken up and preserved in a modified form.'[105] In short, it was an instance of the Hegelian process of *aufhebung*.

Reflecting his idealism, Bosanquet held that this process existed only through the minds and actions of finite human minds. This was because the progress of the finite person was both necessarily reliant upon and constitutive of the realisation of an unlimited or 'infinite' whole (which, again in line with Hegel, Bosanquet called the Absolute). The finite person and the infinite Absolute were bound together by the 'great achievement' or 'prime', that gave value to the society. This drive – or 'nisus' – towards self-completion led the finite person to attempt to fill the gaps and resolve the incoherences within their characters and human worlds. Bosanquet explored this point using surprisingly Nietzschean terminology. As part of this process, a 'very profound and considerable transvaluation of values' was aided by the gradual growth of a clearer understanding of a whole which made sense of the otherwise fragmentary and incomplete values and meanings that every person possessed in their own particular life..[106] In Bosanquet's terms, the finite centres imbued the 'decadent' social forms with a higher meaning, reflecting the fact that these forms existed only through the interactions of finite centres.

Bosanquet's analysis recalled aspects of Constant's conception of progress. For one thing, like Constant Bosanquet held that even though progress could be achieved only via the actions of persons (finite centres), perfectibility was manifested in the improvement of society as a collective entity. As noted above, it is important not to overstate the degree to which Constant's individualism extended beyond his political writings.[107] The interlinking of the personal and the social was fundamental for both he and Bosanquet. For the latter, finite persons developed in the sense of living with 'an increased wealth and harmony of finite existence', which tended to produce 'a satisfied self' through being 'in possession of a vast social and intellectual world'.[108] The reciprocal development of the finite individual and the whole constituted a 'double criterion' by which, continuing his Nietzschean turn, 'All progress, all civilisation, all transvaluation of values must ultimately be tested.'[109] The growth of the spiritual heart of human freedom required this 'transvaluation of values' in order to bring the finite person to affect a reconciliation within itself, between the outward circumstances of the person's life and the inward world of thought and values.[110]

Spiritual growth affected this reconciliation via the construction of the prime in relation to which the finite person felt at home in the world. This created what Bosanquet referred to as 'the stability and security of the finite self, with the true sense of values reacting on external conditions', something that he characterised as 'the sense of human worth and freedom'.[111] This reconciliation required the finite person to conceive of the furthering of his own isolated good as the proper ultimate aim of his life. Yet, each person should recognise a need to orient his whole life to the service of something larger than himself. In other words, ultimately finite persons could attain this sense of value only to the extent that they understood and accepted the 'worthlessness and nullity' of their achievements viewed as their respective purely personal 'acquisitions'.[112]

Like most other absolute idealists, Bosanquet argued that the moral and aesthetic development of the finite person could occur only through struggle, and indeed not only where good and evil conflicted, but also where the good conflicted with itself.[113] Spiritual progress required each person to battle through the 'hazards and hardships of finite selfhood'.[114] Every 'finite soul' was 'a perfection, following upon certain physical conditions, and constituting a conscious world, capable of diverse degrees of unity and perfection, and essentially an organ of the universe for focusing and appreciating that special range of the external world with which it is connected.'[115] Bosanquet argued that

'the value of the particularity is indirect, and depends on what it helps to realize.'[116] This claim recalled Constant's contention that the greatness of the individual was a reflection of the greatness of their age.[117]

This was not a purely abstract philosophical position for Bosanquet. Indeed, it laid the foundations of his decades of work with the Charity Organisation Society (COS).[118] The COS was renowned for means testing the poor who had applied for financial support. While acknowledging rhe complexity of the causes of poverty, ultimately charity was denied when COS case workers judged a family's poverty to result predominantly from its members' recklessness. For Bosanquet and the other members of the COS, families should be forced to live with the consequences of their lack of thrift in order to teach them the moral importance of self-discipline and self-reliance.

This attitude recalled Constant's warning that the decadent poor had not been 'schooled to the imperatives of power and riches', meaning that the forced redistribution of wealth would lead them to 'use [it] only deplorabl[y] and coarsely.'[119] A key difference was that Bosanquet acknowledged many poor families could make good use of redistributed wealth, whereas Constant did not. For the British idealists more generally, the poor struggled against daily hardships and dangers. The British idealists' world is fundamentally social and the overarching struggle is to be a dutiful agent serving the good of one's community.[120] This contribution was to be made voluntarily, rather than as a result of state coercion, something that of course was also of paramount importance to Constant. More fundamentally, for Bosanquet decadence tended to promote social growth, whereas Rousseau saw it as degenerative and Constant saw it as an irredeemable imperfection of modern societies.

5. Conclusion

This article began by analysing Constant's ambivalent attitude to Rousseau's thought, whereby he endorsed Rousseau's critique of the aesthetic and personal character of modernity while simultaneously damning the contemporary influence of political Rousseauianism. The article proceeded to show how Bosanquet charted a subtle middle way between Rousseau and Constant on the question of the relationship between ancient and modern liberty. Bosanquet delineated a distinction between the state and community that Rousseau collapsed, whilst articulating crucial interrelationships between individual wills and collective life that Constant never fully grasped.[121] This enabled Bosanquet to articulate key progressive tendencies within modern decadence in ways that escaped both Rousseau and Constant. Hence, it has been shown that while Constant's position was more sophisticated than its popular reputation might have us believe, Bosanquet modernised Rousseau's epochal theory in far more insightful and nuanced ways.

Notes

1. Maria Dimova-Cookson, *Rethinking Positive and Negative Liberty* (London: Routledge, 2020).
2. See for example, Benjamin Constant, *Principles of Politics Applicable to All Governments*, trans. Dennis O'Keefe, ed. Etienne Hofmann (Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Fund, 2003) (hereafter *1806 Principles*), 513; Constant, 'The Spirit of Conquest and Usurpation and their Relation to European Civilization', in his *Political Writings,* trans. and ed. Biancamaria Fontana (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 106n; Benjamin Constant, 'Principles of Politics Applicable to All Representative Governments' [1815 version], in Constant, *Political Writings*, 275.
3. Bernard Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State*, fourth edition (London: MacMillan, 1923 [first edition 1899]).
4. Benjamin Constant, *On Religion*, trans. P.P. Seaton Jr, ed. T. Todorov and E Hofmann (Carmel, Ind.: Liberty Fund, 2017), 69.
5. Constant, *Religion*, 69–70.
6. See works explored below and Benjamin Constant, *Commentary on Filangeri's Work*, trans. and ed. Alan S. Kahan (Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Fund, 2015), 31–3, 165, 227–8.
7. Constant, *1806 Principles*, 5; see also *ibid.,* 31.

8. Constant, *1806 Principles*, 13.
9. Constant, *1806 Principles*, 31.
10. Holmes would object to interpreting Constant's rights as pre-social. See Holmes, *Benjamin Constant*, 53–4. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for pointing out this divergence.
11. Constant, 'Spirit', 107; see Constant, *1806 Principles*, 367–9.
12. Constant, 'Spirit', 108, 109.
13. Constant, 'Spirit', 108.
14. Constant, 'Principles', 177–9.
15. Benjamin Constant, 'Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns', in his *Political Writings,* 309–28.
16. Constant, 'Liberty', 316; Constant, *1806 Principles*, 352–9.
17. Constant, *1806 Principles*, 8; see Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 'Social Contract', in his *Social Contract and Discourses*, trans. G.D.H. Cole, rev. J.H. Brumfitt and J.C. Hall (London: Dent, 1973), 203.
18. Constant, 'Spirit', 110–4.
19. Constant, 'Spirit', 108–9.
20. Constant, 'Spirit', 120–9.
21. Constant, 'Liberty', 328.
22. G.W.F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. H.B. Nisbet, ed. Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), sections 181–208. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon argued this from the beginning of his political literary career in 1836, with his most famous statement of the case being found in his *What is Property? First Memoir. An inquiry into the principle of right and of government* [1840], in his *Works*, trans. B.R. Tucker (Princeton, Mass.: B.R. Tucker, 1876), volume 1, see especially chapter 2. See also Domenico Losurdo, *Liberalism: A counter-history*, trans. Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 2011), especially 184–91. Losurdo highlights the position on property in Constant, 'Principles', 213–21.
23. Constant, 'Spirit', 46–7, 61, 99–100, 161–5.
24. Constant, 'Liberty', 317.
25. Alan Kahan, 'From Constant to Spencer: Two ethics of laissez-faire', first line section 5.
26. Biancamaria Fontana, 'Introduction', in Constant, *Political Writings*, 16.
27. Edward Caird, 'Lectures on Moral Philosophy: Social ethics', in Colin Tyler, ed., *Unpublished Manuscripts in British Idealism: Political philosophy, theology and social thought*, 2 vols. (London: Thoemmes Continuum, 2005), vol.2, 40–152. See also Colin Tyler, *Common Good Politics: British idealism and social justice in the contemporary world* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017), chapter 2.
28. Bosanquet, *Philosophical,* 80–2.
29. Bernard Bosanquet, 'The Reality of the General Will', in his *Science and Philosophy, and other essays* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1927), 255–68.
30. Bosanquet, *Philosophical*, title page, quoting the 'third maxim' found in the fourth book of Rousseau's *Émile, Ou De L'Éducation*; translation, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile: or On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), Book IV, 225.
31. Bosanquet, *Philosophical,* 13.
32. Bosanquet, *Philosophical,* 38.
33. Bosanquet, *Philosophical,* 218.
34. Colin Tyler, 'Forms, dialectics and the healthy community: Recovering the British idealists' reception of Plato', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie,* 100:1 (February 2018), 76–105; Sandra den Otter, *British Idealism and Social Explanation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 69–77, 180–9.
35. J.H. Muirhead, ed., *Bernard Bosanquet and his Friends* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1935), 47.
36. Noël O'Sullivan, *Problem of Political Obligation* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019), chapter 8.
37. Bernard Bosanquet, 'The Duties of Citizenship', in his *Science*, 273–5, 281–2.
38. Bosanquet, 'Duties', 269–80.
39. Bosanquet, 'Duties', 270.
40. Bosanquet, 'Duties', 270–2.
41. Bosanquet, 'Duties', 271.
42. Bosanquet, 'Duties', 272.
43. Bosanquet, 'Duties', 272.
44. Bosanquet, 'Duties', 274.
45. Bosanquet, 'Duties', 274.
46. Bosanquet, 'Duties', 275.
47. Bosanquet, 'Duties', 276–7.
48. Bosanquet, 'Duties', 278.
49. Bosanquet, 'Duties', 280.
50. Bernard Bosanquet, 'Unvisited Tombs', in his *Some Suggestions in Ethics* (London: MacMillan, 1919), 66–87.
51. Bosanquet, *Philosophical,* 221n, citing Rousseau, 'Social Contract', Book I, chapters 3–4.

52. Bernard Bosanquet, 'Individual and Social Reform', in his *Essays and Addresses* (London: Swan Sonneschein, 1891), 24–47.
53. Bosanquet, 'Life and Finite Individuality', in his *Science*, 101.
54. Bosanquet, 'On the True Conception of Another World', in his *Science*, 324.
55. Rousseau, 'Social Contract', 203–4.
56. Bosanquet, 'Duties', 275–83.
57. Bosanquet, 'Conception', 324.
58. Bosanquet, 'Conception', 325–31.
59. Bosanquet, *Principle of Individuality and Value* (London: MacMillan, 1912), xx.
60. Bosanquet, 'Conception', 324.
61. Bosanquet, *Philosophical,* 55–6.
62. Bosanquet, *Principle*, 146.
63. Bosanquet, *Philosophical,* 96–110.
64. Bosanquet, *Philosophical,* 110–2.
65. Bosanquet, *Philosophical,* 168–70.
66. Bosanquet, *Philosophical,* 69.
67. Bosanquet, *Philosophical,* 65n.
68. Colin Tyler, *Idealist Political Philosophy: Pluralism and conflict in the Absolute idealist tradition* (London: Continuum, 2006), 149–53.
69. Bosanquet, *Philosophical*, 148–55.
70. Bosanquet, *Philosophical*, chapter XI.
71. Bosanquet, *Philosophical*, 276.
72. Bosanquet, *Philosophical*, 277.
73. Bosanquet, *Philosophical*, 277.
74. Bosanquet, *Principle* and *Value and Destiny of the Individual* (London: MacMillan, 1913).
75. Bosanquet, 'Conception', 329–31.
76. Bosanquet, *Value*, 304.
77. John Rawls, *Law of Peoples, with 'The Idea of Public Reason Revisited'* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 30.
78. Bosanquet, *Philosophical,* liii. Bosanquet, *Value,* especially 1–30, 167, 207–12, 226–7.
79. Bosanquet, *Principle*, Lecture II.
80. Bosanquet, 'Duties',
81. Bernard Bosanquet, 'Life', *passim*; Colin Tyler, *Idealist Political Philosophy: Pluralism and conflict in the absolute idealist tradition* (London: Continuum, 2006), 149–58.
82. Bosanquet, 'Life', *passim*.
83. T.H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, fifth edition (Oxford: Clarendon, 1906), section 184.
84. Benjamin Constant, '[Le règne des hommes est passé], title ascribed to a fragment published in *OCBC/ Oeuvres*, III, 454.' Quoted in Etienne Hofmann, 'Theory of Perfectibility of the Human Race', trans. Arthur Goldhammer, in Helena Rosenblatt, ed., *Cambridge Companion to Constant* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 268.
85. Hofmann, 'Perfectibility', 268; Stephen Holmes, *Benjamin Constant and the Making of Modern Liberalism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 109–11.
86. Hofmann, 'Perfectibility', 268.
87. Bosanquet, 'Reality', 258–62; Bernard Bosanquet, 'Kingdom of God on Earth', in his *Science*, 333–51.
88. Rousseau, 'Social Contract', 255–6.
89. Pierre Manent, 'Introduction to *On Religion*', in Constant, *Religion*, xvi-xviin1.
90. Hofmann, 'Perfectibility', 268.
91. Constant, *1806 Principles*, 360–1.
92. Constant, *1806 Principles*, 364.
93. For example, Constant, 'Spirit', 104–5.
94. Constant, *1806 Principles*, 364–5.
95. Constant, *1806 Principles*, 365.
96. Constant, *1806 Principles*, 366.
97. Constant, *1806 Principles*, 366.
98. Constant, *1806 Principles*, 371.
99. Constant, *1806 Principles*, 371.
100. Bosanquet, *Value*, 308.
101. Bosanquet, 'Reflections', 316–7.
102. Bosanquet, 'Reflections', 317.
103. Bosanquet, 'Reflections', 317.
104. Bosanquet, 'Reflections', 317–8.

105. Raymond Geuss, *Public Goods, Private Goods*, new preface (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), xxi.
106. Bosanquet, *Value*, 310; see 128, 314, 316, 321.
107. Hofmann, 'Perfectibility', 268; Holmes, *Benjamin Constant*, 174–8.
108. Bosanquet, *Value*, 314.
109. Bosanquet, *Value*, 314.
110. Bosanquet, *Value*, 316–7, 321–2.
111. Bosanquet, *Value*, 317.
112. Bosanquet, *Value*, 320.
113. A.C. Bradley, 'Hegel's Theory of Tragedy', in his *Oxford Lectures on Poetry* (London: MacMillan, 1965), 71, 85–92.
114. Bosanquet, *Value*, Lectures V-VIII inclusive.
115. Bosanquet, *Principle*, xxvi.
116. Bernard Bosanquet, *Individuality*, 27 (and see 26–7).
117. Hofmann, 'Perfectibility', 263–8.
118. See Bernard Bosanquet, ed., *Aspects of the Social Problem* (London: MacMillan, 1895); Bosanquet, 'Individualism', 334–8.
119. Constant, *1806 Principles*, 366.
120. See, for example, Bosanquet, 'Duties', in Bosanquet, *Science*, 269–92; Tyler, *Common Good Politics*, chapter 6.
121. Holmes claims Constant also delineated state and society (Holmes, *Benjamin Constant*, 55–6).

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