



In mathematics, *involution* is a function  $f: x \rightarrow X$  that, when applied twice, brings one back to the starting point:  $f(x) = X$  and  $f(f(x)) = x$ . *But how so?*

We can use doors as a model of how the human ego can go by relating to the *self*, or fail to do so. It is a model because it applies in *medias res*, and is itself a *contraption* that has to be *operated* in order to be effective: that is, it has to be *opened* and *walked* through. Doors operate the connection *between* the human ego *and* the wider self. That is, the steps from which the ego assumes that it is the *same* as the self, then realises that it is only *similar*, articulating the *difference* and timely discovering that the self runs *off* from the ego, but is also its home.

If the *ego* is our vantage point, it will transcend. If the *self* is our vantage point, it is immanent. What is the nature of change in this relation of the ego to itself (which the mathematical definition of *involution* above, fails to account for)? Is it *metamorphic*, or *anamorphic*? It may well be that it is metamorphic from the vantage point of the *ego*, and anamorphic from the vantage point of the *self*. Metamorphosis entails a complete transformation and expresses itself *organically*, while anamorphosis is partial and expresses itself *architecturally*. Hence the door as a model.

The door is an architectural *contraption* that can be applied to a variety of media: images, for instance, as they are arranged in a variety of sequence, feature a *montage*. However, when matched with a *walkabout* in text images can operate as *doors*. Doors conjoin the work of hands and feet: they must be opened for us to walk through. We can open a door, walk through and close it behind us: behold, we are *somewhere else*. Where there was a crab there is now a fish! Or, the larva has become a butterfly. Essentially, an *egocentric* account.



Rasmus Paludan holds a burning Koran outside of the Turkish embassy on January 21, 2023 in Stockholm, Sweden | Jonas Gratzner/Getty images. *Ego perspective*: Rasmussen Paludan burns the Koran (etc.). *Self perspective*: the picture of the act is substituted for the contents of the book.

From the vantage point of the self the ego starts as an *identity*, only to proceed by *analogy*, amplifies the *difference* by projection and *collapses* before the self (as an event). Here, the change is a *transformation* rather than a complete alteration: the possibility that the ego—through *involution*—will acquire a *sustainability* before the sustaining self. Is this psychology, phenomenology, religion, religious phenomenology, religious psychology, or do we need a different term for it? Perhaps *anthroponomy* could account for the observation/analysis of ego-self configurations?

That is, a science in the wake of natural history based on field-observation. But what kind of field? Evidently, the field would have to include artefacts, because we are up with is a *journey of fabrication*. It is *not*

something out of nothing. That is, a field-understanding of artefacts: which is their architecture—the cultural history of artefacts as their architecture (rather than describing them separately as objects/items) in a field-understanding of the self. As far as I can see, this would support the cultural turn: nature as heritage.

That is, a common heritage of the life-form of planet earth as a single (/unique) creature. But also in the discussions on the *liberty of expression* which currently is fixated on the right to burn holy books, in protest of what their contents brought about in history and societies. “I own this book and I can do with it what I like”. In the purely private aspect, of course, but then it doesn’t express anything: in the *private* realm the burning of a book is an act of physical destruction of a particular item. In *public* space, however, the book is a collective legacy and not private property.

Which is why book-burning is regularly perceived as an act of violence against a community. As such it is one amongst many acts that in combination make up warfare. The people who defend book-burning, typically do not want to argue. Neither do people who do the actual burning. So, then the question is whether the liberty of expression is to say or do anything thing you like, with items that are private property (including yourself, body and ego). The destruction of private property in public, is generally accepted only in connection with ritual bonfires (e.g. <sup>St</sup>John’s eve).

From an anthroponomic perspective, holy books are *collective vessels* that are an integral part of *community architectures*. Which is why the burning of Toras/Bibles/Korans extends to other burning acts (synagogues, churches and mosques). But the point is that although the items may be privately owned—and tethered to ethno-religious isolates—the three book-religions share the idea that both their books and creation (the world and everything that is in it) is human by *lease*, and Divine by *landownership*. They seek to educate/tame the human ego into acceptance.

Whether this has been successful/not is another matter, in the sense that it is debatable: it can/should be debated. But is debate something we do to maintain our positions, or to improve

ourselves. Is it something we do to applaud/condemn something, or to improve our odds to make better decisions? If for the latter, which is the *democratic* idea, then acts cannot be equated with expression as long as acts can simulate, substitute and erase expression. Agency are better conceived as ways of screening, intercepting and framing information.



The SATOR square figuring on a famous door in the French city of Grenoble brings us into the heart of the matter, in this handout. Which is: we know that doors combine two key items that extend thought (Spinoza) in the horizontal and the vertical—hands (that open the door) the feet (that walk through) and the hands (that shut the door behind you). In addition this door features the SATOR square, which has some points in common with mathematics. It features a mathematical involution in the sense that the same function  $f$  (the successive 4 transformations of SATOR) are the same in the horizontal and the vertical. That is  $f(x) = X$  and  $f(f(x)) = x$ . But if featuring a demonstration of unity of the self (whether religiously/secularly defined) the sequences in the horizontal and vertical directions are not doing the same job with the human body, and engaged it differently. Most of us know this as we enter a door. But when we enter the realm of a text? If a text is a door it means that it will call different on the world of the hands and the itinerancy of the feet: and that there are transactions at this level that are non-trivial, if we manage to keep our balance. Which is why burning a book declares an act of sovereignty (which it mimics) but really conceals a defeat.

If agency is aligned with the liberty of expression it is rather in the sense that you cannot hit-and-run: on the contrary, this can only lead to the *denial* of expression. “Nothing has been said”, “it is all in your head”, “you are imagining things”: this is the sign and signature of *fascism*. The problem today is that people who turn to alt-right tropes *unawares*, do not see themselves as fascists. Hence there is a problem of growing undeclared fascism. It grows up in the name of democracy: and most conspicuously defending the liberty of expression.

The essence of this contemporary fascism comes from the festooning the human ego, in the aspect that is in rebellion against the self. This is a very real aspect of human being: one that withdraws from the challenge of human growth, and does not want to share: neither with other people, other species nor with the planet. Fascism ensues when the *point of excess* is reached in administrating and representing people who do *not* count—and are *not* named—living in a passive expectation of that something great is about to happen (and one is part of this): *the eventual state* (cf, [BADIOUS](#)).

However, it is mined by a specific *indolence* that defines it: the lack of transaction and value-balance between two forms of moderation—**1**) the moderation of representation; **2**) the moderation on *tacit knowledge*. The radical potential of Aristototele’s Golden mean, has yet to be politically defined. But has been defined through a number of artistic ventures.