

'ABSOLUTE IDEALISM' AND FINITE INDIVIDUALITY¹

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The similarities between some currents of Anglo-American philosophy and Indian philosophy have frequently been noted, and it seems plausible to say that we see the two traditions at their closest when we look at the work of the idealist thinkers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Sometimes the parallels between idealism and Indian Philosophical thought are the result of the general influence of British philosophers throughout the English-speaking world -- we see examples of this in some Indian studies of political philosophy². At other times, we find the two arriving at similar insights quite independently of one another -- for example, in the area of metaphysics³. It is no surprise, then that British idealism has been, and continues to be, of interest to Indian philosophers.

The two best known figures in what is often called British 'Absolute Idealism' are, arguably, F. H. Bradley and Bernard Bosanquet.⁴ They were contemporaries: Bradley was born in 1846 and Bosanquet two years later. Both came to Oxford in the late 1860s and were introduced to "German philosophy" by Benjamin Jowett, Edward Caird and T. H. Green. Both produced important studies in logic, ethics and metaphysics that challenged the influential empiricist and individualist tradition of their time. And, for a while, their work was at the center of philosophical debate both in Britain and in what was then its Empire.

But, as is well known, the idealist movement in Britain -- and, indeed, almost everywhere -- seems to come to an abrupt end in the early part of the 20th century. Bosanquet died in 1923 and Bradley in 1924 -- but, by that time, their influence in philosophical circles in Britain was already much less than it had been. Of the reasons often cited for the turn from idealism in Anglo-American philosophy, the most important was not (as one might think, given the views of Bertrand Russell, A. J. Ayer and Karl Popper) the putative

obscurity and non-falsifiable character of its metaphysics but, rather, problems with its analysis of the self or finite individual⁵. On this issue in particular, idealism was alleged to fly in the face of common sense and to lead to a view of the human person as unreal and of no distinctive value. Specifically, it was said to be inconsistent with respect for the individual, entailed a submission to the community or the state and, by extension, justified totalitarianism.

But is this in fact consistent with how the idealists understood the nature and value of the human individual? For that matter, does idealism even have a monolithic view of individuality? It is generally admitted that 'absolute idealism' is to be distinguished from the brand of idealism found in such authors as Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison, James Ward (1843-1925), J. M. E. McTaggart (1866-1925), W. R. Sorley (1855-1935), and Hastings Rashdall, who were considered to be 'personalists',⁶ but there would seem to be a consensus that there is no significant difference among the views of the 'Absolute Idealists' themselves. The arguments given for absolute idealism by Bosanquet and Bradley are held to be very much the same. In fact it has been claimed that, given the similarities in background, interests, and philosophical orientation, Bosanquet and Bradley "may almost be regarded as a single philosophical personality"⁷. And several commentators go further. Since much of Bosanquet's philosophical work appeared some time after corresponding analyses by Bradley,⁸ it has been argued that what Bosanquet has to say is unoriginal, or was little more than an attempt to show how experience confirmed Bradleyan idealism,⁹ so that Bosanquet is frequently regarded to be simply "a follower of Bradley"¹⁰. Not surprisingly, then, it is commonly held that the absolute idealists had a uniform view of the finite individual¹¹ -- and that it was this that led Anglo-American idealism as a whole into such disrepute.

The nature of Absolute Idealism and the relationship between the work of Bradley and Bosanquet are not, however, as straightforward as the preceding comments might lead one to believe. It is plausible to say that, for a time, Bosanquet considered Bradley's studies in metaphysics and ethics (and -- though to a much lesser extent -- in logic) to have been 'decisive' -- that they either convinced him or reflected conclusions to which he had himself already come. But there are also reasons to believe that Bosanquet does much more than merely repeat what Bradley had done before him and, hence, to reconsider the relation between absolute idealism and finite individuality.

In this paper, I wish to point out some important differences in result, if not in doctrine, in the accounts of Bradley and Bosanquet concerning the nature and value of the human individual. I begin with a brief summary of what I take to be Bradley's view of the finite individual or self. Next, I outline Bosanquet's account, and argue that, despite some similarities in vocabulary and general orientation, an attentive reading of his remarks reveals a number of points in which his view is quite unlike that of Bradley. I then turn to their respective accounts of punishment which, I suggest, bring out the differences between them concerning the value of the individual. Finally, I argue that, even where Bosanquet's views seem closest to those of Bradley -- in his late essay on 'finite individuality' -- if we take account of the context in which they are expressed, and if we are attentive to some matters of detail, we will see that there are still important differences between the two men. As a result, not only should this give one grounds to reconsider the standard view of Bosanquet's relation to Bradley, but one might find that there is good reason for preferring Bosanquet's approach. Moreover, this will challenge the common understanding of how 'absolute idealism' regarded 'finite individuality' -- a conclusion that will no doubt be of interest to students of the history of idealism and to those who would describe themselves as philosophical idealists.

I

Bradley's discussion of the individual self is one of the best-known parts of his philosophical work. In *Ethical Studies*, he argues that the individual is little, if anything, apart from its intellectual and moral membership in society and the community of values. Indeed, Bradley holds that "the 'individual' apart from the community is an abstraction. It is not anything real..." (ES 173).

The same conclusion is arrived at in his metaphysics. In *Appearance and Reality*¹², after having canvassed and rejected a number of theories concerning the nature of the self (AR 64-104), Bradley concludes that it is impossible to state what 'the self' is (AR 103). Our standard conceptions of 'self' presuppose the existence of relations, and relations, Bradley argues, are "indefensible" and "appearance and not truth" (AR 28).¹³ Thus, the human self is not real, but an appearance (AR 103). The general inability to recognise this is due, he believes, to there being a "great ambiguity" in the concept of 'self' (AR 103).

It does not follow, Bradley acknowledges, that belief in 'the self', must be abandoned. Although the self is neither "the genuine fact" (AR 64) nor a basic unit of reality it can still be said to 'exist' (AR 64).¹⁴ But what this self is¹⁵, and why we might continue to believe in it are issues that Bradley leaves quite unclear. Bradley's 'positive' views of personal identity or 'the soul' or 'the self', are not what many take 'the self' to be. He writes, for example, that to the extent that we separate ourselves from the 'not-self', we are 'mutilating experience' (AR 268). And, again, even, when we do speak of the existence of a 'self', its "duration in principle need be not more than momentary" (ETR 416). It is not surprising, then, that he concludes that "perhaps in all cases the self involves and only exists through an intellectual construction" (AR 464-465; see 467).

But if the self is not real, then what is? What is real must be something that is not contradictory. It must be consistent, harmonious and all-inclusive; Bradley calls this 'the Absolute'. It is "higher, in a sense, than our experience and knowledge" (AR 470) and cannot be grasped by discursive thought. Here, there is no plurality of finite things, and there are no distinctions. Indeed, it is in this Absolute that finite things are "transmuted and [lose] their individual natures" (AR 469; cf. AR 403).

While one might think that 'appearance' and 'reality' are exhaustive categories and mutually exclusive, Bradley sees no logical incompatibility between them; "[t]here is no reality at all anywhere except in appearance, and in our appearance we can discover the main nature of reality" (AR 487). Thus, the self is necessary for the manifestation of the Absolute and it is through individual selves that human beings come to have an awareness of it. Bradley also acknowledges that there are degrees of reality (AR 431; see also Ch. 24); the self is, then, perfect or real in some degree.¹⁶

Nevertheless, these comments are likely of little comfort to those who wish to retain a special status for the human individual, since Bradley's view is, first, that the 'self' is real *only* so far as it occupies a station in the universe and, second, that *all* degrees of reality -- both the self and the nonself -- "are all alike essential and necessary to the Absolute" (AR 404; see AR 431). Moreover, Bradley says that the self becomes more perfect as it contains within itself more of the "total Universe" (TE 656; see Bosanquet, PIV 250). Its reality,

then, is dependent on the degree to which it is 'transmuted' (AR 152) and 'self-consistent' (AR 487) - in other words, as it becomes less and less distinctive from other selves. Indeed, given Bradley's rejection of not only external, but internal relations¹⁷, it is difficult how to see that he can argue that distinctions among selves in the Absolute are able to be preserved. Thus, while he does say that each part is in the Absolute "unabridged" (AR 152), he acknowledges that "in coming together [all appearances] in varying degrees lose their distinctive natures" (AR 403; see AR 152).¹⁸ And even though Bradley says that the self is in the Absolute, he makes no attempt to explain -- and he professes that one cannot explain -- the relation of the self to the Absolute. "The immanence of the Absolute in finite centers, and of finite centers in the Absolute, I have always set down as inexplicable" (ETR 246; see also ETR 272- 273), and he holds that "[w]here humanity stands in the scale of being we do not know" (ETR 244)¹⁹. In light of these remarks, it is not surprising that Bradley seems to place little value on the finite 'self'. When he asks, in *Essays on Truth and Reality*. "how much do ["[t]he ideas and wishes of 'fellows such as I crawling between heaven and earth'"] count in the march or the drift of the Universe?" (ETR 243),²⁰ the answer he suggests is, 'Not much'. In the end, for Bradley the individual human person apparently has no special or distinctive value²¹ outside of it being one among an infinite number of degrees of reality.

In short, then, we look at Bradley's discussion of the 'self', we see that the self is not real, that -- even though it exists -- it is not at all clear *what* it is (or what it could be, given the relation of the self to the Absolute), that there is no explanation of why one might believe in the existence of the self (or, again, what such a belief might amount to or mean), that (as we will see below, given Bradley's tendency to pan-psychism) there seems to be little that is distinctive about the ascription of consciousness to the self), and that, in the end, there seems to be no special role or value for the self. Whatever 'function' the self has in the revelation of the real is one that it shares with all finite things.

II

One finds the theme of 'individuality' continually recurring throughout Bosanquet's work. It was the subject of his two volumes of Gifford Lectures, and the fundamental in his accounts of logic, morality and politics.²² And, at

first inspection, his views and those of Bradley seem much the same.

Consider, for example, what Bosanquet means by the term 'self'²³. Like Bradley, he rejects a "false particularisation" of the human self as a being distinct from every other being, which emphasises him in his "aspect of isolation" and "independently of his relation to the end" and to others (PTS 189). He also denies that finite selves could be "necessarily eternal or everlasting units" (LFI 87) or "differentiations of the absolute" (LFI 86; see PTS 166).

At times, even the language that Bosanquet employs to describe the nature and value of the finite self seems inspired by Bradley. He says that "the self as we know him in Space and Time..... is a figure deformed and diminished" (PIV 383) and "essentially imperfect and inconsistent what itself" (PIV 249). Again, in his contribution to a symposium entitled "Do finite individuals possess a substantive or an adjectival mode of being?",²⁴ Bosanquet writes that, "[f]or what appears as a passage in time, the Absolute has need to express itself through us as very subordinate units....; when its life demands or existence no longer, we yet blend with it as the pervading features or characters, which we were needed for a passing moment to emphasise...".²⁵ Finite individuality, as such, seems to be of little value. Often, when Bosanquet discusses the 'self', his focus tends to be on the importance of self-transcendence (VDI 25) and, he notes, that "we experience our self most completely just when we are least aware of its finite selfness" (PIV 250). Altogether, these comments seem to point to the human individual as having merely an "adjectival" mode of being and value.

But it is intriguing that, in the passage from *Life and Finite Individuality* just cited, Bosanquet refers to an essay²⁶ in which he seems to shy from this very conclusion. There, he explicitly challenges Bradley's remarks that "all or most of the perished millions who have covered this globe" have been irrelevant to "the main stream of civilization" (ES 343). Bosanquet reminds us of the value of the contribution of the 'anonymous' individual to the social good, and he repeats this view -- that individuals characterise the world "as permanent qualifications" (LFI 101) -- throughout his work.²⁷

Again, while Bradley allows that appearances are "indispensable" for the manifestation of the Absolute (AR 431; 404; 487- 488), Bosanquet goes much further. He portrays the self as having not merely an 'indispensable' function -- which, of course, for Bradley *all* degrees of reality have -- nor even

a 'relatively high' level in the evolutionary process (PIV 157-158), but as standing as "the climax and sum and substance of evolution" (PIV 158; cf. 338) and as having a unique function (see PIV 326; 337-338). Bosanquet argues not only that selves are necessary for the realization of the whole (PIV 287), but that the finite self has a central role. Its role is to convert 'externality' -- to 'bridge' externality and the Absolute (PIV 321, see also 193-194, 325-326, 337, 382). For example, Bosanquet writes that "[e]xternality is jointed to the absolute through conscious centres" (PIV 218), and that it is through the self that nature acquires its significance and value; self-consciousness has as its meaning "to give everything its character, to be the centre in which everything in its degree tells on the import of the whole" (PIV 337).²⁸ Moreover, the privileged manifestation of the Absolute is in the work of the human spirit--namely, social life, art and religion (cf. VDI 90-91; 378; PIV 270). Thus, not only is it that "the burden of the finite is inherently ... an instrument of the self-completion of the infinite,"²⁹ but "[n]ature, or externality, lives in the life of conscious beings. This characteristic [Bosanquet writes] is essential". (PIV 371).

The individual is thus conceived of as a "copula" (PIV 371; see PIV 288³⁰, 321-2, 326, 218; VDI 280 ff³¹) between nature and the Absolute.³² As G. T. Hobbs notes, "[f]inite minds have the dual nature of being at once a solution of the complexity which gave them rise, and also a means of further contributing to the ultimate unity, the Absolute Spirit, through the broader scope of unification which consciousness affords".³³

Bosanquet argues that the finite self is found in the Absolute, but insists it cannot be absorbed by it. He writes that :

we are to think of the individual as a world of experience, whose centre is given in the body and in the range of externality that comes by means of it, but whose limits depend on his power. He is a world that realizes, in a limited manner, the logic and spirit of the whole ... (PIV 287).

It is this feature of being 'a world' that allows us to see that the self is to be distinguished from other things. "A world ... is a system of members, such that every member being *ex hypothesi* distinct, nevertheless contributes to the unity so the whole *in virtue of the peculiarities which constitute its distinctness*" (PIV 37; emphasis mine). It is because it is 'a world', that each self retains its distinctiveness in the Absolute. In fact, the Absolute is described by Bosanquet as 'a world of worlds' (PIV 158).³⁴

And, again, he asserts that :

We, both our form -- I mean, our peculiarly qualified individual self-consciousness -- and our content -- I mean, our interests and experiences - are thus real and eternal in the ultimate being (VDI 282; cf. VDI 287).

Bosanquet's recognition of the distinctiveness and value of the 'self' in the world is also obvious in his attitude towards 'pan-psychism'. While Bosanquet, like Bradley, does allow that there are varying degrees of 'reality', he clearly resists what seems to be Bradley's tendency towards 'Pan-psychism'³⁵ -- that nature exists on the level of consciousness or that it is "made up of elements having minds" (PIV xxvi; PIV 362)³⁶. Admittedly, Bradley does not explicitly endorse pan-psychism.³⁷ He writes that the issue of the 'psychical' character of nature is one "which cannot be answered" (AR 239). But he does say that "[t]he physical world is an abstraction ... but which, if taken as standing in its own right, becomes at once self-contradictory" (AR 236)³⁸, and he writes that "we cannot call the least portion of Nature inorganic" (AR 240). Thus, if there is a physical world that is separate from that which is experienced by finite selves, and if "[i]t is better, on the whole, to conclude that no element of Reality falls outside the experience of finite centres" (AR 468), then it would seem to follow that the physical world must be able to 'experience' itself -- i.e. have some degree of consciousness. And this is consistent with Bradley's comment that "[t]he number of finite centres and their diversity is (we know) very great, and we may fairly suppose it to extend much beyond our knowledge" (AR 468). Moreover, since for Bradley, "reality is sentient experience" (AR 128; ["to be real ... must be to fall within sentience"]), as G. T. Hobbs argues, "the obvious conclusion would seem to be that ["what appears to us as the 'material world' is really only the appearance of sentient organisms not ourselves" and] that nature is simply an area of agreement among finite experiences".³⁹

Now Bosanquet would agree that inorganic elements of nature have to be mediated through finite sentience.⁴⁰ But he would insist that there is no reason to think that reality *is* experience and that elements of nature has the properties of 'mind'; pan-psychism, he holds, is at best a "gratuitous" hypothesis (PIV 366; see 363)⁴¹. To begin with, Bosanquet argues that there is nature of which

our experiences are perspective, just as one may speak of different people having "perspectives of ... (a) building from different points of view" (EL 18). Pan-psychism, however, "transforms the complementariness of mind and nature, on which ... their inseparability depends, by an analysis of one into the other such as wholly to destroy the speciality of function for which the one is needed by the other" (PIV 363). Moreover, Bosanquet says that "the work for which finite mind is necessary and valuable may ... be summed up as guidance ... and appreciation" (PIV 363-364) and that "it is only in the sphere of mind that Nature reveals, to begin with, anything at all, and *a fortiori*, that she reveals the possibilities of life and spirituality that are shut up within her" (PIV 367). To advocate pan-psychism ignores that "our relation to [the material incidents of life] is essential to finite being, and that if they are in addition subjective psychical centres their subjective quality is one which so far as realised would destroy their function and character for us" (PIV 363). Thus, to assert or to leave open the possibility of pan-psychism is to adopt a view of the role and value of the finite self in the relation between Nature and the Absolute that Bosanquet would simply reject.

In short, for Bosanquet, not only does nature have "a form of being independent of mind", but "its highest significance is revealed through mind".⁴² Pan-psychism not only ignores the "complementariness of mind and nature", but also excludes "finite spiritual beings" from a central role -- that is, that of mediator between Nature and the Absolute (PIV 361-362; 371; 382 ff.)⁴³. As noted above, Bosanquet insists that, while the Absolute manifests itself throughout nature, it does so essentially through 'subjective mind' (PIV 365),⁴⁴ and that "[f]inite selves ... reveal themselves the coupla, the living tension, by which the full experience affirms itself in and through externality" (PIV 382). To the extent that Bradley advocates or is open to pan-psychism, then, there is a clear difference between Bosanquet's view of the nature and value of the self and that of Bradley.

A further illustration of the difference between Bosanquet and Bradley on this point may be found in how each attempts to provide an adequate description of 'the self'. While Bradley's approach in *Appearance and Reality* is to 'reconstruct' the individual and show how various conceptions of the self lead to contradictions,⁴⁵ Bosanquet focuses instead on building the individual up-on the "transmuting or expanding power of common finite mind" (PIV 376).

For Bosanquet, the nature of a thing is inseparable from what it will become, and so he begins with the finite self -- which has a "nisus towards absolute unity and self-completion" (VDI 4) -- and moves on to its interconnectedness with other selves and with the environment. But this procedure does not lead, as Bradley suggests, to a confusion of the self with the non-self. It is, rather, a means by which one can express the nature of the individual more adequately.⁴⁶ Indeed, it is only because it is incomplete, Bosanquet suggests, that the individual self cannot be an absolute principle (PIV 310). Bosanquet's objection to the view that finite consciousness has some 'ultimate status', then, is not so much that it is contradictory (as in Bradley), but that it is unrealised.

Such a distinction between Bosanquet and Bradley is not insignificant, and while it may be tempting to hold that their approaches are complementary - i.e., that Bradley 'tears down' the standard conceptions of the self while Bosanquet's task is to produce a new analysis of the self -- such a view cannot be sustained. As much as their criticisms of the empiricist conceptions of the self agree, and while they concur that the Absolute is 'one' and is 'ultimate reality', there are significant differences that are present in their respective views on epistemology and logic, the relation of thought to the Absolute, on the metaphysics of feeling and, arguably, on the issue of the nature of internal relations differences that bear on their 'positive' views of the self.

For example, Bosanquet's focus on 'building up (and up to) the individual's is consistent with his epistemology and with the principle that "the true office of thought is to build up" (PIV 58). Thus, he notes that the discursive model of thought (and 'relational' understanding) are continuous with the development of concrete judgment (see PIV 58 ff) and are "the first step on the road to perfect knowledge of the Absolute."⁴⁷ (indeed, he suggests that this is nothing new, for he notes that Aristotle has long before recognised "the synthetic character by which thought builds up its world" (PIV 263).) According to Bosanquet, thought leads us to a comprehension of the Absolute. He says that :

we are bound to follow through as it obviously develops itself towards a higher vitality and a fuller perfection, in the certainty that ... it will point us to what lies beyond" (PIV 39)

-- and what it is that lies beyond is the concrete universal -- the Absolute. And

he adds that this process of "transmutation and rearrangement of particular experiences, and also to the contents of finite minds, by inclusion in a completer whole of experience, is a matter of everyday verification". (PIV 373). Bradley, however, views discursive thought as incapable of building up anything real, and holds that discursive judgement and concrete judgement are "opposed and discontinuous".⁴⁸ For example, he holds that argument in the form of a syllogism 'tortures' inference (PL 526), and analytic thought can never restore the unitary nature of the given. Thought can give only a false picture of the real, and Bradley insists that philosophy can never say how appearances fit into the Absolute (ETR 272-73). Thus, Bosanquet would see a constructive view of the self as more adequate and accurate, whereas Bradley would see it as no more intelligible than the views of the self that he attacked in *Appearance and Reality*.

There is another aspect of Bosanquet's logic that bears on the issue of the concept of the self. As we have just seen, according to Bosanquet, "our knowledge exists for us as a judgement, that is as an affirmation in which our present perception is amplified" (EL 32). But he adds that "the process of construction is always that of exhibiting a whole *in its parts*" (EL 58 [emphasis mine]). And this would suggest that as we build up the finite individual by seeing the various relations it has, these selves or 'parts' do not -- and cannot -- disappear.

Again, differences between Bosanquet and Bradley on whether one can 'build up' to a notion of the self can be seen by contrasting Bosanquet's focus on the positive role of thought and reason with Bradley's emphasis on feeling. For Bradley, what is real is what can be *felt as a unity*; it is not, as James Bradley notes, consistency.⁴⁹ Bosanquet's 'rationalist' view, on the other hand, is that something is more real as its relations with other things are more developed, and it is known to be more real as these relations are understood. A fully consistent being would not, on Bradley's view, thereby be 'real', and a self that is 'built up' and is consistent is not something that Bradley -- unlike Bosanquet -- would defend. And Bradley could not therefore embrace Bosanquet's view that "if I possessed myself entirely, I should be the Absolute" (LFI 85).

The important role played by 'feeling' in Bradley's work is in keeping with his denial of internal relations -- i.e., that internal relations "seek to hold

on to the initial felt fact of identity and difference, and they point to a higher consummation beyond themselves and beyond all relations” (ETR 239-240) -- but that they simply cannot succeed in doing so. Indeed, given that on Bradley’s view, the real can only be ‘felt’ “ultimate reality is supra-relational” (AR 238), and both external and internal relations are rejected (CE 642, ETR 239-240). As noted earlier, however, this would seem to have severe implications for the nature and value of the finite self. Although Bradley does suggest that finite centres continue to exist in the absolute, their status is quite unclear and it is not obvious how far he is committed to defending their ‘reality’. Recall, for example, Bradley’s comment that “[t]he immanence of the Absolute in finite centres, and of finite centres in the Absolute, I have always set down as inexplicable” (ETR 246).

Bosanquet, however, seems to be open to the view that the Absolute is, at least in principle, even if not in fact, intelligible, and that this is achieved through our knowledge of an object in its relations. And this suggests that Bosanquet may have held that internal relations are coherent and, even, that there are internal relations in the Absolute⁵⁰. For example, one of the models that Bosanquet uses in describing personal identity is that of a machine (cf. PIV xxiv; xxv-xxvi (summaries of lectures 4-5), 142 ff, 209 ff.)⁵¹. He writes that “[m]ind and individuality, so far as finite, find their fullest expression as aspects of very complex and precisely determined mechanical systems” (PIV 146). Now, just as in a machine the differences in the parts must remain, even though all contribute to the whole, so, in the concrete universal, selves’ must remain. But one must also note that it is in seeing these ‘parts’ in their multiple relations to the other parts of the ‘system’ that we understand both the parts *and* the whole in which they appear, for the connections among the parts in a system is that “the parts and their variations, though not similar, determine each other, as in any machine, or more completely in an organism or mind” (xxii). And again, given Bosanquet’s interest in preserving differentiation in the Absolute, the existence of (at least) internal relations seems to be required. Certainly some idealists (e.g. A. C. Ewing, G. F. Stout and J. M. E. McTaggart) insisted on there being internal relations and, even if Bosanquet is suspicious of the emphasis of these authors on the ‘ultimate’ status of finite individuals, allowing for internal relations would seem to be one way in which one could preserve difference in the Absolute.

Admittedly, Bosanquet never explicitly endorses the view that there are internal relations in the absolute, and his discussion of relations is an issue that would itself merit a lengthy study. Bosanquet clearly rejects external relations. Moreover, he acknowledges that we create terms and relations in the act of knowing and that, in the 'inference to the Absolute,' as data are brought together, their respective limits are removed (PIV 264, 267-268). It is also true that he says that all 'subjects *qua* 'things' are "provisional subjects" (SP 92)⁵². Again, one of Bosanquet's objections to linear inference (e.g. syllogistic) is that, in relations to the whole, the 'terms' acquire a new meaning and significance.⁵³ These considerations, then, might suggest that, for Bosanquet, such terms and relations are not real. But it does not follow that terms or subjects or relations are *not* to be found in the Absolute. Indeed, he suggests that there is an element of negativity and of contradictoriness that remains in the Absolute (PIV 232-233). For, if there is a differentiation of finite selves in the Absolute, there must, by definition, be some relation between those units. Even though Bosanquet refers to the importance of grasping a whole *as* whole, just as in aesthetic appreciation a grasp of the whole can be acquired through grasping the parts in their relation to one another, so an understanding of the Absolute is grasped through an understanding of *its* 'parts'. And it is instructive to note here that, unlike Bosanquet, Bradley did not see art as a model for the real.⁵⁴ Thus, even though, in an essay entitled "Science and Philosophy", Bosanquet defends Bradley's attack on relations from (what would seem to be) the arguments of Bertrand Russell (SP 30, 31, 32), from the examples that Bosanquet gives, the issue there seems to be focused on the reality of *external* relations. Therefore, while he does not directly address this issue, Bosanquet seems to be open to the existence of internal relations and this, again, would suggest an account of the Absolute as something that is a complex of relations and is intelligible, and wherein the finite self in some way continues to exist. But this is clearly not a view that Bradley could or would want to adopt.

Bosanquet's 'positive view' of the self, then is consistent with a number of other features of his philosophical work -- features with which Bradley clearly does not agree. In light of this, it seems implausible to view their respective accounts even as complementary.

What I have wished to show in this section, then, is that Bosanquet's account of the nature of the self is importantly distinct from that found in Bradley.

I have argued that, for Bosanquet, individuals are permanent qualifications in the Absolute and has an indispensable function -- serving as a copula between nature and the Absolute. (Indeed, it is because of the special role that he assigns to the self, that we can see why Bosanquet, unlike Bradley, is explicitly opposed to pan- psychism.) Moreover, we see important differences between Bosanquet and Bradley when we examine how Bosanquet describes the self. Bosanquet's 'constructive' approach is not to be taken as simply a 'complementary' view to that expressed by Bradley. In the first place, Bradley does not share Bosanquet's view that the real is that which is ultimately consistent. Moreover, we see a difference in their views on the role of thought-- specifically, in their attitudes to discursive judgement as leading to concrete judgement and the Absolute. Finally, it seems that Bosanquet is open to the existence of internal relations in the Absolute -- and that the Absolute is not 'super-relational'.

There are, then, several differences between Bradley and Bosanquet on the nature and value of the finite individual. These distinctions may, however, still seem rather subtle. It may be useful, then, to turn briefly to some of their respective views in social philosophy, and see whether these differences can be brought out more clearly.

III

Bosanquet's recognition of the importance of the finite individual is evident throughout his social philosophy, and is particularly obvious when we compare his discussion of punishment with that found in Bradley -- one of the few 'applied' issues which both treat at some length.

When one reads Bradley's comments on punishment in his *Ethical Studies* and Bosanquet's in his essay "On the Growing Repugnance to Punishment"⁵⁵, it seems that both are presenting more or less the same view. Indeed, given some of the remarks that Bosanquet makes in this essay, there is reason to believe that, here, Bradley's work directly influenced him, though Bosanquet clearly provides a more elaborate statement.

To begin with, consider the issue of who it is that is to be punished. Bosanquet and Bradley reject the notion that one, strictly speaking, punishes children or animals; more precisely, they may be "disciplined" or 'corrected'.

In both of these cases, the beings concerned are not (or are not fully) morally accountable and responsible and, thus, they cannot, strictly speaking, be 'guilty' and, hence, liable to punishment. What is missing, or is incomplete, in such cases is moral personality. Only a being with a moral personality can be punished (see CE 156; ES 31-31, n.2; SS 183-184).

Again, one sees a similarity in the arguments of Bradley and Bosanquet in these texts in that both apparently reject the utilitarian view of deterrence or reformation as constituting the primary aim of punishment.⁵⁶ Punishment is, in Bosanquet's account, retrospective and not "outward looking"; in Bradley's words, it is an end in itself (ES 30). Thus, as an alternative, both seem to adopt a retributivist view.

But how can one justify a retributivist theory? According to Bosanquet, punishment is "the 'negation' of a bad will by the reason of the social will for good" (SS 195). Acts set precedents and wrongful acts must be "annulled" and "publicly undone" (SS 191). But the mere annulment is often insufficient; there must be an additional 'act' so that the agent with the bad will "shall not fail to apprehend the intensity of the annulling act" (SS 193). And this seems not far from Bradley's "vulgar" view that, in doing wrong, "I have taken into my will, made a part of myself the assertion of not-right I *am* the realization and the standing assertion of wrong" (ES 27). Since this 'wrong' "calls and cries for obliteration" (ES 27), the role of punishment is to 'obliterate' the offence.

The fact that retribution is the basis of punishment does not exclude reference to other factors in determining how it is to be applied. Bradley, like Bosanquet, allows the modification of methods of "punishment according to the useful and the pleasant" (ES 27; see SS 195). Deterrence and reformation, then, are legitimate 'expansion', but if either comes to be the point or goal in punishing, the effect will be too weak or too strong (SS 195). Thus, in these texts, both appear to express a retributivist view; in *Ethical Studies*, Bradley writes that he is giving

the theoretical expression of the popular view, viz. that punishment is justice; that justice implies the giving what is due; that suppression of its existence, in one form or other, is due to guilt, and so to the guilty person. (ES 29)⁵⁷

The similarity between Bosanquet's views on punishment and those expressed by Bradley in *Ethical Studies*, suggests not only that both recognise the finite individual as having a significant value, but that there is an important relation between this and the justification of retributivism. To refuse the retributivist view--to suggest, for example, that criminals are sick, and that what is needed is not punishment but cure--is not to respect individuals as free and responsible beings. As Bosanquet notes, if one is not morally guilty, but sick, one cannot plead the claims of moral innocence--for one is not a moral being at all (SS 187; see CE 156).

At first inspection, then, one might conclude that the views of Bradley and Bosanquet are quite close. But while Bosanquet thought that retributivism was required by a principle of respect for the individual, it is not obvious that Bradley actually did. There is, in fact, some reason to believe that Bradley's remarks in *Ethical Studies* are misleading and do not represent his considered views, for his specific discussion of punishment in other work does not seem to reflect the general respect for, and a recognition of the value of, the 'finite individual'.

In "Some Remarks on Punishment",⁵⁸ published in 1894, but possibly written as early as 1878 or 1879, Bradley proposes that a form of Darwinism be employed in determining who to punish and how to do so.⁵⁹ It is this Darwinism that breaks "the connexion between punishment and guilt" (CE 153), and Bradley's argument here leads one to see his view as quite at odds with the retributivism found in *Ethical Studies*⁶⁰. Here, retributivism, like the "educational" and the deterrent view, is to be "made subordinate to another and higher law what we may call the principle of social surgery" (CE 152; see CE 164) -- that one can eliminate those who are no longer capable of contributing to society.

Bradley gives two main reasons for such a 'policy'. The first is his view of the moral end: The welfare of the community is the end and is the ultimate standard. And over its members the right of the moral organism is absolute. Its duty and its right is to dispose of these members as seems to it best. (CE 158).

The issue, then, is not simply one of whether a law has been broken or a wrong has been committed, but of the contribution of a person to a common good.

The second reason that Bradley gives for this policy and, thus, for abandoning retributivism, is that retribution is based on guilt, and it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine moral responsibility or to determine a standard for moral crime (CE 154). If action by the state required certainty in this respect, it could never act. Bradley says "[i]f you can acquire the right to punish only by proving moral crime, it seems hard to be sure that this right is really secured" (CE 154).

Admittedly, Bradley still allows that to punish the innocent would be unjust (CE 154, 155), but this does not mean that it is wrong (CE 155). The just is subordinate to 'the good' or 'the right'.

Clearly, then, Bradley has no time for the idea of the 'rights of the innocent'. (CE 158) Or for the "sacredness" of the individual.⁶¹ Nor is Bradley's view here idiosyncratic. Bradley's policy of 'social surgery' would seem to allow for involuntary sterilisation and eugenic procedures -- as 'corrective measures' imposed not merely against an individual, but against a class, be they 'criminal', 'the poor', or 'the feeble minded'. And, again, in an essay entitled "What is the Real Julius Caesar?", he writes that we are to "treat the individual as real so far as anywhere for any purpose his being is appreciable" (ETR 247). If, however, one's being is not "appreciable", it would seem that that individual would have no 'reality' and, hence, little or no value at all.

In fact, the "social" or "moral surgery" suggested by Bradley's 'Darwinism' - i.e., "that social improvement can come only by selection" (SS 182) - seems to be consistent with a view that would deny the value of the individual altogether (CE 161). And it is a view of the nature and value of the individual that reflects the account of the 'the self' that we have seen in Bradley's metaphysics.

Bosanquet's discussion of the nature and justification of punishment is quite different from this. As noted above, his own view is, broadly speaking, retributive. But he also explicitly rejects both the principle of "social surgery"⁶² and the apparently Bradleyan view which, he thinks, would confuse the "punishment" of an individual with "extinctive measures" against a 'class' (SS 182). Bosanquet argues that a policy of 'social surgery' misses the very point of punishment, which is tied to individual responsibility for actions.

Punishment is a "reaction of the general moral will, stimulated by an action of a personal bad will" (SS 198) -- i.e., something that reflects that there has been moral failure on the part of an individual. Moreover, a policy of 'social surgery' employed against 'the criminal class' would suggest that there was no reason to believe that criminality is tied to considerations of heredity or social class -- whereas, Bosanquet would argue, the poor, as a class, are no more susceptible to vice than the rich. Finally, such a policy ignores the value of the individual will. Thus, Bosanquet says that "The will or character which is the atmosphere of values and shares their quality is itself a value [and has] a value of its own" (SS 132) and that "we have an undeniable human value of a distinct and universal type, in which there cannot be a human creature who is not a partaker in some mode or degree" (SS 77).

Admittedly, while Bosanquet opposes "eugenic selection" as a method of dealing with criminality, he does not exclude it altogether.⁶³ The forced sterilisation of the "congenitally feeble-minded" was a common practice in England at that time, and Bosanquet has no *a priori* argument against it. But in those instances where he would allow such 'selection', the reason is that it is considered to be on a par with the control of disease -- something which Bosanquet is careful to distinguish from criminality (SS 18). As just noted, Bosanquet does not think that there is any evidence to say that criminality could be linked to heredity, but even if it were, the conclusion is not obviously 'extinction', but segregation, (SS 186).⁶⁴

In short, then, Bosanquet emphasises the importance of recognising the relation between punishment and the value of the human individual. Indeed, in *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, Bosanquet speaks of the criminal "as a human being, and presumably capable of a common good" who retains certain "revisionary rights" of humanity (PTS 206). (In fact, following Kant, Bosanquet suggests that the criminal has a "right to punishment".) One has, it would seem, an obligation to treat persons in certain ways - including punishing them - because of qualities they have as persons.

This concern for the human person in punishment is consistent with Bosanquet's understanding of the nature of politics. Rather than suggest that the value of finite individuals is determined simply by how they are instrumental to a social end, Bosanquet says that "[t]he aim of politics is to find and realise

the individual" (PTS liv) -- and it is clear from the context that he is referring to the individual human person.⁶⁵ In fact, in his political philosophy, Bosanquet proposes several limits on state action and says that, should the state impose too many constraints on human conduct, "moral and intellectual death" will set in (PTS 200). Now, if human individuals did not have a distinctive value -- that is, a value that corresponds to them having a *unique* relation to the Absolute (if not more) -- why should it make any difference if the state imposes restrictions on their activities?

What we see here with the example of punishment, then, is that for Bradley the individual does not count for much in light of the common good, and that, in general, he shows no interest in defending its value. Bosanquet, however, explicitly adopts quite a different view, arguing that the very nature of punishment requires recognising the finite individual as a being of some value, whose will must be respected and taken seriously, and that punishment is justified only because it has as its object the 'annulment' of an act of a being that has a bad will.

Such difference on the issue of punishment and Bosanquet's views on the 'aim' of politics bring out clearly what is, perhaps, obvious only on a close reading of Bosanquet's and Bradley's discussion of the self or finite individual -- that, while there are certainly important similarities between the two, their arguments and conclusions concerning the nature and value of the finite individual are far from identical.

IV

Still, it may be objected that we should not exaggerate the differences between these two views. Consider, for example, Bosanquet's account of consciousness; here, he speaks of the individual 'mind' as fundamentally passive and says that "[t]he world imposes its plan upon the incipient centre of life and mind" (VDI 95). Moreover, as I have noted above, Bosanquet speaks of 'selves' as "provisional subjects" and explicitly describes the "reality" of finite individuals as "adjectival" and not "substantive" -- and he claims that the goal of the development of the human spirit is not *our* personality, but *a* personality (VID 282). Again, when Bosanquet speaks of 'individuality', he identifies it, not with what is peculiar to an individual human person, but with the "content

of the self" (VDI 287) - i.e., those "interests and affections which carry us beyond our formal and exclusive self" (VDI 288), and which are present in "the great achievements of knowledge, of social and super-social morality, of the sense of beauty, and of religion" (PIV 378; see PIV 270). According to Bosanquet, "we care for what transcends us, more than for our self" (VDI 288), and it is *this* that is fundamentally valuable and important. And, yet again, Bosanquet writes that the "differences between different persons (is not) ... ultimate and irreducible" (VDI xx, referring to lecture 2), and that "[t]here is no rule as to how far 'persons' can overlap in their contents. Often a little change of quality in feeling, it seems, would all but bring them into one ... At their strongest they become confluent" (VDI xxi). Surely, if we take account of these comments, the differences between Bosanquet and Bradley seem to be very minute indeed.

But to understand what exactly Bosanquet means by such remarks, one must understand the context in which they are made.

To begin with, in much of this discussion of individuality and the Absolute, Bosanquet is responding to personalist idealism -- notably that of Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison.⁶⁶ One of Bosanquet's objectives is to reject Pringle-Pattison's view that the individual human being is an *ultimate* principle of reality and value.

Thus, when Bosanquet argues that the individual is adjectival and not substantial, he is challenging the view that the self is 'self-existent'⁶⁷ He still holds that 'individuals have "a relative independence"' (LFI 80), and he goes to some pains to insist -- as Bradley does not -- that while finite human beings are "adjectival" they are not "mere adjectives" (LFI 97). Bosanquet acknowledges that it is our nature to be a single self" (LFI 92) and that selfhood is not "a trival or unreal thing" (PIV 289) -- and being a single self is something that is based on each of us having "differences of vital feeling, depending as a rule on the belonging of different selves to different bodies" (VDI 47, cf. PIV 284). But, he says, if "I set up to be in myself a self-centred real, I become *ipso facto* in the main a false appearance" (LFI 93). It is Pringle-Pattison's conviction of our "self-completeness" and our independence as physical beings that blinds us "to the moral and spiritual structure that lies behind the visible scene" (LFI 90). This Bosanquet believes, is a central problem with the

personalist view. His criticism of Pringle-Pattison reminds us, then, that we must "make at least as much of co-existent as of continuous identity. Otherwise, we unnaturally narrow down the the basis of our self" (LFI 97).

The nature and value of the individual self cannot, Bosanquet insists, be determined independently of its relation to others. The "perfection of the finite self" (LFI 99) occurs through social activity -- "in that distinctive act or service" (PTS 170) to the social good. One's "individuality" and personal identity, therefore, depend on there being something greater than the finite self, and it is in this sense that finite individuality is "adjectival". As we have seen above, Bosanquet believes that this "inclusion in a completer[sic] whole of experience is a matter of everyday experience" (PIV 373; 374; see PIV 27) - and it is reflected not only in his politics and ethics (where he discusses the essentially social character of the individual and the relation of individual good to the common good), but even in his logic, where every item of knowledge reveals itself to be part of a larger system. It is for this reason that Bosanquet emphasises that 'seriality'- linear identity -- is not the most fundamental part of our experience, and that our 'self' is better identified with the 'content' of the self and 'what we care for' (VDI 288) than with "the identity with myself as a bodily being, externally described by name and terrestrial history" (VDI 287).

Nevertheless, while Bosanquet recognises that the consciousness of the finite individual is "passive" and, literally, a product of its environment (cf. VDI 95-96, cited above), he adds that "in proportion as that centre acquires a nature of its own, this nature determines what it can or will accept". (VDI 96; cf VDI 16017). This shows us some of the role of individual will in the nature of mind for, while consciousness may be passive, it is not purely passive. And even though Bosanquet acknowledges that a relation to others is essential to each person's very identity, he says that "[e]very separate mind [is] to be distinguished by uniqueness of function or service" within the community, to make "a contribution to the whole, the content of which could not be precisely repeated in any other individual" (VDI 49). Indeed, because of the individual's 'service to the whole', the whole *depends* on the human individual. Again, it may be true that one becomes more of a self in transcending oneself, but this is simply to say that, what we are at our best is more than what we are at our worst. But if one were completely 'perfected', one would, of course no longer be a 'self' (PIV 250).

Bosanquet's emphasis on lateral identity and on the importance of the content of the self must also be put into context. As Bosanquet notes in his attack on Bradley's defense of 'floating ideas' (in the first edition of PL, pp. 6-8), one cannot separate the content of ideas from their actual existence as psychic states.⁶⁸ 'Content' and 'non-linear identity' are not all that is important; Bosanquet writes that "you cannot value states of consciousness apart from individuals" (PIV 307). Finally, it is instructive to see why Bosanquet says that those "interests and affections which carry us beyond our formal and exclusive self" (VDI 288) and which characterise 'individuality' in its most complete sense are so significant. To say simply that they are standards of value for us is no answer, but merely moves the question back one step - for one may ask why, then, are *they* standards of value? To respond that they are the most coherent of human experiences gives us something more, but does not explain why such experiences *should* matter to us. We must add that these features are the logical product of the 'nisus to totality' - i.e. of the rational character - of *finite selves*. Just as the individual will is the basis of the 'real' or 'general' will, and the self the basis of the "transformed" self (PIV 383), so individual consciousness is in some way the *ground* of value. Thus, the necessity that there be something greater than finite selves and in which they find their fuller realisation does not, as Bosanquet portrays the relation between the self and the Absolute, 'annihilate' then or 'relativize' or minimise their value.

Bosanquet's answer to 'idealist personalism, 'then, is not to deny the existence or value of the finite self, but to emphasise the 'intentional' substantiality of the being of the finite self (cf. LFI 84, 98; see PIV 288). The finite self is therefore, not a "mere appearance" and, therefore, "may fairly be called substantial".

Such arguments - which suggest the importance of the finite human self - are, however, not found in Bradley and, as I have argued, seem to be inconsistent with Bradley's views. In fact, from his remarks in *Appearance and Reality* and *Essays on Truth and Reality*, it is clear that Bradley has some difficulty in saying what the self is and the issue of the value of the individual does not, in any event, seem to be of any great concern. Bradley writes, one will recall, that the question of personal identity is "insoluble" (see AR 69, cf.

AR 63; ETR 246), and he allows that 'given two people with any part of their content indiscernible we are bound ... to consider the same'" (AR 311⁶⁹).

In short, then, while certain comments by Bosanquet on the passivity of mind and the apparently adjectival character of the finite individual suggest a proximity to the ideas of Bradley, his remarks must be read in context. Bosanquet's language comes closest to Bradley's when he discusses the arguments of personalistic idealism -- i.e., when he wishes to emphasise lateral, rather than linear, identity. But we see that Bosanquet also emphasises the intentional substantiality of the self, that mind is active and 'determines' nature, and that the relation to the Absolute does not minimise or eliminate the importance of the self. Bosanquet's description of the self, moreover, differs from Bradley's in several ways. He focuses on the nature of the finite self and is concerned with showing how many of the average person's intuitions about the self are better explained by a non-individualistic metaphysic. His view of the self is also more constructive and 'forward-looking' than Bradley's, identifying those features of the world that enable selves to acquire a concrete or complete individuality. Furthermore, the self is not (as Bradley seems to insist) something that can only be felt or known intuitively. On Bosanquet's account, we know better what the self is when we understand, through reason, its relations in the world. Finally, Bosanquet is also quite explicit about the role (and, particularly, the importance) of the self in the Absolute. Indeed, at times there is even some suggestion that the self has a special degree of reality and, therefore, a unique value. In each of these cases, neither the arguments given, nor the positions defended, are to be found in Bradley.

V

What does the preceding discussion allow one to conclude concerning Absolute Idealism and finite individuality? It has been argued here that, even though Bosanquet shares certain insights with Bradley, their positions diverge concerning the status of the finite self.⁷⁰ Unlike Bradley, Bosanquet was concerned not to lose sight of the value of the human individual -- a

preoccupation reflected both in his philosophy (e.g., in his insistence on the moral philosophy of 'my station' over Bradley's 'ideal morality', in his frequent reference to the finite self as an essential element in the Absolute, and in his view of the Absolute as the realisation of, and not the extinction of, the self) and in his public service work in adult education and social work (e.g., with the London Ethical Society and the Charity Organisation Society).

There is no doubt that Bosanquet recognised Bradley's genius and importance. But his admiration was obviously influenced by the fact that what the latter was doing and the way in which he did it, reflected interests and an approach that had always been much the same as his own. It is not irrelevant here to recall that, while relations between them were cordial, the two were never friends. In attempting to discern the relation between their ideas, then, one must not exaggerate the comments that Bosanquet made concerning his debt to Bradley. And one must also not forget that Bosanquet, with rare exception, was more interested in establishing common ground between, or in 'reconciling', various philosophical positions, than in demonstrating the differences between them or in emphasising the uniqueness of his view. (This is particularly obvious in some of his very latest work, such as *The Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy*⁷¹; one might even view this as reflecting Bosanquet's general attitude towards the nature of reality itself -- that 'differences' were often less important than that which the positions had in common.) Thus, it should not be surprising that Bosanquet would not (and did not, apart from some early exchanges concerning logic) have any strong interest in focusing on differences between himself and Bradley.

If the reading that I have provided above is correct, then it is a mistake to see the views of Bradley and Bosanquet as fundamentally the same. But, more importantly perhaps, there are two further implications -- implications of particular interest for students of the history of philosophy and for those who might call themselves philosophical idealists: first, that there was not a monolithic view of the relation of the individual to the Absolute within 'Absolute Idealism' and, second, that one can hold to Absolute Idealism without abandoning a recognition of, and a respect for, the value of the finite individual.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Paper presented at the World Philodophers Meet - 71st session of the Indian Philosophical Congress, University of Pune, India, November 1996. I wish to thank the organisers, particularly Professor S. S. Barlingay, and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations for their support.
2. See Vishwanath Prasad Varma, *Studies in Hindu Political Thought and its Metaphysical Foundations*, 3rd ed., Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass, 1974, Frank Thakurdas, *The English Utilitarians and the Idealists*. Delhi : Vishal Publication, 1978, S. Ghosh, *The Influence of Western, Particularly English, Political Ideas on Indian Political Thought, with Special Reference to the Political Ideas of the Indian National Congress, 1885-1919*. Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1950. and B. S. Sharma, *The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi in Relation to the English Liberal Tradition*, Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1955.
3. See, for example, S. N. L. Shrivastava, *Śaṅkara and Bradley*, Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass, 1968, P. T. Raju, *Idealistic Thought in India*, Chandigarh : Panjab University Publication Bureau, 1961, A. C. Mukerji, *The Nature of Self*, Allahabad, 1938, and *Self, Thought and Reality*, Allahabad, 1933, N. K. Devaraja, *An Introduction to Śaṅkara's Theory of Knowledge*, Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass, 2nd ed., 1972, and S. Radhakrishnan and J. H. Muirhead, eds., *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, London : Allen and Unwin, 1936, 2nd. ed. 1952.
4. The following texts will be cited in the body of this essay. By Bosanquet : *The Essentials of Logic*, 1895 (henceforth abbreviated as EL) *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, 4th ed. 1923 (PTS), *Some Suggestions in Ethics*, 1918 (SS), *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, 1912 (PIV), *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, 1913 (VDI) and "Do Finite Individuals Possess a Substantive or an Adjectival Mode of Being? : A Symposium," in *Life and Finite Individuality* (ed. H. Wildon Carr), Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume 1 (London : Williams and Norgate, 1918), pp. 75-194 (LFI); by Bradley : *Ethical Studies* (second edition) 1927, (ES), *Appearance and Reality* (second edition, ninth impression (corrected), 1930) (AR), *Essays on Truth and Reality*, 1914 (ETR), *Collected Essays*, 1935 (CE), and *Principles of Logic*, 2d edition revised, 2 vols., 1928 (PL) [This edition of PL contains a number of "Terminal Essays" (TE)].

5. See, for example, objections raised by J. A. Hobson, and L. T. Hobhouse, See also Ralph Stedman, "Bosanquet's Doctrine of Self-Transcendence", *Mind* n.s. 40 (1931).
See Rudolf Metz, *Die Philosophischen Strömungen der Gegenwart in Grossbritannien* (Felix Meiner Verlag : Leipzig, 1935). Translated as *A Hundred Years of British Philosophy* (Tr. J. W. Harvey, T. E. Jessop, Henry Sturt; Ed. J. H. Muirhead), London : Allen and Unwin, 1938, p. 383.
7. According to J. S. MacKenzie, "Bradley and Bosanquet have almost to be regarded as one person ... Neither is readily intelligible without the other" (Review of *Ethical Studies*, 2nd edition, in *Mind* n.s. 37 (1928), pp. 235-236) Cited in Peter P. Nicholson, *The Political Philosophy of the British Idealists : Selected Studies*, Cambridge : 1990, p. 243, n. 25. See also Anthony Manser's comment that "[i]t has been suggested that there was, at the end of the nineteenth century, a great English philosopher named 'Bradley-Bosanquet'" in *Bradley's Logic*, Totowa, NJ : Barnes and Noble, 1983, p. 198.
8. Bradley's *Ethical Studies* was published in 1876, but it was not until 1899 that Bosanquet provided any systematic work on social philosophy (*The Philosophical Theory of the State*) and not until 1918 that he produced a book -- in fact, a series of nine essays - on ethics (*Some Suggestions in Ethics*). Bradley's *Appearance and Reality* (1893) predates Bosanquet's Gifford Lectures, *The Principle of Individuality and Value* and *The Value and Destiny of the Individual* by 20 years. [According to Francois Houang (*Le néo-Hégélianisme en angleterre* (Paris : Vrin, 1954)), the development of Bosanquet's philosophy corresponds directly to that of Bradley. For example, "it was the publication in 1893 of Bradley's *Appearance and Reality* that explains the transition in Bosanquet's work from logic to metaphysics" (*op. cit.*, p. 8; See also his *De l'humanisme à l'abolitisme* (Paris : Vrin, 1954), p. 9).] Finally, even though Bosanquet's essay "Logic as the Science of Knowledge" appeared in the same year as Bradley's *Principles of Logic* (1883), one of the primary tasks of his *Knowledge and Reality* (1885) and *Logic or the Morphology of Knowledge* (2 vols., 1888) seems to be to take up (and make more consistent) Bradley's work.
9. See Emile Bréhier, *Histoire de la philosophie*, Vol. III, (Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 1964) p. 917 : "Le mérite de B. Bosanquet est surtout de faire ressortir tout ce que l'expérience peut apporter de vérifications à un idéalisme tel que celui de Bradley".
10. See, e.g., Arthur Kenyon Rogers, *English and American Philosophy since 1800 : A Critical Survey* (New York : Mcmillan, 1923), p. 264.

11. For a dissenting view, see Jonathan Robinson, "Bradley and Bosanquet", *Idealistic Studies X* (1989), pp. 1-23. According to Robinson, "Bradley and Bosanquet disagreed so profoundly over such questions as the nature of reality and the relation of thought to feelings that they ought not to be looked on as representing some common doctrine" (*op. cit.*, p. 2). See also Rudolf Metz's discussion in Metz (1938), p. 346, Metz concludes that "[d]espite the considerable agreement between them ... Bosanquet's philosophy represents an independent re-creation, extension and application of Bradley's doctrine on the part of a genuine thinker who happened to be congenial with him and who scarcely fell below him in ability" (Metz (1938), p. 3346).
12. Book I, chs. 9 and 10, pp. 64 - 104.
13. Cf. "Relations" [in *Collected Essays*, pp. 626-676] p. 655, n. 5 : "a relation [is] a self - contradictory abstraction". Bradley says, as well that relations reflect a contradiction between what a thing is and what it is not - that the notion of 'relation' is "infected and contradicts itself" (AR 29).
14. His reason for allowing this is that he acknowledges "we have a self whenever within a finite centre there is an object. An object involves opposition, theoretical and practical, and thus opposition to a self, and it must so be felt" (ETR 416). in other words, as G. T. Hobbs says, "The self is an objectification of the felt limitation which occurs when an object has been distinguished within a finite centre" (See Grinsley T. Hobbs, *Personality and the Self in the Views of Francis Herbert Bradley and Bernard Bosanquet*, Ph.D. thesis in philosophy, Duke University, 1955, p. 259).
15. Despite Bradley's arguments for the existence of the self, the concept of 'self' in his work is still problematic. The self requires an object and, therefore, is negative; the felt subject, which Bradley says is 'positive' cannot, therefore, be that thing. In other words, the self is a 'feeling' that, once judged or thought, is an object and, therefore, is not the self. Moreover, while Bradley refers to "centres of feeling", "centres of immediate experience", and 'soul', these are not the same as a "self" (AR 464-465, n. 1; see also ETR 414-421). Finite centres, for example, include other 'persons', and we may have finite centres without any self (ETR 416). See Garrett L. Vander Veer, *Bradley's Metaphysics and the Self*, (New Haven : Yale University Press, (1970), p. 310.
16. See Bradley's essay "Uniqueness" in TE, pp. 647-658, at p. 657.
17. See his essay on "Relations" in CE, especially at p. 642.
18. Thus in AR Ch. 23, Bradley talks about numerical separateness of beings as

based not on them having distinct bodies, but on differences *in* bodies, based on them having different content, Self, to the extent that it is real, is identified by content (AR 311) rather than (to use a term employed by Bosanquet) 'linear identity'.

19. While it is true that Bradley writes that "each member [within the Universe, understood as a perfect system, is] individual and unique", he goes on to say that "the actual presence of such individuals can not by our observation or thought be verified in detail" (TE 656).
20. Cited in Andrew Vincent, "The individual in Hegelian Thought", *Idealistic Studies*, XII (1982), pp. 156-168, p. 160.
21. Bradley says that "we must once and for all abandon and reject any special prerogative for human beings" (ETR 244). See also ETR 348 and Houang, *Néo-hegelianisme*, p. 41.
22. In addition to the tests noted above, see also Bosanquet's *Psychology of the Moral Self* (1897).
23. In LFI, Bosanquet distinguishes between the self or soul and "the finite individual" (LFI 100), but such a distinction need not concern the reader here. This distinction is, in any case, quite different from that between the self and "Finite centres of feeling" that one finds in Bradley (AR 464-465).
24. In *Life and Finite Individuality*, *op. cit.*
25. LFI 102.
26. In his *Some Suggestions in Ethics*, chapter 4.
27. See, for example, PIV 37 : "A world or cosmos is a system of members, such that each member, being *ex hypothesi* distinct, nevertheless contributes to the unity of the whole in virtue of the peculiarities that constitute its distinctness."
28. G. T. Hobbs summarises this point by saying that the external world finds its highest significance as it enters into the lives and experiences of persons (see Hobbs, p. 36).
29. See "Contradiction and Reality", *Mind* n.s. 15 ((1906) : 1-12, p.10.
30. This seems to be suggested, as well, in Bosanquet's remark that "[e]very degree and every distinct centre or origin of individuality necessarily constitutes a different vision and interpretation of things, and through all these incompletenesses a totality of differences must emerge which, so far as we can grasp, could not be allowed in any other way" (PIV 288).

31. Here Bosanquet is discussing Green's view, outlined in the *Prolegomena to Ethics*, that as individuals, we are not extinguished in the absolute.
32. As I discuss at greater length below, this account of the finite self as mediator between nature and consciousness, and as having a particular importance, is possible because Bosanquet readily adopts the view that the more coherent or inclusive something is, the higher or more real it will be (see PIV 270). Bradley, however, does not "follow" Hegel (or, at least, the 19th century readings of Hegel) here.
33. Hobbs, p. 209.
34. See also Bosanquet's comment that "... the Absolute allows minor worlds, formally distinct to constitute its union with externality, which union is itself" (PIV 321, cf. VDI).
35. The openness of Bradley's 'absolute idealism' to the charge of "pan-psychism" or *panentheism* has been recently underscored by Timothy Sprigge, in "Absolute Idealism and the Environment", (paper presented at the conference on "Idealism in the Twentieth Century", organised by the British society for the History of Philosophy, September 5-7, 1994). See also Sprigge's "Are there intrinsic values in nature?" in *Applied Philosophy*, Ed. Brenda Almond, New York : Routledge, 1992.
36. Bosanquet also described this view as one that sees all of nature as "a society of spirits" (PIV 362) or as "subjective psychical centres" (PIV 363).
37. Bosanquet notes this as well. See his reference in PIV 362 to Bradley's essay on "Reality and Thought" *Mind* o.s. xiii (1888), p. 327, later republished as chapter 15 of AR.
38. See also AR Ch. 22 on nature, especially p. 250.
39. See Hobbs, pp 139 and 141.
40. See Bosanquet's comments noted above, e.g. PIV 326, 337, 371, 361, n. 1 and 319, versus Bradley's view at AR 242, 247-248.
41. Cf. EL 11 : "though [reality] is *in* our thought, [it] is not considered merely as our thought," and Bosanquet's letter to James Ward, cited in J. H. Muirhead, *Bernard Bosanquet and his Friends*, (London, 1935) p. 107.
42. Hobbs, p. 127, n 46.
43. Still, one may well wonder whether Bosanquet has any more of an argument than this against pan-psychism.

44. Thus, Bosanquet says that "[t]he finite self, then, *qua* finite, is the centre of awakening of a determinate world" (PIV 190; see 382). Andrew Vincent concludes from this that "[t]he finite mind is the vehicle of the whole. The universe reaches a pitch or comprehensiveness in human consciousness". (Vincent (1982). p. 159). Similarly, Francoeois Houang argues that, for Bosanquet, human spirit in its diverse mainfestations is the unique vehicle of the self-revelation of the Absolute. According to Houng, Bosanquet considers "les esprits humains comme les unques véhicules de l'auto-révélation de l'Absolu" (Houang, *Néo-hegelianisme*, p. 125). Even G. T. Hobbs, who argues that Bradley and Bosanquet "share one basic philosophical position" (iv) acknowledges that it is in Basanquet's treatment of the self that he is "more comprehensive and more forceful than Bradley" (iv).
45. See AR 101 and Richard Wollheim's discussion of "Bradley's reductionist account of the self" in *F. H. Bradley*, (Harmondsworth : Penguin Books, 1959), p. 137).
46. This procedure is also present in Bosanquet's description of the general will as a 'maximizastion' of the individual will, where the former is the latter 'writ large' - that is, in the light of its full relations with others. [Bosanquet also notes that 'interdependence' is one of the characteristics "of thought at its best" (PIV 59).]
47. Hobbs, p. 49.
48. Hobbs, p. 46; see AR 319-320 and Chs 15 and 16.
49. See James Bradley, "Relations, intelligibilité et non- contradiction dans la métaphysique du sentir de F. H. Bradley," *Archives de philosophe* 54 (1991) : 529-551; 55 (1992) : 77-91, pp. 81 and 83.
50. This point has also been suggested -- though not developed -- by Ram Murti Loomba, *Bradley and Bergson -- a comparative study*, with a foreword by Narendra Nath Sen Gupta, Lucknow : Upper India Pub. House, 1937. p. 128.
51. Cf. "The Reality of the general Will, "in *Aspects of the Social Problem*, Ed. Bernard Bosanquet, London ; Macmillan, 1895 : 319-332 at p. 322.
52. Cf. *Psychology of the Moral Self*, p. 57, where Bosanquet writes that the line between the subject and the environment is not always drawn at the same point.
53. See Hobbs, pp. 63-64.
54. See ETR, essay VI. I owe this point to James Bradley.
55. Ch. 9 in SS 181 -- 212; see also PTS 201 -- 217.

56. But see Davide Crossley's argument, referred to in note 60 below.
57. See also ES 30 : "punishment is the complement of criminal desert; is justifiable only so far as deserved".
58. In *Collected Essays*, pp. 149-164, reprinted from *The International Journal of Ethics*, IV, April 1894, 269 ff.
59. See Peter P. Nicholson, "Bradley as a Political Philosopher", in *The Philosophy of F. H. Bradley*, Ed. Anthony Manser and Guy Stock, Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1984, pp. 117-130, at p. 130, n. 11. Nicholson suggests that Bradley came later to retract this view, though the evidence he provides is rather slim (see p. 125).
60. David Crossley argues that, even in *Ethical Studies*, Bradley is proposing a utilitarian theory of punishment (see "Bradley's Utilitarian Theory of Punishment," *Ethics* 86 (1975-1976), pp. 200-213. I cannot pursue this issue here though, if he is correct, this only reinforces the claim that Bradley's view of the individual is importantly distinct from the one I have argued is to be found in Bosanquet.
61. Crossley, "Bradley's Utilitarian Theory", p. 212.
62. See Bradley, CE 164.
63. John Morrow has made much of this in "Liberalism and British Idealist Political Philosophy : A Reassessment", *History of Political Thought*, 5 (1984) : 91-108.
64. Interestingly, Bradley would seem to reject such a policy of imprisonment or confinement as well (cf. Bradley's views on the use of 'confinement' in punishment, in CE 161).
65. Admittedly, Bosanquet writes that the "self in the process of being made or moulded more and more passes beyond its factual being" (VDI 91), but he adds in a note on that same page that "[i]n a duly adjusted whole every element has value."
66. See his *Hegelianism and Personality* (1887), *Man's Place in the Cosmos* 1897; 2d ed. 1902), "Do finite Individuals possess a substantive or an adjectival mode of being?", in *Life and Finite Individuality*, Ed. H. Wildon Carr, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, supp. vol. I, 1918) : 103-126 and *The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy*, Oxford, 1917. Bosanquet discusses Pringle Pattison in his account of the Absolute and the individual in LFI and in Lecture VII of PIV.
67. See Rudoslav Tsanoff, "The Destiny of Self in Professor Bosanquet's Theory," *Philosophical Review*, 29 (1920), pp. 59-79, at p. 73.

68. See *Knowledge and Reality*, London : Kegan Paul and Trench, 1885. See also Hobbs, p. 41.
69. Cf. CE note C[on 'Identity] § iii, 533-538.
70. It has been argued elsewhere that there are other differences as well. See William Sweet, 'F. H. Bradley and Bernard Bosanquet', in *Philosophy after F. H. Bradley*, Ed. James Bradley, Bristol, U. K. : Thoemmes Press, 1996, pp. 31-56.
71. London, 1921. On this point, see Claudia Moser *Die Erkenntnis und Realitäts-problematik bei F. H. Bradley und B. Bosanquet*. Würzburg, 1989, chapter 1, and Mark Francis and Jhon Morrow, *A History of English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, London : Duckworth, 1994, p. 283.