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Introduction

"In Politics We Have an Art…"

> Since human beings are not merely political animals but also language-using
> animals, their behavior is shaped by their ideas. What they do and how they do it
> depends upon how they see themselves and their world, and this in turn depends
> upon the concepts through which they see.
>
> Hanna Pitkin

In December 2010, during a press conference, President Barack Obama made headlines declaring that "this country was founded on compromise." In July 2011, he noticed with surprise that "compromise has become a dirty word," despite the fact that "America, after all, has always been a grand experiment in compromise." In 2012, he was echoed, surprisingly for many, by Barbara Bush, during a March conference on First Ladies: "I hate the fact that people think compromise is a dirty word. It is not!" Their words were fiercely debated by pundits and in the blogosphere, yet from a scholarly perspective there was nothing extraordinary in his observation. In the English-speaking world at least, most politicians and theorists would agree that "politics is the art of compromise" and that the Americans are particularly good at it.[1]

In 1957, for example, Francis Biddle, Attorney General during World War II and primary American judge during the Nuremberg trials, wrote: "Of course, it is obvious to any American that our whole national life is built on compromise, and that the great institution, the American Constitution, from which we suck the strength of our public life, is in itself a series of compromises, great and

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[1] Despite prolonged efforts, I was unable to track down the original author of this widely used saying. The quote is sometimes mistakenly attributed to Bismarck, who is known for saying in effect that "politics is the art of possible." Also, John Morley claimed in his book *On Compromise* that "in politics we have an art…" yet failed to complete the quote. See further.

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small…."[2] Decades later, Peter B. Knupferstill agreed: "It has become a tru-
ism among political scientists, historians, and informal observers of American
political history that compromise is the hallmark of liberal polity." After briefly
reviewing the historians and political scientists who have "celebrated the fram-
ing and the substance of the American Constitution as a microcosm of American
political thought and process … [p]roceeding from an understanding of com-
promise based on pluralistic democratic theory," Knupfer goes on to assert:
"Federalists not only explained the Constitution's compromises as the product
of mutual affections that transcended the advancement of narrow interests,
but they also provided future generations of compromisers with a battery of
arguments with which to defend similar types of agreements."[3] In support of
his thesis, he cites among other Founders the private confession of Nicholas
Gilman that the new Constitution "was done by bargain and Compromise,"[4]
and Alexander Hamilton's public declaration before the New York ratifying
convention: "In our state legislatures, a compromise is frequently necessary
between the interests of counties; … the same must happen, in the general gov-
ernment, between states."[5]

Yet this American devotion to compromise as a central political method has
an earlier inspiration – the British. Lord Macaulay ("A life of action, if it is to
be useful, must be a life of compromise")[6] and Edmund Burke ("All govern-
ment, indeed every benefit and enjoyment, every virtue, and every prudent act,
is founded on compromise and barter")[7] have probably long been the most
quoted politicians on both sides of the Atlantic when it comes to justifying the
necessity of compromise in politics.

This apparent agreement remains, however, far from universal. In the United
States, some of the most vocal supporters of the Tea Party movement, for exam-
ple, brag openly about their unwillingness to compromise, while in continen-
tal European politics, 'compromise' was and still seems to remain, more often
than not, "a dirty word." Decisions that in the English-speaking world would

[2] Francis Biddle (1957), "Necessity of Compromise," in *Integrity and Compromise: Problems of Public and Private Conscience*, ed. R.M. MacIver (New York: Harper & Brothers), 1.

[3] Peter B. Knupfer (1991), "The Rhetoric of Conciliation: American Civic Culture and the Federalist Defense of Compromise," *Journal of the Early Republic* 11, no. 3: 315–317.

[4] Gilman to Joseph Gilman, Sept. 18, 1787, in Max Farrand, ed. (1937), *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787* (New Haven), III, 82.

[5] Remarks of Alexander Hamilton, New York Convention, June 25, 1788, in Jonathan Elliot, ed. (1888), *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution…* (Philadelphia), II, 318.

[6] Thomas Babington, Lord Macaulay (1833), "War of the Succession in Spain" in *Critical and Historical Essays Contributed to the Edinburgh Review,* 5th ed. (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans), vol. 2, p. 91.

[7] Edmund Burke (1999), "Speech of Edmund Burke, Esq., On Moving His Resolutions for Conciliation with the Colonies" in *Select Works of Edmund Burke*, A New Imprint of the Payne Edition, foreword and biographical note by Francis Canavan (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund), vol. 1, p. 223.

be proudly presented as successful compromises are in Europe repacked and reframed as something totally different.[8]

Obviously, then, 'compromise' is not just another word in the vocabulary of politics. It has been argued "that every political system can be classified … on the basis of its prevalent attitude toward compromise"[9] or that "democracy and compromise are somehow, perhaps intimately, related to one another."[10] Yet despite its purported centrality to politics the concept draws much less attention from political philosophers than other related ones, such as representation, toleration, election, and the like.[11] In more than a century, barely a dozen of books and articles have more or less seriously dealt with this concept, and they did so mostly from a normatively objective perspective, making the *theme* of political compromise one of the most neglected by political theorists.[12]

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[8] A recent exception would be the 'financial compact' between the EU states, presented by the Commission President, Jose Manuel Barosso, as an "attempt to compromise" at the European Summit held on December 8–9, 2011. However, even this exception can be seen in a new light, considering the connection between 'compromise,' 'contract,' and 'compact.' See further.

[9] Marvin Rintala (1969), "The Two Faces of Compromise," *Western Political Quarterly* 22, no. 2: 326.

[10] Arthur Kuflik (1979), "Morality and Compromise," in *Compromise in Ethics, Law, and Politics*, ed. J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (New York: New York University Press), 41.

[11] Terence Ball, James Farr, and Russel L. Hanson, eds. (1988), *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), ix.

[12] **Books:** John Morley (1906) [1886], *On Compromise* (London: Macmillan and Co.); T.V. Smith (1956), *The Ethics of Compromise and the Art of Containment* (Boston: Starr King Press); R.M. MacIver, ed. (1957), *Integrity and Compromise: Problems of Public and Private Conscience* (New York: Institute for Religious and Social Studies); J. Rolland Pennock and John W. Chapman, eds. (1979), *Compromise in Ethics, Law, and Politics* (New York: New York University Press); Barry Jay Seltser (1984), *The Principles and Practice of Political Compromise: A Case Study of the United State Senate,* vol. 12 (New York and Toronto: Edwin Mellen Press); Martin Benjamin (1990), *Splitting the Difference: Compromise and Integrity in Ethics and Politics* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas); Patrick J. Dobel (1990), *Compromise and Political Action* (Savage, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers); Richard Bellamy (1999), *Liberalism and Pluralism: Towards a Politics of Compromise* (London and New York: Routledge); Avishai Margalit (2009), *On Compromise and Rotten Compromises* (Princeton: Princeton University Press); Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson (2012), *The Spirit of Compromise: Why Governing Demands It and Campaigning Undermines It* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press). **Articles:** T.V. Smith (1942), "Compromise: Its Context and Limits," *Ethics: An International Journal of Social, Political, and Legal Philosophy* 53, no. 1; John H. Hallowell (1944), "Compromise as Political Ideal," *Ethics* 54, no. 3; Oliver Martin (1948), "Beyond Compromise," *Ethics* 58, no. 2; John Livingston (1956), "Liberalism, Conservatism, and the Role of Reason," *Western Political Quarterly* 9, no. 3: 641–657; Marvin Rintala (1969), "The Two Faces of Compromise," *Western Political Quarterly* 22, no. 2; Francis Edward Devine (1972), "Hobbes: The Theoretical Basis of Political Compromise," *Polity* 5, no. 1: 57–76; Frank R. Ankersmit (2002), "Representational Democracy: An Aesthetic Approach to Conflict and Compromise," *Common Knowledge* 8, no. 1: 24–46; Avishai Margalit (2005), "Indecent Compromise, Decent Peace," *Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, delivered at Stanford University, May 4–5, 2012; Chiara Lepora, "On Compromise and Being Compromised," *Journal of Political Philosophy* 20, no. 1: 1–22.

However, even within such a scarce literature, a compromise about the proper role of compromise in politics appears impossible. There are several explanations for this lack of agreement. First, the semantic field covered by the concept makes it difficult to manage. 'Bargain,' 'accommodation,' 'trade-off,' 'contract,' even 'consensus' but also 'sellout' are but a few of the accepted meanings of compromise. Second, what makes compromise such a 'boo–hurray' concept besides its built-in ambiguity is a difference of visions about what politics is or should be.[13] Evidently, once one embraces the economic picture of politics everything is potentially subject to compromise. If, on the contrary, one embraces a value-laden perspective nothing can ever be compromised.[14] Last but not least, concepts are difficult to fully grasp in the absence of their genealogy – an enterprise never undertaken so far in the case of compromise.

It is precisely this gap that I seek to address with the hope that in the process I might be able to clarify not only where this ambivalent attitude toward compromise comes from, but also its relationship with other key concepts, such as representation and self-representation. For, as I will try to demonstrate, the willingness or unwillingness to compromise in politics is related not only with particular understandings of political representation but with peculiar representations of the self as well. These overlooked connections, however unconscious, may help illuminate many of the political conundrums, old and new.

If, what, and when a politician is willing to compromise depends not only on her or his understanding of what political representation stands for, but also on her or his representation of the self. Furthermore, it depends on how her or his supporters understand what she or he is representing. The stake could not be higher. The dangers of an uncompromising stance in politics need no exemplifications, but neither does the unqualified embrace of compromise as the political method par excellence. The worrisome loss of trust of citizens in 'their' representatives might be a misstated problem whose roots are to be found in the split genealogy of compromise. The Occupy Wall Street movement and the Tea Party supporters might have more history to share that they would dare to admit.

1.1. THE OPPORTUNITY

Compromise is a word of Roman origin, designating a reciprocal promise (a co-promise) to solve a dispute by abiding by the decision of an impartial third party, a *compromissarius*. It was a verbal contract meant primarily to avoid the hassle of a formalized court of justice, and for this reason it was rather popular especially during the early Middle Ages. It later acquired a second, mostly forgotten, meaning as a method of election, mainly but not exclusively inside the Church. In both cases, the selected *compromissarius* served as a representative

[13] Margalit, "Indecent Compromise."
[14] Ibid., 195.

for the parties or the communities involved. These basic facts are rather well known, at least by specialists. However, the overlooked history of compromise also reveals a dazzling discrepancy between the usages of the word in England compared with continental Europe, notably France, starting with the sixteenth century and lasting all the way to the late eighteenth century. Despite the increased intellectual exchanges of that time, during that period virtually all French authors used 'compromise' in negative contexts with an astonishing consistency, while their English counterparts embraced it as a virtue in a display of consistency turned upside-down. The first British and French dictionaries from the seventeenth century confirm this discrepancy. Even today, after a long process of homogenization, these differences are still discernible, both across the English Channel and across the Atlantic, but at the beginning of the modern period such discrepancies were indeed striking.

Literally tens of British writers, from Heywood and Shakespeare to Swift and Burnet, used 'compromise' in a positive or at least a neutral context – and they did so with remarkable concordance. For them, 'to compromise' meant mainly to bargain, to give and take for the sake of reaching an agreement otherwise impossible. In other words, compromise remained the only alternative to open violence. At that time, even Christ was described as a compromiser because he was a peacemaker, and many authors talked openly about 'the virtues of compromise.' Furthermore, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, the classical sense of arbitration by an impartial third party had started to fade away, being replaced with the sense of mutual agreement between two parties, a contract, a covenant, or a voluntary association of a multitude. I suspect that this assimilation of compromise with contract and covenant explains why the British enthusiasm for compromise coincides with the explosion of contractarian language and the practice of covenant.

Across the Channel, on the contrary, by the second half of the sixteenth century Coquille, Montaigne, and Charron were already concerned about 'compromise' and 'compromising' – a concern shared by later writers as distant in time and style as Corneille, Descartes, and even Rousseau and Guizot. Author after author worried about compromising 'his conscience,' 'his virtue,' 'himself,' and so on. For Frenchmen, 'compromise' was (and has remained) a dangerous word, hence the later distinction between *compromis* (used mainly but not exclusively in a positive context) and *compromission* (marked exclusively by negative connotations).

For now, one can only make note of the obvious and look for an explanation: by the end of the sixteenth century the French had started to be increasingly *méfiants* about compromise, while their British counterparts, far for manifesting such worries, became increasingly enthusiastic about it. Why? How did it come about that the neutral Latin term *compromissum*, initially confined to a particular, delimited meaning, came to signify so many different things – a virtue, a bargain, a contract, a mutual adjustment of otherwise irreconcilable positions, a method of election, but also 'endangerment,' 'jeopardy'

or 'putting one's own reputation to hazard'?[15] If linguistic disagreements are also disagreements about our social world, one can hardly find a concept with a more contested meaning, and therefore one more able to shed light on otherwise less obvious disagreements.[16] More often than not, conceptual change signals important political changes when located in particular historical contexts.[17]

If so, such a salient discrepancy between commendable and condemnable compromise presents us not only with a challenge but with a rare opportunity as well. What we have to deal with is a case in which the split in the meaning of an ambiguous concept and the linguistic disagreements that followed can be relatively easily circumscribed (almost pinpointed) both in time (between the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth) and space: Britain and France.

A methodological clarification is in order. While I am focusing almost exclusively on the French–English differences in the usages of compromise, I also suspect – following Spanish, Italian, and German dictionaries and the general occurrences of compromise in these countries – that the French caution about compromise was typical for the rest of continental Europe as well. However, much more research in this direction is needed before reaching a definitive conclusion.[18]

1.2. THE CHALLENGES

Obviously, this is not an easy enterprise for several reasons. To begin with, a conceptual history of compromise presupposes exploring a remarkably virgin territory. As I will show in the next chapter, until the second half of the nineteenth century there was no substantive effort to seriously consider the ambiguity of compromise and/or its theoretical and practical usefulness for politics, let alone its history. There are therefore no previous bibliographical reference points to guide the enterprise. Second, unlike with other concepts, determining the nature and range of the criteria in virtue of which a word is used is further complicated precisely by its intrinsic commendable or condemnable connotations.[19] To call a particular action or state of affairs a "compromise" means more than to describe it: it also means praising or condemning it.

[15] See, e.g., *The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology* (1988), ed. Robert K. Barnhart.
[16] Quentin Skinner (1988), "Language and Political Change," in Ball, Farr, and Hanson, *Political Innovation*, 11.
[17] See James Farr (1988), "Understanding Conceptual Change Politically," in Ball, Farr, and Hanson, *Political Innovation*, 37.
[18] See the next chapter for further clarification on this English peculiarity.
[19] I am following here the three main requirements of conceptual history, as described by Quentin Skinner in "Language and Political Change."

Such an enterprise requires thus "the comparison of texts to contexts as well as of texts to other texts."[20] The methodological challenge, therefore, most of the time concerns the proper balance between the analysis of everyday language as disclosed in rather obscure or even nonpolitical writings and the more or less conscious usage of certain concepts by authors belonging to the 'canon' of political theory. Both are sides of the same coin. Any societal and political event "in its manifold connections is based on advanced communicative work and on the work of linguistic mediation."[21] If Wittgenstein is right in asserting that concepts are tools and "to understand a concept, it is necessary to know the full range of things that can be done with it,"[22] then a conceptual history should neglect neither everyday utterances of the concept nor its more elaborate usages.[23]

The multitude of labels for such an enterprise – *Begriffgeschichte,* history of ideas, intellectual history, philosophical history of ideas, conceptual history, and so on – indicate, I suspect, a bit of scholarly vanity at work. I find the label of 'conceptual genealogy' not only simple and accurate but also most likely to be met with wide approval from all parties involved in this kind of dispute.[24] I share with the *Begriffgeschichte* school the focus on both the continuities and the shift in the meaning of the concept of compromise, trying to contextualize them, being convinced that precisely because, as Koselleck put it, "social history

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[20] Cary J. Nederman (2009), *Lineages of European Political Thought: Explorations along the Medieval/Modern Divide from John of Salisbury to Hegel* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press), xxi.

[21] Reinhart Koselleck (2002), *The Practice of Conceptual History*, trans. Todd Samuel Presner et al., foreword by Hayden White (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press), 24.

[22] Melvin Richter (1995), *The History of Political and Social Concepts: A Critical Introduction* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press), 133.

[23] To discover the foundations of modern political thought, e.g., Quentin Skinner – emphatically a historian of ideologies (to be distinguished from one 'of ideas') – "tried not to concentrate … exclusively on the leading theorists, and ha[s] focused instead on the more general social and intellectual matrix out of which these works arose," helping thus "to illuminate some of the connections between political theory and practice." Quentin Skinner (1978), *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), x–xi. To properly analyze the meaning of representation, Hanna Pitkin too combined a careful analysis of "the way in which we are ordinarily using words when we are not philosophizing or wondering about their meaning" with "a study in the history of political thought, tracing the treatment of representation by major political theorists." And Pierre Rosanvallon – supporter of a philosophical history of the political – agrees that such history "cannot be limited to the analysis of and commentary of the great works, even though these can often justifiably be considered 'moments' crystallizing the questions that an era poses and the responses that it attempts to these questions." Pierre Rosanvallon (2006), "The Study of Politics in History," in *Democracy Past and Future*, ed. Samuel Moyn (New York: Columbia University Press), 46.

[24] I tend to favor the term 'genealogy' to 'history' for, following Foucault, 'genealogy' suggests a more accidental and less linear development than 'history.' For a similar argument, see J. Peter Euben (1988), "Corruption," in Ball, Farr, and Hanson, *Political Innovation*, 221. This being said, I will not shy from sometimes using the two terms indiscriminately. If more clarification will be required it will be made in due course.

and conceptual history stand in a reciprocal, historical tension that can never be canceled out," their relationship cannot be ignored.[25] Yet I also believe that "the achievements … of analogous Anglophone work on the philosophy and history of political languages are compatible with *Begriffgeschichte* … and indeed offer means for coping with some of its inadequacies."[26] As a matter of fact, it might very well be the case that "there is no right way to construct a conceptual history"[27] and "no recipes that can be mechanically applied."[28] The subject at hand and the structure of the argument impose, more or less, the choice between focusing on the "great texts," secondary sources, and historical context.

It is easy to see why, from a methodological perspective, this book makes no great claims to originality. It too combines contextual historical analysis of compromise in daily parlance and an almost quantitative survey of the usage of compromise in both French and English between the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, with an analysis of some well-known texts in the history of political thought. Obviously, by 'daily parlance' I understand here the ordinary use of compromise in texts that are focused neither on compromise nor necessarily on its political virtues or lack thereof. But the fact that in one particular context one finds repeatedly the same concept used with the same connotation, even unconsciously, should be enough to indicate that at the conscious level things are no different, both for the individual and for her or his audience. Thanks to the new digitalized libraries, I was able to peruse some hundreds of instances of 'compromise' used in texts during that period, both in English and in French, making use of the ones that I find emblematic not only in terms of common usage, but also in connection with my working hypothesis. While I am not claiming that I have covered every single such instance, I believe that I was able to gather sufficient evidence to prove a radical split in the understanding of compromise on either side of the Channel.

As far as the selection of philosophical texts is concerned, a somewhat different rationale applies. Since I am trying to demonstrate the connection between different usages of compromise and different understandings of self-representation and contractarianism, I choose to focus on the authors who directly addressed these issues from different perspectives. Even so, any selection of this kind will be partially subjective and any thorough treatment of these thinkers, whether Bodin, Hobbes, Hotmann, Locke, Burnet, or Jurieu, is beyond the scope of this enterprise. What I have tried to consider is the hypothesis that despite more obvious similarities and differences, a closer look shows the same divide that holds for compromise also holds on either side of the Channel on issues related to basic underlying assumptions about contractarianism and (self-) representation.

[25] Reinhart Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History*, 23.
[26] Melvin Richter, *The History of Political and Social Concepts*, 5.
[27] Ball, Farr, and Hanson, *Political Innovation*, ix.
[28] Pierre Rosanvallon, "The Study of Politics in History," 76.

Yet in the specific case of this conceptual genealogy, things are further complicated by the span of time required by such an endeavor – from medieval time to early modernity – a period about whose proper interpretation academic debates are still ongoing. On the one hand we have, roughly speaking, the partisans of the 'continuity thesis' (such as J.H. Burns, Brian Tierney, and Francis Oakley), for whom the importance of the unbroken connections between medieval times and early modernity cannot and ought not to be overlooked. On the other hand, we find the supporters of the 'rupture thesis' (among them J.G.A. Pocock, Constantin Fasolt, and Sverre Bagge), for whom the real focus should be on the departures of early modern thinking from the medieval frame of thought.[29] But, however challenging, the choice of the period, although partially subjective, is by no means arbitrary. As the structure of the argument determines the appropriate methodology, it also imposes, at least to a certain extent, the time limits.

The end of the sixteenth century marks the time when the first French negative connotations of compromise arose, but also the years when, as Allen observes, "the lines on which political thought proceeded in the two countries rapidly diverges"[30]; the beginning of the seventeenth century is the time when, in England, compromise came to signify a peaceful agreement that did not necessarily imply the presence of an impartial arbitrator, but also the time when cross-Channel political realities started to differ substantially; as a whole, the entire seventeenth century witnessed in France the raise of administrative centralization and political absolutism, but also in England the final victory of Parliament and the increasing popularity of the social contract theory in different versions; finally, the end of the period, that is, the beginning of the eighteenth century, marks a time when, thanks mainly to the popular translations of Barbeyrac and Burlamaqui, the French became accustomed with a theory of social contract based upon individual wills, but also the time when one can safely assume that a particular representation and self-representation of the French individual was already so deeply embedded in the collective imagination that it could hardly be affected (at least for a long time) by any new 'imports.'

Hopefully, by the conclusion of the book, both the supporters of the continuity between medieval and early modern times and the partisans of the 'rupture thesis' will have been in part vindicated.

1.3. COMPROMISE AND SELF-REPRESENTATION

The tip of the iceberg has a bad reputation. It is deceitful, we are told, since it fails to signal the huge mass of ice underneath the surface of the ocean. Only one-seventh to one-tenth of an iceberg's total mass is above water. Yet in

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[29] For a survey of the literature surrounding this dispute, see, e.g., Nederman, *Lineages of European Political Thought*, esp. the introduction and part 1.

[30] J.W. Allen (1957), *A History of Political Thought in Sixteenth Century* (London: Methuen), xv.

condemning the tip we tend to forget the most important thing: it might not
warn us about the true size or shape of the iceberg, but it does something else –
it signals its very existence. It reveals, so to speak, its own concealment. When
it comes to political philosophy, the ignored history of compromise might very
well be the top of an iceberg: in itself it might not seem much – just another tor-
tuous history among many others that in the past few decades have stirred the
interests of political philosophers and historians of ideas. Yet such a perception
is as deceitful and revealing as the tip of an iceberg, like which the conceptual
history of compromise signals much more – concealed differences in the under-
lying assumptions we make about individuals and their relationships with the
political sphere.

Thus, if not methodological requirements then common sense pushes the
research further back. Before even asking why differences in the usages of
compromise are there, one must clarify what the common significance was to
begin with. Furthermore, one has to move behind the objective consideration
of compromise into the subjective realm, regardless of how uncomfortable this
move might feel to the scientist. Considering how morally charged are both the
sympathy and the antipathy toward compromise, one cannot avoid the elusive
question of self-apprehension for the person facing the possibility of compro-
mise. One is willing or not to compromise depending on how one represents
oneself and what one thinks is at stake in the process of compromising.

So how did the medieval man apprehend himself and how was he appre-
hended by his fellows *before* the split in the meaning of the compromise took
place? How did he perceive himself before being afraid to compromise or, on
the contrary, before he came to embrace it as a virtue? The quest for this medi-
eval man reveals the now forgotten dialectic between *forum internum* and
forum externum, formalized already at the beginning of the twelfth century,
a dialectic that, despite today's oblivion, for more than a thousand years pro-
vided the foundation for individualism across the Western world. *Forum inter-
num* was the forum of conscience, authenticity, and freedom, subject to no one
and punishable by no one except God. *Forum externum*, on the other hand,
was the forum in which the individual identified himself and was identified
through belonging to one or several communities, or a combination thereof.
Only from this perspective was he liable to judgment and punishment by the
community.[31]

I claim therefore that, far from being just a small wheel in a huge mech-
anism turned by social forces beyond his control, medieval man was more
sophisticated than we moderns might care to admit and this sophistication was
reflected in his attitude toward compromise. As all the words that we associ-
ate today with individuality indicate, he was apprehended and apprehended

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[31] For more details, see Alin Fumurescu (2011), "Lost in Translation: Centripetal Individualism
and the Classical Concept of Descending Representation," *European Journal of Political Theory*
10, no. 2.