Cognitive and Affective Aspects of
Three Conceptions of Liberty

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Abstract: I unveil the visceral intuitions underlying each of three conceptions of liberty: the negative, the positive, and the republican. I borrow from recent developments in embodied cognition, especially discoveries about preverbal infant cognition, Lakoff and Johnson’s work on how metaphor emerges from bodily experience, and emotions research. I discover strong parallels between the three conceptions of liberty, different bodily experiences, the different metaphors used to discuss them, and different sets of emotions. Notably, republican liberty has to do with the shame of subordination, not the fear of interference. Finally, the bodily experiences and emotions underlying each metaphor are quite distinct, and count against reduction of negative and positive, or negative and republican liberty, to a single conception.
Introduction. What is the meaning of political liberty? Berlin’s influential “Two Concepts of Liberty” (2002/1958) identified two main families of political liberty, the negative and the positive. Skinner, and Pettit, argue for a third conception of liberty, the neoroman or republican.

- **Negative liberty**: no human agency interferes with the agent’s activity, freedom as noninterference.
- **Positive liberty**: realization of the agent’s true self, freedom as self-mastery.
- **Republican liberty**: the agent is not subject to the arbitrary will of another human agency, freedom as nondomination.

There are many fine philosophical arguments defending or criticizing each of these conceptions of liberty. There are further arguments that each is properly distinct, or that the three reduce to two conceptions or to one. Arguments must remain primary, but they often depend on pretheoretical intuitions. In this essay I seek to unveil those intuitions through examination of preverbal cognitions of liberty by human infants, of the bodily metaphors used in arguments about liberty, and the emotions associated with experiences of freedom and unfreedom.

Bernard Williams (2005, 76) is confident that, "there must be a core…perhaps some universal or widely spread human experience,” to which the various conceptions of liberty relate. I shall argue that the three conceptions are rooted in three different kinds of human experience. The leading metaphor used to discuss negative liberty is lack of obstacles to a body in motion, and the characteristic emotion in response to its breach is
anger. The leading metaphor used to discuss positive liberty is a central essential self expelling its contingent periphery, and the characteristic response to its breach is nausea, disgust, expulsion. The leading metaphor used to discuss republican liberty is of a master, by his mere presence, dominating a slave, and the characteristic response is shame. One novel contribution of the essay is that the republican conception has to do with freedom from shame, not freedom from fear.

It is useful to distinguish a few more meanings of liberty, even though some may untidily overlap with the negative, positive, republican, or each other. Sovereign liberty is the effective power one agent has to subject other agents to its will, even to deprive them of their liberties, what Nietzsche idolized as the will to power. Natural liberty is the right to subject others to one’s will, regardless of whether one has effective power to do so. Civil liberty is to do what one would will, except as prohibited by law. Democratic liberty is the equal right to participate in the authoring of laws, collectively exercising the sovereign power. Effective liberty is the actual capacity to exercise a given formal liberty. Usually, the agent is a human individual, especially with respect to civil liberty, but can be a body of humans, especially with respect to sovereignal liberty.

Infant Cognition Experiments: Liberty as Embodied Experience. The cognition and affect associated with each of the three conceptions of liberty may be strongly or weakly innate to some organisms. Positive liberty maintains organisimal boundaries: a sponge, or even a single-celled organism, repels or expels nonself. Negative liberty is convenient for motile organisms, which move from one possible place to another in pursuit of goals. Social animals are concerned with ranking and rules, the realm of republican liberty’s concerns. Whether or not innate in humans, liberty
concerns appear early in the course of human experience and development.

Infant psychologists investigate preverbal cognition. The methods they devise to do so are surprising and illuminating in themselves, as are infant responses to their experimental manipulations (Spelke, Phillips, and Woodward 1995). A common method is to portray on a two-dimensional display the motions of abstract things, typically, one or more circles. Infants tend to look longer at unexpected events than they do at expected events, thereby revealing to the researcher the infant’s expectation or implicit knowledge. It has been shown that infants expect a moving thing to maintain cohesion, that is, for it not to split into two things as it moves from left to right, and for two things not to join into one as they move from left to right. They seem to distinguish objects, which move only when moved by another thing, from agents, which are self-propelled. They expect a moving thing to follow one connected path. They expect an agent to follow the shortest path (Gergely and Csibra 2003). They expect one object in motion to move another if and only if they touch. They expect, however, that agents may detect and respond to things at a distance. Preverbal infants recognize events and causes. Additionally, infants as young as six months recognize containment relationships (Casasola, Cohen, and Chiarello 2003).

Premack and Premack’s (1995, 1997) laboratory investigations, involving infants about 52 weeks of age, provide support for hypotheses directly relevant to the understanding of liberty. They say that infants perceive moving objects as causal, and moving agents as intentional. Self-propelled agents move connectedly on an efficient path towards an intended thing or location and stop there. In their experiments, other agents can caress or hit. When one circle touches softly another, call it a caress. When
one circle slams hardly into another and rebounds, call it a hit. Other agents can also help or hinder. The Premacks showed infants an animation of two balls on the right side of a partial barrier (picture it as an enclosure containing a room on the right with two balls in it, a wall on its left side, and an opening in the middle of the wall leading into the room on the left). In one condition, the black ball goes up and towards the opening in the barrier, and the grey ball helps push it up and through. In another condition, the grey ball heads up and into the opening of the barrier, blocking from above the white ball’s attempt to go up and through the opening. Looking times indicate that infants recognize visually dissimilar *caress* and *help* as similar, presumably by value, and recognize visually similar *hinder* and *help* as different. Note that action at a distance is also possible for agents, who can console rather than caress, encourage rather than physically help, threaten rather than hit, and discourage rather than physically hinder. The ultimate inference is that the preverbal infant exhibits positive valence towards an agent who advances liberty and negative valence towards an agent who hinders liberty.

These experimental findings are not surprising, perhaps; but they are contrary to the orthodox view that human knowledge and action are based on propositional instructions written on to a blank slate, and read off of it, essentially depending on language and logic. More recently, theories of embodied cognition propose that modal simulations, bodily states, and situated action underlie cognition (e.g., Barsalou 2008). Lakoff and Johnson (1999) go beyond a typology of metaphor towards a full theory of embodied cognition.1 For this essay, I take no position on the nature of cognition, except

1 Strauss and Quinn (1997, 140-160) offer a more modest and defensible account of
for the humble view that it may in part be structured by bodily experiences, as revealed in part by the metaphors we use to explicate concepts. I do rely on Lakoff and Johnson’s explications of particular metaphors, which are often insightful (even if, as pioneering work, they are not based on proper samples).2 Metaphors of spatial relations are frequent in our conceptual systems, they say. We possess a container schema, which has the structure of an inside, a boundary, and an outside. This metaphor will inform our investigation of positive liberty. We are also able to move, and to track movement through space. Among other spatial schemata, we possess a source-path-goal schema, of motion from a source, along a path, to a goal. This metaphor will inform our investigation of negative liberty. Some primary metaphors are: Difficulties Are Burdens, Categories Are Containers, Time Is Motion, Relationships Are Enclosures, Control Is Up, Understanding is Grasping (50-56). For Relationships Are Enclosures, for example, the subjective experience is an interpersonal relationship, the sensorimotor experience is being in an enclosure, an example is “We’ve been in a close relationship for years, but it’s beginning to seem confining,” and the primary experience is living in the same enclosed physical space with the people you are most closely related to. For Control Is Up, the subjective judgment is being in control, the sensorimotor domain is vertical metaphor. Haser (2005) forcefully disputes Lakoff and Johnson’s theories.

2 Kovecses (2005) summarizes empirical testing of Lakoff and Johnson’s hypotheses, and considers in detail universality and variation of metaphors across cultures. Nothing in this essay depends on Lakoff’s (2006) contentious explanations of liberal and conservative thought. For references to metaphor in political science, see Beer and De Landtsheer (2004, 33, passim); in the history of political thought, see Musolff and Zinen (2009).
orientation, an example is, “Don’t worry! I’m on top of the situation,” and the primary experience is finding that it is easier to control another person or exert force on an object from above, where you have gravity working with you. The Control is Up metaphor will inform our investigation of republican liberty.

Multiple metaphors may explicate a single concept. Philosophical investigation sometimes attaches itself to one of those metaphors and works through its entailments as if it were the one true literal meaning of the concept, and rejects as wrong other metaphors commonly used to represent it. It is easy for a thinker to overlook hidden metaphorical entailments, and to shine a light on metaphor helps prevent missteps. Hobbes (1994/1651, 25, Ch. v[14]) dismisses the reasoning of the scholastics, in part for their use of metaphor. Yet Hobbes is one of the great masters of metaphor in the philosophical literature. Plainly, he is bewitched by the primary metaphor of bodies in motion through space, and its entailments force many of his conclusions. Careful philosophical investigations should lead rather than follow metaphor.

**Negative Liberty: Liberty As Noninterference.** Hobbes is the most authoritative source of the conception of freedom as noninterference. For Hobbes, all is bodies in motion. Bodies at rest remain at rest, unless moved by another body. Bodies in motion will remain in motion, unless hindered by another body. Mental events are the result of external motion entering the interior of the body, and of internal motions exiting the body by way of voluntary motion: “For what is the heart, but a spring; and the nerves, but so many strings; and the joints, but so many wheels, giving motion to the whole body, such as was intended by the artificer?” (Hobbes 1994/1651, 3,
The motion may be too small to detect, but it is there, for example, the internal motion of the appetite: “For the Schools find in mere appetite to go, or move, no actual motion at all: but because some motion they must acknowledge, they call it metaphorical motion; which is but an absurd speech; for though words may be called metaphorical; bodies, and motions cannot” (28, Ch. 6[2]).

Liberty is the absence of external impediments to motion, and “when the words free, and liberty, are applied to any thing but bodies, they are abused; for that which is not subject to motion, is not subject to impediment” (136, Ch. xxi[2])). Liberty applies to objects as much as to agents. “For whatever is so tied, or environed, as it cannot move, but within a certain space, which space is determined by the opposition of some external body, we say it hath not liberty to go further” (136, Ch. xxi[1]). This is so of imprisoned or chained living creatures, even of water contained by banks or vessels. If the impediment of motion is inside the thing we say it lacks power, not that it lacks liberty, as when a man is sick in bed or a stone sits.

Hobbes’ captivation by the metaphor of bodies in motion forces him to the bizarre conclusion that fear and liberty are consistent. That means, for example, that the successful threat of imprisonment does not reduce the threatened individual’s liberty, since following a successful threat there is no actual restraint of motion caused by an external obstacle. “For if we take liberty in the proper sense, for corporal liberty (that is to say, freedom from chains, and prison), it were very absurd for men to clamor as they do, for the liberty they so manifestly enjoy.” Hobbes’ problem seems to be that even if all were bodies in motion, for example, the utterance of a threat making a motion on the

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3 See Hobbes’ De Corpore, chs. 8 and 9 for more detail on motion of bodies.
air that moves on the eardrum, and so on, the motivating force of the threat is a counterfactual and thus is not any body in motion in the actual world. In contrast, infants recognize that agents can act at a distance.

Lakoff and Johnson (1999) identify many metaphors in our concepts of events and causes. The second most prominent is the Object Event-Structure Metaphor (195-198), in which attributes are possessions, changes are movements of possessions, causation is transfer of possessions, purposes are desired objects, and achieving a purpose is achieving a desired object. For example: one has one’s freedom; he lost his freedom; their freedom has been taken away.

The most prominent is the Source-Path-Destination Metaphor (179). It seems to drive thinking about liberty as noninterference, and deserves closer attention. The heart of it is the motion of a trajector in space. The metaphor maps the source domain of motion-in-space to the target domain of events.

- States Are Locations (interiors of bounded regions in space)
- Changes Are Movements (into or out of bounded regions)
- Causes Are Forces
- Causation is Forced Movement (from one location to another)
- Actions Are Self-Propelled Movements
- Purposes Are Destinations
- Means Are Paths (to destinations)
- Difficulties Are Impediments to Motion
- Freedom of Action Is The Lack of Impediments to Motion
- External Events Are Large, Moving Objects (that exert force)
Long-term, Purposeful Activities are Journeys

For example, here are some common metaphors of human action (adapted from 190-192): *We’re just starting out on this project. We were wandering aimlessly. We are moving ahead on it. We’re at a standstill. We’ve come a long way. We need to retrace our steps. We need to catch up. We’re getting nowhere with this. We’ve made it to where we wanted to go.* Freedom is sometimes conceptualized as eliminating obstacles to movement (188-190; Lakoff 2006, 29): *Workers of the world, throw off your chains! I don’t want anything to tie me down. I feel imprisoned in this job. I’m trapped in my marriage. Break out of your daily routine.* One does not want to be held down, or held back. Freedom is tearing down walls, opening doors, clearing fields, getting out of holes.

Freedom, Berlin says, entails “absence of obstructions on roads along which a man can decide to walk” (2002/1969, 32). Agents wanting such freedom would want the unity and energy to move through space (effective liberty), would want all possible ways to be open to all possible destinations, would want not to be weighed down with burdens, would want to avoid pitfalls and uphill struggles, would want not to be dragged or pushed around, and would not want to be blocked by any obstacle.

**Civil Liberty: Liberty as Territory.** No proponent of equal liberty would endorse the idea of natural liberty, except perhaps in the unhappy circumstances of the state of nature where there is no civil society. Civil liberty, we shall see, is not to move without hindrance in any direction, but is to be safe inside a particular area, a protected sphere. Locke (1988/1698, 305-306, Second Treatise, Section 57) is the classic reference for the move from a natural liberty to civil liberty.

that ill deserves the Name of Confinement which hedges us in only from Bogs and
Precipices…..*the end of law* is not to abolish or restrain, but to *preserve and enlarge Freedom*: for in all the states of created beings capable of laws, *where there is no Law, there is no Freedom*, For *Liberty* is to be free from restraint and violence from others; which cannot be, where there is no Law: But Freedom is not, as we are told, *A Liberty for every Man to do what he lists*: (For who could be free, when every other Man's Humour might domineer over him?) But a *Liberty* to dispose, and order as he lists, his Person, Actions, Possessions, and his whole Property, within the Allowance of those Laws under which he is, and therein not to be subject to the arbitrary Will of another, but freely follow his own.

Some say that Locke here advocates positive liberty (e.g., Berlin 2002/1957, 193), that he thinks the law forces each individual to the one true destination. That would be so if the hedges lined roads, and closed off all roads but one. But hedges that hedge “in” enclose fields, and only happen to line roads (the etymological root of “hedge” is enclosure, e.g., The Hague was once the count’s enclosure). They enclose fields to keep predators out and to keep us in and protected from danger beyond the hedge, the danger unmistakably stated by Locke to be the threat of domination of each by all others, not failure of the individual to follow the true path to the true destination. Note that the field of freedom is free from domination, connoting republican liberty. Locke (1988/1698, 305-306, Second Treatise, Section 137) says that those exiting the state of nature for civil society would never intend “to give to any one, or more, an *absolute Arbitrary power over* their Persons and Estates, and put a force into the Magistrate's hand to execute his unlimited Will.” In contrast, for Hobbes, law directs people along the right path to the right destination, “and keep them in such a motion, as not to hurt themselves by their own
impetuous desires, rashnesse, or indiscretion, as Hedges are set, not to stop Travellers, but to keep them in the way” (1994/1651, 229, Ch. xxx[21]).

Paley (1835, 94) said that, “Natural liberty is the right of common upon the waste; civil liberty is the safe, exclusive, unmolested enjoyment of a cultivated enclosure.” It was obvious to Marx (2007/1884, 27) that bourgeois liberty was the liberty of the bourgeoisie: “The limits within which each person can move without harming others is defined by the law, just as the boundary between two fields is defined by the fence.”

Hobbes (1994/1651, 136, Ch. xxi[2]) said that a free man is "he, that in those things, which by his strength and wit he is able to do, is not hindred to do what he has a will to.” Berlin’s (2002/1957, 169, emphasis added) definition of negative liberty paraphrases Hobbes’ (he footnotes Hobbes at 170): “If I am prevented by others from doing what I could otherwise do, I am to that degree unfree…” However, Berlin continues, quickly but quietly departing from Hobbes, “if this area is contracted by other men beyond a certain minimum, I can be described as coerced, or, it may be, enslaved” (169). “The wider the area of noninterference the wider my freedom” (170). “A certain minimum area of personal freedom which must on no account be violated; for if it is overstepped, the individual will find himself in an area too narrow for even that minimal development of his natural faculties which alone makes it possible to pursue, and even to conceive, the various ends which men hold….It follows that a frontier must be drawn between the area of private life and that of political authority” (171). Positive liberty as self-mastery is “not the ‘negative’ conception of a field without obstacles, a vacuum in which nothing obstructs me” (190). “Most modern liberals…wish the frontiers between
individuals or groups of men to be *drawn* solely with a view to preventing *collisions* between human purposes” (199). The essence of the notion of liberty is “the holding off of someone or something -- of others who *trespass in my field* or assert their authority over me” (204).

Is the territory of liberty one of noninterference, as Hobbes and Berlin would have it; or one of nondomination, as Locke and the new republicans would have it? We shall take up the question at the end of the essay.

**Positive Liberty: Liberty as Self-Mastery.** Berlin’s depiction of positive liberty blurs into one at least three distinct kinds: positive liberty as self-mastery, positive liberty as fair distribution of capacities among individuals, and positive liberty as democratic participation (see also Swift 2006, 55-68). This is important because the points he scores against positive liberty as self-mastery do not score against the other two kinds of positive liberty.

Positive liberty as self-mastery does not mean to be one’s own master, but to master one’s self, to realize one’s true essence. T.H. Green (2007/1882, 82) says that negative freedom means to be secured from compulsion, and thus to have the power to do what one wills or prefers, regardless of the nature of the will or preference, or of its object. Positive freedom, he says, depends wholly on the nature of the preference and the kind of object willed or preferred. Negative freedom is the absence of obstacle to *pursuit* of *any* end, and positive freedom as self-mastery is to *obtain* the *right* end. Conceptually, and historically, the proper distinction is not between positive and negative, however, but between “realist” (idealist or rationalist) conceptions of liberty which hold that only right action by some *real* self is free, and “empiricist” conceptions which hold that
unobstructed action by an *empirical* self is free (Nicholls 1962). The social liberals of the later 19\textsuperscript{th} century thought that liberty can be increased by public education, factory legislation, trade unionism, and what later came to be called the welfare state. Green was a social liberal in the realist camp. Berlin comments that he agrees with Green’s policies, but rejects his metaphysical doctrine of the two selves (Berlin 2002/1969, 41). Green’s idea that an action, protected or supported by the state, is free only insofar as it contributes to the common good of society was dubious in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century and is monstrous in the 21\textsuperscript{st}.

Social liberal Hobhouse (1964/1911, 76), in contrast, advocated both negative liberty and an empiricist positive liberty, an effective liberty to do what one would choose to do.

If we refrain from coercing a man for his own good, it is…because it cannot be furthered by coercion….Personality is not built up from without but grows from within, and the function of the outer order is not to create it, but to provide for it the most suitable conditions of growth.

Liberty depends not only on an absence of obstacles, but also on the presence of capacities. The greatest liberty requires that individuals’ capacities should be *fairly* distributed (whether egalitarian, prioritarian, or sufficientarian). Coercion should be minimized across state and society. For example, state noninterference with trade unions, or its interference with nominal freedom of contract in labor and consumer markets, can lessen the *private* coercion by the stronger of the weaker, and thereby increase liberty. Finally, I say that positive liberty as democratic participation is incompatible with positive liberty as self-mastery: under the realist conception, the state is obligated to
command its subjects to obtain the right ends, regardless of what the empirical selves of citizens would choose in competitive elections to limited terms of office in a modern democratic regime. Berlin’s confound of the three kinds permits him to casually toss totalitarianism into the same basket as social liberalism and modern democracy.

The Folk Theory of Essences is one metaphor of causation, according to Lakoff and Johnson: “Everything has an essence that inheres in it and that makes it the kind of thing it is. The essence of each thing is the cause of that thing’s natural behavior” (215). Or, I add, for an agent, it should be the cause. Additionally, they identify a Subject-Self Metaphor System. Generally, the Subject exists only in the present, is the experiencing consciousness, is the locus of reason, will, and judgment. In one subsystem, the Subject is also the locus of the person’s Essence, and the remainder of the person is Self or Selves, each metaphorically a person, an object, or a location. One instance of that subsystem is The Essential Self Metaphor, in which there is the Subject, With The Essence; Self 1, The Real Self (Fits The Essence), and Self 2, Not The Real Self (Doesn’t Fit The Essence), the “ancient and pervasive image of the two selves, the influence of which has been vast over language, thought, and conduct” (Berlin 2002/1969, 32).

Rousseau is the primary modern source of freedom as self-mastery, but for some reason Berlin targets Kant. In his Lectures on Ethics (1997/1784, 137-144, 27:360-

\[4\] A lecture series Berlin delivered in 1952 (published in 2006) contained many of the ideas and phrases later published in “Two Concepts of Liberty” (2002/1958). In the earlier lectures, Rousseau is the demon, followed by Fichte, and Kant is for the most part the saint.
Kant says that the power of the soul over all its faculties is autocracy. It is not sufficient that there be a legislative authority with power to direct oneself, there must also be an executive authority with power to force. “There is in man a certain rabble element which must be subject to control, and which a vigilant government must keep under regulation, and where there must even be force to compel this rabble under the rule in accordance with ordinance and regulation. This rabble in man comprises the actions of sensibility” (137, 27:360). In the kingdom of the essential ends of human nature, the autocrat dominates two inferior castes: first, the moral inclinations and feelings, and the remaining inclinations and feelings, second, the emotions and passions. The loyal subjects of the first caste give him the power to compel disloyal subjects of the first caste, and to attempt extermination of the second caste. The ease with which freedom as self-mastery became the rationale for “an authoritarian State obedient to the directives of an elite of Platonic guardians” is eloquently detailed by Berlin (199). A founding metaphor of liberty as self-mastery was autocracy, complete with leader, vanguard, masses, and internal enemy. When Kant’s innocent metaphor of individual self-mastery as autocracy is later mixed by the romantics with the metaphor of supraindividual entities as individual organisms, the autocracy metaphor becomes bloodily literal.

Hobbes defined negative liberty as the absence of external impediment. Is, then, positive liberty as self-mastery the absence of internal impediment? Berlin (2002/1957) says that the positive doctrine of liberation by reason considers ignorance an obstacle to be overcome by knowledge. Music or mathematics are initially foreign bodies (187), but after I grasp them I absorb them into my system, identifying them as parts of myself, and

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5 I owe the reference to these passages to Lakoff and Johnson 1999, 426-427.
what was once an obstacle to free activity becomes free activity (187). This applies “to
all other obstacles which present themselves as so many lumps of external stuff blocking
free self-development” (188). We are enslaved by institutions, beliefs, neuroses which
can be removed only by knowledge; imprisoned by evil spirits we have created, which
must be exorcised.” I assimilate the objects of reason into my substance (190).

Berlin is silent on the point, but we know that Kant was exquisitely attuned to
his inner bodily states. A friend of his said that, “perhaps no man who ever lived paid a
more exact attention to his body and everything that affected it” (Jachman, quoted in
Shell 1996, 264). Another colleague wrote that he “is the most careful observer of his
evacuations, and he ruminates often at the most inappropriate places, turning over this
subject so indelicately that one is often tempted to laugh in his face” (Mininger and Peck
2004, 209). The “philosophical problems Kant confronts manifest themselves in
fundamental metaphors of digestion, constipation, and expurgation” (211). Nietzsche
seems to have known this, and mocked Kant for it: “When … Kant says: ‘Two things
remain forever worthy of reverence [the starry heaven and the moral law],’ today we
should sooner say: ‘Digestion is more venerable’” (quoted in Weineck 2006). I do not
wish to join in Nietzsche’s “vulgar…physiologism” (36), but rather join Shell (298, 304)
in thinking that Kant’s peculiarities (as do Nietzsche’s) enable rather than constrain his
creative genius.

Charles Taylor, in his defense of positive liberty as self-mastery, says, “that for a
defense of positive liberty as self-mastery, says, “that for a
self-realisation view you have to be able…to follow your real will” (180), and that self-
realization can “fail for internal reasons” (181). If someone has some irrational fear that
prevents him from doing something important to him, he would want to get over it. “It is
clear that we experience this fear as an *obstacle* to be *overcome* (185). Similarly an *attachment* to comfort that prevents one from undertaking highly valued adventure, “it is quite understandable if I experience this attachment as an *obstacle*, and feel that I should be freer without it” (emphasis added, 185). “My irrational fear, my being quite distressed by discomfort, my spite -- these are all things which I can easily see myself *losing without any loss whatsoever to what I am*. That is why I see them as *obstacles* to my purposes…even though they are…*mine*” (186).

The most apt metaphor for negative liberty as noninterference is lack of obstacles to an agent’s motion along any path to any destination. The Source-Path-Destination Metaphor corresponds to our usual concepts of efficient causation. The most apt metaphor for self-mastery is of the agent as a Container with an essential and true Center and, as the radius increases, an ever more contingent and false Periphery. The agent as essential Center of Container corresponds to the concept of formal causation. Her essence makes her what she is, not what is contingent in her. For negative liberty an obstacle blocks the motion of an agent, for positive liberty as self-mastery an obstacle blocks the agent’s repulsion of nonself. Berlin opens and closes his discussion with reference to obstacles, but the intervening passages appeal almost entirely to entailments from the blend of Containment and Center-Periphery schemata. Unknown but worthy objects are grasped, absorbed, made a part of myself, assimilated into my substance. Known but unworthy objects peripherally inside myself are removed, even exorcised, by the central essence. The interior of the alimentary tract is at the periphery of the body, but it is where nutrients are taken in and waste is excreted. Taylor’s agent has, as part of his periphery, an irrational fear, an attachment to comfort, or a tendency to spite, that
could be lost without any loss to who the agent is. Unwanted possessions (or, as Nietzsche might put it, indigestions) are not obstacles to be overcome, however, but stuff to be rid of.

Self-mastery can be forced into the Source-Path-Destination Schema, but only by hacking it to fit: the agent is not free to move along any path to any destination, but only along the right path to the right destination. External obstacles could interfere with that right trajectory. The so-called internal obstacles are not properly obstacles, however, but deareths or burdens. Finally, applying the source-path-destination metaphor to self-mastery forces the metaphorical contradiction that there are obstacles which are not obstacles: any external or internal obstacles which block the agent from following a false path or pursuing a false destination cannot be obstacles, since they are directing her to the true path and destination.

MacCallum’s (1967) reduction of Berlin’s negative liberty and positive liberty to a single concept is influential. Any conception of political freedom fits within the same triadic relation, he argues. Freedom is always of an agent, of some sort; from something; to do, not do, become, or not become some other thing. MacCallum’s triad, however, is able to quaff any conception of liberty because, in its universality, it devours all of human action (each action possibly subject to a constraint of some kind). Even after MacCallum’s reduction, the many kinds of liberty tend to sort into what Berlin called the negative and the positive. The negative is usually about the individual human agent, the positive about an agency within or beyond the individual. The negative is more about doing, and the positive more about becoming. The more fatal objection comes from Taylor (178-180): positive liberty as self-mastery is not just the freedom to
become something, it is actually becoming the right something. This fourth element is omitted by MacCallum, and has no analog in his negative conception of liberty. I add another consideration. The preverbal intuitions of embodied experience, as revealed in the metaphors dominating discussions of these concepts, are quite different for liberty as noninterference and liberty as self-mastery. The former has to do with an agent in motion not being stopped by another agent, the latter with an agent which absorbs the worthy and repels or expels the unworthy. They can be forced together, but the attempt results in metaphorical bewilderment. My point supports Berlin’s (2002, 12) claim that the two are not different interpretations of a single concept, but two profoundly different attitudes.

**Republican Liberty: Liberty as Nondomination.** Skinner (1998) brought to light a republican conception of liberty as nondomination prevalent in early modern Europe, which had been somewhat obscured by utilitarianism in the 19th century and then was eclipsed by Berlin’s famous essay in the 20th. The republican thinkers asked what it means for a civil association, a city or a state, to be free. They compared the individual human, the *natural body*, to the *body politic* made up of its individual human members. How is each capable of possessing and forfeiting its liberty? In the medieval era most people were serfs or slaves, and over time more and more individuals gained their freedom. To be free was no longer to be a slave. The republican conception of liberty ultimately derived from the Roman legal tradition codified in the *Digest*, which always defined liberty in contrast to slavery. A slave is “someone who, contrary to nature, is made into the property of someone else” (39). The essence of slavery is not to be actually forced or threatened by force, but its essence is to be under the power of someone else (who may, but need not, exercise his power to force or threaten). The slave
is dependent on the will of the master, subject to his whim. The master has no obligation to advance the interests of the slave; whatever the slave might happen to enjoy is by the master’s mercy, not by right. The slave is not independent and able to act on his own will. The master-slave relationship is the source domain, mapped one to one to the target domain of the ruler-people relationship. In an unfree state the people are dependent on the will of the ruler, on his whim. The ruler has no obligation to advance the interests of the people; whatever the people might happen to enjoy is by the ruler’s mercy, not by right. The people are not independent and able to act on their own will. For a natural body to suffer loss of his liberty is to be made a slave, and for a body politic to suffer loss of its liberty is to be made a slave.

Says one of those republican thinkers, Sidney, “As liberty consists only in being subject to no man’s will, and nothing denotes a slave but dependence on the will of another; if there be no other law in a kingdom than the will of a prince, there is no such thing as liberty” (86). A body politic, like an individual body, can be rendered unfree if it is forced, threatened by force, or merely under the power of anyone other than itself.

In a free state, “the laws that govern it -- the rules that regulate its bodily movements -- must be enacted with the consent of all its citizens, the members of the body politic as a whole” (1998, 26). To the extent it is not, the body politic is moved by a will other than its own, and is unfree. The free state, according to Sidney, is “a compleat body, having all power over themselves in themselves” (28). Another metaphorical implication of the body politic, says Skinner, is that a free state should enable each individual citizen to exercise equal participation in the making of the laws (30). Its laws, writes Harrington, are “framed by every private man” to “protect the
liberty of every private man, which by that means comes to be the liberty of the
commonwealth” (67). If the body politic is dominated by an arbitrary will, then each
individual member of the body politic is dominated as well. An individual can only be
free in a free state.

Pettit adds that there can be also interference without domination: one might
allow interference in one’s actions on the condition that it tracks one’s avowed interests.
For the republican, although law interferes, the nonarbitrary rule of law creates the
freedom that citizens share: republican law is nondominating interference. The liberty of
the commonwealth consists in the empire of her laws, said Harrington (2007/1656, 92,
emphasis added) in response to Hobbes: “For to say that a Lucchese hath no more liberty
or immunity from the laws of Lucca than a Turk has from those of Constantinople, and to
say that the Lucchese hath no more liberty or immunity by the laws of Lucca than a Turk
hath by those of Constantinople, are pretty different speeches.” Following Pettit (2000,
39), one can speak of liberty from the laws of any state, but of liberty by the laws only of
a republic

**Republican Liberty as Embodied Experience.** Pettit’s (2008) latest iteration
of republican liberty is somewhat more abstract. He speaks of freedom as the absence of
alien control. Alien control with interference is simply the exercise of control by means
of interference. Alien control without interference happens when the controller
invigilates the choices of the controlled agent; the controller stands ready to interfere (or
not) should the controlled not follow some desired pattern, or should the controller
change its mind. He speaks as well of the “positionality” of alien control, and once again
we go back to Hobbes (quoted by Pettit 2008, 108): “because the power of one man
resisteth and hindereth the effects of the power of another: power simply is no more, but the excess of the power of one above that of another. For equal powers opposed, destroy one another.” The control of $A$ by $B$ can be countered by the control of $B$ by $A$. Equal reciprocal control cancels out such that both agents are free.

Premack and Premack (1995) offer intriguing hypotheses, arising from the same line of experiments, about infant cognition of power. Possession is indicated by comovement of things, at least one of which is an agent. Infants do not evaluate the caressing or hitting of objects, but if the object is possessed by an agent they do. One agent may control another agent, as in slavery (I add that an agent may comove at a distance with an agent). They say that older infants will notice which of two agents controls the other, which one is more powerful than the other. Which agent is the possessor is indicated indirectly by signs of power, such as size, and directly by the possessor’s ability to control movement of the possessed. An agent of greater power forces comovement on an agent of lesser power. In contrast, a group of agents of equal power freely comoves together, not touching but a short distance from one another. The hypothesis is supported by the finding that infants expect physically similar agents (say, either black or white in color) to form groups, and even more by the finding that infants accept as a group the comovement of differently colored agents, that is, comovement is more salient than physical similarity. The concept of group entails further expectations: its members will engage in like action, just as an individual is expected to act consistently; its members will act positively towards one another and males negatively towards nonmembers. The Premacks’ independent insights about infant cognition of power are parallel to Pettit’s reconstruction of republicanism. Forced comovement is
much like domination, and free comovement of equals is much like the liberty of the body politic.

The distinctive feature, and the sticking point, of the republican conception of liberty is the idea of domination without interference. The mere presence of arbitrary power, and not necessarily its exercise, limits liberty. What do the intuitions of embodied experience, as revealed by metaphor, tell us about unequal and equal power among agents? Lakoff and Johnson (1980) suggest that Control Is Up, and Lack Of Control Is Down, and that is the most common metaphor of domination used by the republican theorists reported by Skinner. In Roman law, a slave is not *sui iuris*, of his own laws, autonomous. The slave is *sub potestate*, that is, *under* the power of another. The slave is subject to the will of someone else (Skinner 2006, 403): to be subject originally meant to be *put under* something. For Livy, the liberty of a community is the ability to “*stand upright* by means of one’s own strength without *depending* on the will of anyone else” (Skinner 1998, 46). Milton said that a nation which lacks the power to remove its ruler fancies a ridiculous and painted freedom, fit for cozened *babies*. Without that power, “though *bearing high their heads*, they can in due esteem be thought *no better than slaves* and vassals born to the tenure and occupation of another inheriting Lord. Whose government, though not illegal, or intolerable *hangs over them* as a Lordly scourge” (75-76). To Harrington, the courtier, instead of being *upright*, is *cringing, servile*, and *base* (96).

The association of power with up is obvious enough to provide just one example: “Your Highness.” Schubert (2005) conducted a series of experiments to test the hypothesis that the abstract social concept of power includes spatial information about...
the vertical dimension. For example, in a priming experiment, subjects were shown pairs of words, such as master-servant, coach-athlete, captain-sailor, Russia-Chechnya, and were tasked with choosing the more powerful word. Half the time the more powerful word was presented on top of the screen, and half the time the less powerful word was on top. Subjects more quickly chose the powerful word when it was on top. Schubert, Waldzus, and Giessner (2009) also tested Power is Big in a priming experiment. A powerful name shown in a larger font size was recognized more quickly as powerful than when shown in a smaller font size. Fiske (2004, 94-103), summarizing multiple ethnographies, finds that power is represented as Above, Larger, In Front Of, Earlier In Time, More Numerous, and More Forceful. Local variations are intuitive and immediately apprehended by newcomers, he says. Power Is Up and Power is Big are each attested in many languages, and many use plurals to indicate deference or subordination. Anderson (2004) counted the frequency of metaphors of size, and of rank, per thousand words of text, in the transition from an authoritarian to an electoral regime in the former Soviet Union. Size metaphors were the Russian equivalents of big, large, wide, high, and great. Metaphors of rank were of officials as parents, as persons of superior intellect, and as setters of tasks for subordinates. Fifty political texts were selected from each of three periods, from 1966 to 1985, 1989, and 1991 to 1993. The frequency of metaphors of size was 11.5 in the Authoritarian period, 6.0 in the Transitional period, and 3.8 in the electoral period. The frequency of metaphors of rank was 6.8 in the Authoritarian period, 3.1 in the Transitional period, and 1.6 in the Electoral period.

Premack and Premack are supported in a more recent and different setup by
Hamlin, Wynn, and Bloom (2007), with relevance to the republican conception of liberty. Here infants, 6 and 10 months of age, saw a display of a climber (a circle with eyes) attempting to go up a hill, in one condition helped by a character (say, a triangle with eyes) pushing it up from below, and in another condition by a character (say, a square with eyes) hindering by pushing it down from above. Infants expect the climber later to approach helpers and avoid hinderers. Moreover, when presented with a physical choice between the helping object and the hindering object, the infants reached for the helper. The infants seem to be making social evaluations based on witnessing what a second agent did to a third agent (they exhibited no such evaluations when triangles pushed up and squares pushed down a non-self-propelled circle without eyes). Even though the square with eyes which had hindered from above the triangle with eyes was not actually threatening the infant, the infant wanted nothing to do with it. The dominating agent has watching eyes, and Pettit characterizes the dominator as an invigilator.

It would be possible to design infant cognition experiments to test in isolation responses not just to force, but to threat of force, and to mere dominating presence. The latter, however, would require habituating infants to the expectation that these now merely dominating high or big figures in prior circumstances sometimes forced low or small figures. This exercise suggests a small amendment to Pettit and Skinner. How do we know whether a power is arbitrary or nonarbitrary? I suggest either from the person or from her role. If I see a particular individual dominator arbitrarily threatening or forcing others, I may feel dominated by her even though the dominator never threatens or forces me. If I see that, generally, absolute monarchs arbitrarily threaten or force their subjects, I may feel dominated by my absolute monarch, even though my monarch has
never arbitrarily threatened or forced the subjects of his realm. And, there may well be political contests over whether a given role tends to the arbitrary or the nonarbitrary.

MacCallum tried to reduce negative liberty and positive liberty to the same concept. Kramer (2008) and Carter (2008) try to reduce noninterference and nondomination to the same concept. Their new concept of noninterference is Hobbesian in spirit, requiring the actual rather than the threatened blockage of a path. Their innovation is that paths may be conjunctive. Thus, when the brigand threatens “Your money or your life!”, and you hand over your money, a path is blocked, the conjunctive path of keeping both your money and your life. Liberty is measured by a ratio of the number of paths open divided by the number of paths open or blocked. Similarly, an arbitrary dominator closes off conjunctive paths, as estimated by the probability of his interference. Whereas before, I could do simply $X$ and not cringe, $Y$ and not be servile, or $Z$ and not be base; the dominator’s interference blocks those options and my liberty is thereby reduced. The problem I see with this construction is that any reciprocal relationship, even those consensual and valued by all, would reduce liberty, which does not accord with our usages and intuitions concerning the topic. For example, polite people would reduce my liberty because I know that if I were rude in response to their politeness they would withdraw their company, closing off paths. But surely domination by others reduces our liberty in an important way, and ordinary reciprocal politeness does not. For their part, Pettit and Skinner insist that the republican conception has to do with the mere presence of the arbitrary power, not the probability of its interference.

I propose that the difference between noninterference and nondomination is even deeper. We have seen that each of the three conceptions of liberty differs
metaphorically from the others. Now we shall see that each is associated with a distinct set of emotions.

**Emotions and the Three Conceptions.** Based on the emotions literature (for example, Lewis, Haviland-Jones, and Barrett 2005), and on simple inspection, I suggest the following relations between various emotions and various conceptions of liberty. I find the classification of basic emotions proposed by Ellis and Toronchuk (2005) the most useful in this application, understanding that theirs is one contestable scheme among many: Happiness/Liking, Seeking/Wanting, Disgust, Rage, Fear, Play, Lust, Need/Attachment, Care/Nurturance, and Rank. Negative liberty elicits emotions of seeking and wanting. Its violation elicits frustration, and anger (more precisely, in response to wrongs done by human agents, indignation) that works to remove the obstacle, and disappointment should anger fail. Infants express anger, for example in response to arm restraint or a barrier problem, and the emotion is quite distinct from their expressions of fear; anger energizes and organizes behavior, such as struggling and pushing, that removes the barrier (Lemirise and Dodge 2008). Positive liberty elicits emotions of happiness and liking. Its violation elicits nausea that works to repel, or disgust that works to expel or exterminate, and, if those fail, feelings of impurity, contamination, and poisoning result. Violation of republican liberty elicits shame, indignation that works to counter and equalize power, and depression should indignation fail.

Human shame resembles the appeasement displays of many primates. According to Fessler (2007),

People often lower their faces, avert their gaze, slump their shoulders, and adopt a
stooped posture and a bent-kneed gait. Conversely, pride, the opposite of shame, involves the inverse pattern of behavior, namely an elevated face, direct gaze, squared shoulders, erect posture, and stiff-legged gait….whereas animals adopt an expansive posture when threatening rivals so as to appear maximally intimidating, subordinate individuals employ a shrinking posture, making themselves appear small and non-threatening, in order to appease.

Fessler studied emotion words, in particular synonyms of shame, in California and Sumatra. He also asked Californians and Sumatrans to tell stories of shameful events. Out of 52 emotion terms, shame ranked 49th in California, but second in Sumatra. Synonyms of shame were few among the Californians, and many among the Sumatrans. Moreover, the Sumatran synonyms of shame broke into two clusters. The first was similar to the Californian experiences of shame, as further revealed by the shame stories, in which the emotion is elicited when there is failure to comply with an expected standard of behavior, others know of the failure, and the shamed knows that others know. The second, however, was entirely absent from Californian vocabulary and stories, and had to do with subordination, not with violation of a standard. In contrast, guilt was unmentioned by the Sumatrans, but was the main theme in about 20% of Californian stories and, although they are distinct emotions, guilt was confused with shame in about another 15%. About ten percent of Sumatran stories were about such subordinance-shame, the aversive experience of merely being in the presence of a social superior.

Fessler proposes that subordinance-shame is an older emotion oriented to relationships of rank, and that social-shame is a newer emotion evolved from subordinance-shame, oriented to cooperative relationships among prospective partners. The republican
conception’s contrast of shame in the mere presence of an arbitrary and superior power, versus shame for violating a common standard, is perfectly parallel to Fessler’s distinction.

Goodin and Jackson (2007) say that the republican conception is mistaken because it requires freedom from fear of any possible interference. The proper calculation is the magnitude of the interference times the probability of its occurrence, they suggest. However the relevant motivation of republican liberty is the shame of subordination, not the calculative fear of decision theory. The observation that domination characteristically causes shame, while interference characteristically causes anger, provides support to Pettit’s (2000, 22) claim that “domination and interference are intuitively different evils.”

Emotions researchers tout a threefold classification of the moral emotions of disapprobation: wrongs done against persons, against nature, and against community (adapted from Prinz 2007, 68-76). One feels anger in response to actual or threatened harm, and directs emotions of moral anger against a transgressor who wrongfully harms or threatens others. Transgressors feel guilt. One feels disgust (see Rozin, Haidt and McCauley 2008) for bad tastes, and for contaminants, and an increasingly moralized disgust in response to animalistic nature, to strangers and undesirables, and to alleged offenses against nature (Nussbaum 2004 argues that disgust is a bad guide for moral judgment). Transgressors eliciting moral disgust feel the pain of exclusion. Ostracism, being put out, differs from subordination, being put under. One feels contempt, either for social inferiors in hierarchical societies, or a normative contempt for those who defy community standards. Inferiors and transgressors feel shame. The three conceptions of
liberty involve emotions neatly parallel to this threefold typology: negative liberty goes with anger and guilt, positive liberty goes with disgust and exclusion, and republican liberty goes with contempt and shame.

**What is the Territory of Liberty?** Berlin’s negative conception of liberty references noninterference in its summation, but appeals to a territory in its details. “We assume the need of an area for free choice…an area bounded by frontiers” (Berlin 2002/1969, 30). The protected sphere is at first the arms of the mother and father, and then the room made safe to crawl, I suggest. Next, “The extent of a man’s negative liberty is, as it were, a function of what doors, and how many, are open to him; upon what prospects they open; and how open they are” (Berlin 2002/1969, 41). Beyond, we are hedged in from bogs and precipices, in unmolested enjoyment of a cultivated enclosure, in a field defined by fences. However, “one cannot understand political rights in terms of drawing boundaries around autonomous individuals” (Waldron 1999, 233).

For Berlin, liberty has to do only with private life, not with public authority (171). The alternative, he says, is “to knock down walls between men, bring everything into the open, make men live together without partitions, so that what one wants all want” (Berlin 2002/1962, 285). This is a false dichotomy. There is an alternative between each individual isolated in a fenced field and the herding of all into an unpartitioned enclosure. Call it the democratic republic. Each is secure in her household where her actions do no injury to others. Much of our lives together, however, have to do with conflict over coordination, that is, how to manage the necessarily public things, to continue the metaphor, the streets, the water, the sewers, the commerce, the walls of our free city, how it is to guarantee the security of each household from enemies and from itself, even how
it is to argue and haggle (2002/1958, 171) the boundaries of liberties, private and public. An autonomous individual should enjoy a right of exclusive control over her actions that do not harm others, but necessarily collective actions do not permit such a right, instead the best each can hope for is an equal right of control. Although right to exclusive control over an action is stronger than right to equal control over an action, equal control over collective action under a democracy is stronger than the complete lack of control one would suffer under an arbitrary power. An individual exercising autonomy and pursuing development would demand both the private and the public liberties and, contrary to Berlin, this need not fallaciously assume that the many liberties are magically in harmony.

Berlin (170-171) insists that classic liberals such as Locke, Mill, Constant, and Tocqueville meant by liberty only noninterference. The only concession he grants is that liberals might endorse political rights of participation in government as a means to the protection of personal liberties (211-212). Many liberal thinkers and movements, however, have sought the political liberties, as liberties, including some of his canonical authorities. Locke (1988/1698, 283, Second Treatise, Section 22) said that, “The liberty of man, in society, is to be under no other legislative power, but that established, by consent, in the commonwealth; nor under the dominion of any will, or restraint of any law, but what that legislative shall enact, according to the trust put in it.” Although he is no modern democrat, it is doubtful that Locke would agree with Berlin (202/1958, 176) that liberty can be compatible with autocracy. J.S. Mill (1978/1853), referring to Pericles’ funeral oration, wrote that in democratic Athens the liberty of the individual was not sacrificed to an imaginary good of the state (319); and commended Grote’s judgment
that, “Liberty of individual action...belongs more naturally to a democracy” (320).

Constant championed popular sovereignty, but also the limitation of any sovereignty in order that it not invade the personal, or modern, liberties. This limitation is supported in the first place by public opinion, and in the second place by the proper design of political institutions (1988/1815, 175-183). Moreover, he praises both the instrumental and the intrinsic value of what he called the ancient liberties of political participation (1988/1819, 326-327). Tocqueville (1998/1858) is stronger yet. For him, an equalizing society is endangered by withdrawal into a narrow individualism, and only (political) liberty can bring its citizens out of their isolation. “What person could be naturally base enough to prefer dependence on the caprice of one man, rather than follow laws which he himself has helped to make, if he thought his country had the virtues necessary to make good use of freedom?” (88, emphasis added).\[6\] In later commentary, Berlin (2002/1969, 39, 49) briefly conceded an intrinsic value to democratic self-government.

**Conclusion.** I have observed that the intuitions underlying three conceptions of liberty are distinct, by relating each of the metaphors to bodily experiences, by detailing the leading metaphors used to discuss each, and by identifying the set of emotions associated with each conception. My observations may shift the content and the weight of one or another argument concerning any single conception, but more definitively suggest that analytic reductions of the three conceptions to two conceptions or one do too much violence to intuitions rooted in different bodily experiences of freedom. The

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\[6\] I am grateful to XXXXX for introducing me to the subtleties of Tocqueville on liberty.
metaphorical investigation discloses that liberty as territory is frequent in discourse, but not in analysis. The emotional investigation discloses that republican liberty is motivated by emotions of rank rather than by emotions of goal pursuit.

As a child I gleefully exercised my freedom wandering our obstacle-free fields, alone and with friends, blissfully unaware that my seemingly unbounded freedom was in fact due to many background securities provided by human clearing and cultivation, by my dog, my family, our fences, our neighbors, our laws, and our governments. Noninterference tends to the natural body, the physical, a protected area, passively supplied. Nondominance tends to the body politic, the relational, an area of protection, actively created. Noninterference is at best indifferent to, at worst ignorant of, the adult question of who demarcates the boundaries of the liberties. Thus, the territory of liberty is one of nondomination, I conclude.
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