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THE ECONOMIC PSYCHOLOGY OF LEON LITWINSKI (1887–1969)

A program of cognitive research on possession and property *

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Leon Litwinski is one of the unknown pioneers of economic psychology. Following in the cognitive, utilitarian tradition of Descartes, Hobbes, Malebranche, Locke, and Bentham he argued that possession and the ownership of property are cognitively adaptive. They secure objects, affiliations, and ideas for their anticipated utility yet require only relaxed and intermittent attention so that cognitive resources might be directed elsewhere. Though not an empiricist himself, Litwinski's writings contain a program of cognitive research touching on six sub-topics: (1) quantitative modelling, (2) risk homeostasis, (3) anticipatory problem solving, (4) developmental progressions, (5) defendence motivations, and (6) ideas as possessions. Other topics Litwinski discussed are voluntary simplicity, stewardship, transition objects, gender differences in ownership, the neuropsychology of possession, and the psychology of belonging.

Psychology has a decidedly contemporary bias to it and generally does not place its work in context with past decades or past centuries. However, without an active memory of the past, it is impossible to progressively develop and refine explanatory theory. Our narrow focus

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on recent research is not only debasing but also demeaning: in agreeing to forget our predecessors' work, we agree that our own work should be forgotten. Individual contributions and entire careers that might be out of synchrony with contemporary fashion are unlikely to ever be appreciated, not in their own times and certainly not in retrospect. For these reasons, history needs to be an integral part of psychology, as is the usual practice in the natural sciences and in most other of the social sciences.

It is particularly important that economic psychology maintains and appreciates its heritage. Though seemingly new, economic psychology is essentially a modern empirical extension of the millennia old field of political economy. Leon Litwinski, as one of the modern pioneers of economic psychology, was well aware of this. He tried to bring the cognitive theories of Jeremy Bentham up-to-date and in competition with the dominant instinct theories of his day. The purpose of this paper is to update Litwinski's work and to speculate on its importance for current economic psychology.

Biography

Leon Litwinski (also Léon Litwinski, Léon de Litwinsky, Léon Litwinsky and Leon Litwiński) was born in 1887 in Warsaw. When he was only seventeen years old, political activism forced him into exile in Belgium (1964a). There at the University of Liège, Litwinski obtained degrees in commercial science in 1907 and 1908. He also studied as an external student at the London School of Economics in 1906 and at the University of Berlin in 1908. In 1911, the University of Liège awarded him a doctorate, with distinction, in commercial science. His thesis was on the economics of Belgian railways (1911a).

Leon Litwinski was truly pan-European. This is evident in his personal life, in his education, and his careers in international business, economic diplomacy, and social psychology. He was competent in English, French, German, Polish, Portuguese, and Russian. Early in his career he directed several international industrial and trading firms, and he negotiated the establishment of a Belgian trading bank in Moscow. Prior to World War I, he was also editor of the trading journals *l'Exportation belge* and *Moniteur maritime et commercial.* During the War, Litwinski was active in the promotion of post-war

Leon Litwinski 1887–1969.

Polish independence, serving as the Honorary Secretary of the Polish Information Committee in London (1916a,b, 1918a,b,c, 1919). After the War, he held various economic consultant posts with the Polish Foreign Ministry, eventually to become Economic Counsellor of the Polish Legation in Brussels, where he served from 1927 to 1939. Just prior to the outbreak of World War II, he became Poland's chargé d'affairs (Ministre Plenipotentiaire) in Brussels. He escaped to Portugal for the duration of the War. Litwinski was awarded numerous honours for his diplomatic services, including the Order of Poland, the Polish

Bronze Medal for Long Service, the Belgian Order of the Crown, and the Belgian Order of Leopold. Although Litwinski had worked and resided in various cities in Europe, including Warsaw, London, Berlin, Amsterdam, and Lisbon, his home was Brussels. He returned there in the later years of his life, and died there in September, 1969.

Litwinski's first career in international business and his second career in economic diplomacy are themselves admirable achievements. However, he also developed an independent, yet prolific, intellectual career largely centered on topics of social psychology. He took advantage of his exile in Portugal to affirm and reinvigorate this side of his life. He taught at several universities (1958), he organized academic conferences (1944a,b), and he published in such diverse areas as the psychology of property (1941b, 1942), the psychology of international relations (1941a, 1943a, 1945a,b,c), the psychology of emotions (1943b,c, 1944c,d, 1945d,e), and literature (1943d, 1944e). After his return to Belgium, he had memberships in the following psychological associations (in alphabetical order): *American Psychological Association, Association internationale de Caractérologie générale et appliquée, Association de Psychologie scientifique de Langue française, British Psychological Society, Royal Institute of Philosophy, Société belge de Gérontologie, Société belge de Philosophie,* and *Société belge de Psychologie*. His memberships in various philosophical societies are included here for good reason. Litwinski's psychological research was not data driven, but was more in the style of European continental psychology, more discursive and phenomenological, drawing on conceptual analyses, archetypal examples from literature, and integrative reviews.

Although Litwinski has over 100 titles in his lifetime bibliography, covering numerous topics, it is his writings on economic psychology that are of interest here (1913a, 1941b, 1942, 1947a,b, 1949, 1951a, 1952a,b, 1953a, 1956a, 1957, 1958). In the recent *Social Science Bibliography on Property, Ownership and Possession* (Rudmin et al. 1987), he stands out as one of the most prolific contributors to the psychology of property, and certainly none surpass the 45-year span of his work. Although Litwinski did not have training in psychology, did not use empirical methods, did not have an academic appointment, and did not have a body of graduate students to promote and continue his work, he should be considered one of the founding pioneers of economic psychology. His contributions come from a unique intellectual perspective

and are based on wide and expert practical experience. They should not be discounted or ignored only for reasons of historical circumstance.

Historical antecedents

Themes in the psychology of property can be traced rather continuously from Pythagoras in the sixth century B.C., to Plato and Aristotle in Classical Greece, to the Roman Stoics and early Christians, to Aquinas and the Scholastics, to the Renaissance, and forward to the present day (see Rudmin 1988a). In the seventeenth century, three psychological explanations of possession and property came to the fore: (1) instinct, (2) utility, and (3) cognition.

Inspired by Francis Bacon's call for a science of human behavior (Kennington 1963), Descartes developed a physiological psychology based on pneumatic mechanisms of animal spirits and on corresponding passions. Among other functions, these direct and effectuate acts of acquisition and possession. This is the beginning of the modern instinct theory of property (Beaglehole 1932; Drever 1917). Hobbes, who was influenced by both Bacon and Descartes (Moore 1899), subscribed to this type of mechanistic psychology but emphasized the self-centered passions which serve self-preservation and personal pleasure and which underlie possessiveness and private property (Drever 1917). This is the beginning of the utilitarian tradition of the psychology of property.

Influenced by both Descartes and Hobbes (Stumpf 1982), Locke based rightful possession on the concept of 'property' that he had developed for his psychology of perception (Milam 1967). Just as perceptual properties belong to an object because they are caused by powers in that object, so too do economic properties belong to the person whose active powers caused them to be appropriated from nature. Contemporary with Locke and also a follower of Descartes, Malebranche incorporated within his theory of possession both its physiologically driven nature and its utilitarian nature. However, he added several cognitive components. He frequently used the term 'instinct' to mean innate *knowledge* of what is good for the individual. Among the instincts for the good of the self, he included love of pleasure and love of superiority over others, which he claimed are the two fundamental motivations for possession and property (Drever 1917). Malebranche added a further cognitive component by describing

the physiological mechanisms of imagination and contagion of imagination, by means of which socially induced mental representations determine which objects are valued for possession (Drever 1917). Locke and Malebranche together mark the beginning of modern cognitive theories of property.

Thus, by the end of the seventeenth century, psychological theories of property based on instinct, on utility, and on cognition had been prominently articulated. During the following centuries, all three were to be further developed, at first complementing one another, later rivalling one another. For example, Hutcheson argued that desire for property is not a primary instinct, but arises secondarily through the association of ideas (Drever 1917). Hume advocated utilitarian theory, and even enhanced it with a sympathetic mechanism by which people experience pleasure when they think of others' pleasures (Stumpf 1982). More importantly, Hume argued that it is cognitive associative processes that give property its cognitive utility. We need the cognitive security and comfort of a stable and predictable local environment; hence, we need private property:

> 'Such is the effect of custom that it not only reconciles us to anything that we have long enjoyed, but even gives us an affection for it, makes us prefer it to other objects which may be more valuable, but are less well known to us. What has long lain under our eye and has often been employed to our advantage, that we are always most unwilling to part with; but can easily live without possessions which we never have enjoyed and are not accustomed to. It is evident, therefore, that men would easily acquiesce in this expedient that everyone continue to enjoy what he is at the present possessed of' (Hume [1739] 1962: 71)

Dugald Stewart also considered utility to be cognitive and argued that Hume's psychology of 'long possession' better explained the general acceptance of distributive injustice than did Locke's psychology of 'first possession':

> '... all the inequalities of fortune are sanctioned by mere prescription; and long possession is conceived to found a right of property as complete as what, by the law of nature, an individual has in the fruits of his own industry.' (Stewart quoted in Schlatter 1951: 173)

At the close of the eighteenth century, the heir to utilitarian theory and its strongest and now most renowned proponent was Jeremy Bentham. He wanted to be 'the Newton of Legislation', to base social order and civil law on scientific, psychological first-principles (Everett 1966). To do this he developed a modern theory of motivation (Ben-

tham [1815] 1969; McReynolds, 1968a,b). In essence, Bentham's utility theory states that people are motivated to seek pleasure and to avoid pain, both broadly defined, and that morality is determined by the aggregate changes in pleasure and pain that follow an act (Mack 1962). But pleasures are of two kinds: original pleasures, based on sensation, and derivative pleasures, based on memory or imagination. These latter are also called pleasures of expectation (Bentham ([1815] 1969). For Bentham, property is motivated by derivative pleasure: 'Property is nothing but a basis of expectation' (Bentham 1950: 111). Bentham argued that people take pleasure in planning, anticipating, and controlling their small areas of experience and that this pleasure explains and justifies private property (Mack 1962). Based on the cognitive representation and manipulation of the future, present property secures future utility.

Unfortunately, however, overwhelming attention was given to Bentham's motivational psychology to the neglect of his cognitive psychology. Utilitarian theory moved away from cognition towards sensation and towards behaviorist reinforcement theories in which sensations, or memories of sensations, regulate present actions. The cognitive, prospective aspects of property waned in the nineteenth century, particularly in the mainstream tradition of utilitarian theory under James Mill, John Stuart Mill, and Alexander Bain. In 1880, Bain wrote:

> 'If I could be satisfied that the strong feelings connected with Property and with Liberty are in any degree instinctive, I should have to view them as products of evolution. I am not, however, prepared to affirm that the regard to possessions and the desire for freedom of movements, may not grow out of the early and continuous sense of the value of these in promoting our immediate gratifications, and in warding off pressing discomforts.' (Bain 1880: 67)

William James (1890), one of the advocates of instinct theory, repeatedly attacked the contemporary utilitarian theory of property:

> 'The associationist psychology denies that there is any blind primitive instinct to appropriate, and would explain all acquisitiveness, in the first instance, as a desire to secure the "pleasures" which the objects possessed may yield; and, secondly, as the association of the idea of pleasantness with the *holding* of the thing, even though the pleasure originally got by it was only gained through its expense or destruction. Thus the miser is shown to us as one who has transferred to the gold by which he may buy the goods of this life all the emotions which the goods themselves would yield; and who thereafter loves the gold for its own sake, preferring the means of pleasure to the pleasure itself .... [However] these men value their gold, not for its own sake, but for its powers. Demonetize it, and see how quickly they will get rid of it! The associationist theory is, as regards them, entirely at fault: they care nothing for the gold *in se*.' (James 1890, vol. 2: 423–424)

The dispute between Bain and James points to the major nineteenth century development in the psychology of property, namely, the predominance of instinct theory. The belief that acquisition, possession, and property are instinctual had three major sources of development: (1) faculty psychology, (2) German post-Kantian philosophy, and (3) the theory of evolution. In the early part of the century, Cabanis (1802), Combe (1803), Hancock (1824) and others considered acquisitiveness to be one of the mental faculties. As such, acquisitiveness was innate and instinctive. The phrenologists made the faculty of acquisitiveness more neurological; Spurzheim placed it in the temporal lobe (Boring 1950).

The instinct theory of property was also developed within post-Kantian German philosophy with its focus on dialectical processes and on noumenal will. Schneider (1880) argued that instincts are manifestations of will expressed in the dialectic alternation of expansion and contraction (Hocking 1929). Acquisitiveness was one of the expansive instincts. James' (1890) list of instincts, including acquisitiveness, was based on Schneider's list (Hocking 1929). Most psychologists of the day followed James and considered property to be based on an instinct to acquire or to hoard (e.g. Angell 1906; Calkins 1917; McDougall 1908; Rivers 1923; Thorndike 1913; Warren 1919). In a slight variation, Pavlov (1928) and Watson (1929) based property on the instinctive grasp reflex. Bernard (1924) examined over 600 publications between 1900 and 1920 and tabulated 60 different economic instincts, including instincts to acquire, own, collect, appropriate, grab, hoard, and save.

Certainly the most powerful force behind the predominance of instinct explanations of property at the turn-of-the-century was the theory of evolution (Darwin 1859; Spencer 1872). Evolution gave instinct theory a firm biological basis, but more importantly, an intellectually and ideologically attractive framework for comparative research: cross-cultures, cross-species, and cross-ages. Darwin's principal disciple, Romanes (1883), made this most clear when he placed primitive peoples in the phylogenetic progression between apes and civilized man, and then juxtaposed evolutionary progression against individual development. Thus, culture was made phylogenetic, and psychological ontogeny was thought to recapitulate that extended phylogeny. Programs of research on the comparative ethnography of property, on the sociobiology of property, and on children's possessive behaviors and language all began in this period and have continuations to the present

day (see Rudmin 1988a). The first four major reviews of the behavioral literature on property followed Romanes' (1883) scheme, describing the property behaviors of animals, of primitive cultures, and of children: Letourneau (1892) focused on ethnography; Petrucci (1905) focused on biology; and Kline and France (1899) and Beaglehole (1932) completed Romanes' scheme by including reviews of the child development literature.

Cognition vs. instinct

Although instinct theories generally were to fall under heavy attack in the 1930's, at the turn-of-the-century there were very few who did not agree that private property was based on instinct. To assent to the instinct theory one had only to observe the hoarding behavior of rodents or birds, the territoriality of dogs, the grasp reflex of infants, the collections children make of useless objects, or the miserliness of some adults. However, Leon Litwinski was one of the very few who did not assent. He entered the discussion in 1913 with a critical attack on the instinct theory presented in Petrucci's (1905) book on the biological origins of property.

This first article, just two years after completing his economics Ph.D., gives the impression that Litwinski was not aware of the wide endorsement of instinct theory by prominent psychologists. However, his objective was more to revive the economic psychology of Jeremy Bentham than it was to repudiate instinct theory. The opening sentence reads:

> 'Bentham, qui a été un esprit original et perspicace, nous a laissé, dans ses *Principles of the Civil Code*, une théorie de la propriété, qui, jusqu'à nos jours, a conservé une grande partie de son intérêt primitif et qu'il est bon de rappeler au souvenir de contemporains, ou tout au moins de ceux qui ne l'ignorent pas complètement.' (Litwinski 1913a: 427)

Even after instinct theory had passed by the way, Litwinski was to continue to refine, elaborate, and generalize the ideas expressed in his first paper. He would come to link his property theory with social psychological approaches to personality (1951a, 1956a, 1957) and with psychodynamic approaches to child development (1952a,b). However, in his psychology of property there would always be the core cognitive

idea of expectation (*attente* in French) which he derived from Bentham's work.

Litwinski's (1913a) critique of Petrucci (1905) centered on a conceptual analysis of possession and property. Neither can be discovered or characterized by the objective facts of the relationship between the individual and the object. Citing Bentham, Litwinski argued that acts of having, holding, saving, making, selling, modifying, using, and so forth, all fail to explain or differentiate possession and property:

> ' "Extérieurement" nous sommes donc incapables de distinguer un phénomène de possession de celui de la propriété. Bentham a eu donc raison d'insister sur l'invisibilité de ce lien qui constitue la propriété.' (Litwinski 1913a. 449)

It is important to realize that 'possession', for Litwinski, does not mean mere physical possession. That he terms occupation. This was not a new distinction and can be found, for example, in Plato:

> ' "Having" seems to me different from "possessing". If a man has bought a coat and owns it, but is not wearing it, we should say he possesses it without having it about him. (Plato, *Theaetetus*, 197e, in Hamilton and Cairns 1961: 903)

Possession and property are essentially cognitive and social relationships, and are thus not amenable to objective description or biological study. More recent conceptual analyses have also made this argument. For example Snare's (1972: 200) illustration that 'a stolen apple doesn't *look* any different from any other apple' was cited by Miller and Johnson-Laird (1976: 558) in their argument that possession 'goes beyond what is perceptible' and 'is primarily a conceptual matter'.

Again citing Bentham, Litwinski emphasized expectation. It is expectation that links the present to the future, and possession and property both entail expectation. Possession is not just a coincidental act, but the intentional conservation of an object for future use. Thus, transient or opportunistic use is not the same as possession:

> 'Ce qui caractérise donc la possession, ce n'est pas l'exploitation d'une productivité permanente ou transitoire, mais son attente. Nous exploitons la productivité de l'objet que nous possédons quand la circonstance ou le besoin est là, mais la possession elle-même est indépendante de cette exploitation. Elle résulte d'une attente, qui toutefois n'est pas une simple illusion, mais présuppose un pouvoir sur la chose. Nous n'attendons rien des richesses qui se trouvent sur la lune. Elles ne sont pas en notre pouvoir. Ces attentes manquent d'une condition essentielle, qui est la condition de notre pouvoir. Le pouvoir d'un être sur une chose n'est pas donc la possession.' (Litwinski 1913a: 449)

The power effectuating an individual's possession is limited to the individual's power. Possession is thus insecure, and the expectation defining and motivating that possession has little surety. The cost is high, paid in tension and in frequent or continual attention to the object of possession. It is primarily through the social institution of property that surety of expectations can be increased and the psychological costs decreased. Property is possession that has been secured by social approbation or by the sanction of law. Stealing an apple and hiding it grants a tense and tenuous possession, but buying an apple grants the leisure to eat it when and where one wishes. Lawful ownership inhibits those who might otherwise seize the possession, and it musters social forces against anyone not so inhibited. According to Litwinski, property is relaxed anticipation, confident expectation, or in French, *attente dans la détente*.

The ideas that possession is cognitive rather than physical and that property is socially sanctioned possession are both illustrated in common law. The 1805 case of Pierson vs. Post is perhaps the most renowned example (Casner and Leach 1951; Haar and Liebman 1985). Post and his hunting dogs were in pursuit of a fox across an unpossessed waste land. Pierson, knowing the fox was so hunted and in full sight of Post, intercepted the fox, killed it, seized it, and claimed ownership on the grounds that property rights in wild animals are acquired by possession. The case went through several levels of court, and the precedent was set that it is intention and expectation, not physical contact, that define legal possession. The court acknowledged that there were gradations of possession which made adjudication difficult:

> '... whether to acquire dominion over a thing, before in common, it be sufficient that we barely see it; or know where it is, or wish for it, or make a declaration of our will respecting it; or whether in the case of wild beasts, setting a trap, or lying in wait, or starting, or pursuing, be enough; or if an actual wounding, or killing, or bodily tact and occupation be necessary.' (Livingstone in Haar and Liebman 1985: 36)

Litwinski never cited this case, but would have agreed that Pierson and Post both had psychological possession of the fox, and that only a court could turn disputed possession into property.

During the disruptions of World War II, Litwinski returned to intellectual pursuits and made another attack on the instinct theory of property. However, this time he was in good company with many

psychologists making similar attacks (e.g. Beaglehole 1932; Durost 1932; Isaacs 1933; Suttie 1933; Ginsberg 1934; Lattke 1936; Freeman 1936; Murphy et al. 1937; Maublanc 1938; Klineberg 1940). To his credit, Litwinski (1942) presented several new arguments. First, instincts are involuntary and inflexible, whereas property is voluntary and selective. One's inventory of possessions is ever changing. Litwinski emphasized the dynamic nature of possession and insisted that processes of dispossession are as important as processes of acquisition. The very power and success of possession as an adaptive phenomenon is that many and various external implements can be attached to the individual yet remain ever detachable. Litwinski included here intellectual implements, such as ideas and concepts. Second, because animals lack, and young children have yet to develop, the cognitive capabilities of imaginative foresight and sustained attention, their temporary and opportunistic use of objects is not possession in the psychological sense of the term but merely appropriation or occupancy. Third, when animals focus their attention on external objects, as on prey, that focus is automatic, invariable, and all engrossing. Possession is more adaptable:

> '... in the case of the peaceful attention of the happy possessor there is no question of tension without a moment of respite, but of a state of awareness which functions, ceases, to be resumed later, and is susceptible to alternation at will. It lasts as long as the subject maintains his interest in the object through the force of the idea which ties him to this object. Now to possess an object without a moment's respite is to possess it no longer; it is rather to be possessed by it, as is the case with blind and irresistible instinct.' (Litwinski 1942: 31–32)

Litwinski (1942) also presented counter-explanations for the examples of human behavior that James (1890) had argued supported the instinct theory of property. James (1890) reasoned that instincts are innate biological phenomena which are nevertheless subject to modification by socialization and habit. Therefore, instincts should be most apparent in young children, and James (1890) cited children's collecting behavior as evidence of an instinct to acquire. Also, instincts should be very evident under pathological conditions which release the control imposed on instincts by socialization and habit. James (1890) thus cited miserliness and compulsive collecting as evidence of an instinct to acquire. Litwinski (1942) countered that children's possessiveness displays impulsiveness, not possession:

> 'Children do not succeed in attaching themselves to an object and in remaining relatively content, with the result that they have the capacity for irritating and fatiguing their parents

and elders after a certain time. One can understand therefore that in similar states of consciousness there is little room for relaxed attention and hence possessive ties. What children lack in experiencing possession, besides the foresight which comes only from education and experience, is a voluntarily controlled amount of consistency and stability in their interests.' (Litwinski 1942: 32)

When possession does first appear in children, Litwinski argued, it may well have been taught or modelled by adults, as described by Maublanc (1938). As for miserliness and compulsive collecting, Litwinski argued that they need not be attributed to uncontrolled instincts but rather to maladaptive strategies for coping with imperfect cognition:

'One might doubtless say that the tendency to amass, whether it is original or derived, results from an imperfect capacity for foresight in the individual. A man who cannot foresee with accuracy what he will need, gives himself a margin of safety by accumulating and amassing. The imperfect sense of foresight would then afford an explanation of the tendency to amass in so far as it is excessive and irrational.' (Litwinski 1942: 36–37)

Thus, Litwinski systematically repudiated the arguments of the most prominent advocate of the instinct theory of property and tried to restore cognitive theory in its place.

Research prospects

In his writings on the psychology of property, Litwinski anticipated many subsequent developments and he left many ideas and hypotheses that might now be worthy of reformulation or empirical examination. The future prospects of Litwinski's contribution to six general topics in the psychology of possession will each be discussed: (1) quantitative modelling, (2) risk homeostasis, (3) anticipatory problem solving, (4) developmental progressions, (5) defendence motivations, and (6) ideas as possessions.

Quantitative modelling

Litwinski (1942, 1947a,b) argued that the essential state of consciousness defining possession and property is relaxed attention:

'In short, one is a possessor or one is not, but from the moment when one has become a possessor, the states of consciousness to which we have given the name relaxed attention establish themselves in relation to the objects possessed. They live in us in a manner enduring and well-organized but not unintermittent.' (Litwinski 1942: 39)

The attention aspect is due to the anticipated utility of the possession and to the need to maintain some degree of control over it. The essence of possession is primarily cognitive and only secondarily physical or social. The relaxed aspect is due to the surety that the possession will be preserved and available for anticipated use. Social sanctions and legal title increase surety and relaxation.

Litwinski's psychology of possession is distinct from psychological models of possession that postulate an accretion of possession over time and a corresponding inertia in both acquisition and dispossession. For example, Hume ([1739] 1962), quoted earlier, conceived of possession as a mental habit based on the association of ideas. The degree of possession would vary directly with the degree of familiarity and the strength of the associations. Quite recently, Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) have proposed that possession corresponds to an investment of 'psychic energy'. The greater the cathexis, the stronger is the sense of possession. For Litwinski, possession is more cognitive, more flexible, and more adaptive. Possession and dispossession may be quite sudden, with little cognitive inertia. A similar argument has been made by Cooley:

> 'Habit and familiarity are not of themselves sufficient to cause an idea to be appropriated into the self. Many habits and familiar objects that have been forced upon us by circumstances rather than chosen for their congeniality remain external and possibly repulsive to the self; and, on the other hand, a novel but very congenial element in experience, like the idea of a new toy, or, if you please, Romeo's idea of Juliet, is often appropriated almost immediately.' (Cooley 1902: 115)

According to Litwinski (1942), the degree of attentional relaxation is variable. At one extreme, relaxation can lead to indifference and to loss of possessiveness:

> 'A man's attachment to a thing is often rewarded by a feeling of detachment equivalent to indifference. It is thus that one can state that the latter, the moment it becomes predominant, brings what may be called the destruction of possessiveness, in consequence of its indifference'. (Litwinski 1942: 32)

Litwinski (1947a, 1956a) seemed to argue that dispossession must be a cognitive act, not an inadvertency. However, apparent indifference and lack of possessiveness can be seen by others as abandonment, and the argument might be made that prolonged indifference is indeed dispossession, for example, when a land owner loses legal ownership to a

squatter by rule of prescription, known as adverse possession in law (Haar and Liebman 1985). In a more familial context, food on one's plate is a possession, but if left for some time or to some distance, abandonment occurs and others may consume or remove the food.

At the other extreme, lack of attentional relaxation indicates little surety of expectations. The possessor then becomes possessed by the possession, as quoted earlier (1942: 31). This can happen with physical objects or with ideas and beliefs (1950c). For example, with the possession of any disputed properties or with the possession of insecure beliefs, possessiveness is high, surety and cognitive relaxation low. The very anxiety and the demands of possession seem to foreclose the option of dispossession. In those circumstances, Litwinski (1956a) argued that the possessor risks losing adaptive freedom and self-identity:

> 'Not to be deprived of the faculty of choice amounts to the power of exercising one's autonomy, of remaining free and independent, being able to give and to receive by relating oneself to others. We distinguish between the man in chains, such as the miser or the fanatic, and the man who is not, who remains free, who belongs to himself.' (Litwinsky 1956a. 134)

Although Litwinski was not an experimental psychologist, his cognitive theory of possession is nicely conceived for quantitative expression and for empirical examination. His theory predicts that surety and attentional relaxation are positively correlated with one another, and both with possession. In other words, Litwinski hypothesizes that possession is some form of increasing monotonic function of surety and of attentional relaxation. 'Possessiveness' is a preoccupation with maintaining possession in anticipation of dispossession by other potential possessors. Possessiveness is a sign of weak or doubtful possession. Although the difference between possession and possessiveness might be a subtle or confusing distinction for the naive respondent, Litwinski's theory predicts that these should be negatively correlated. Possessiveness of a property that is physically and legally secured would suggest that the owner still feels lack of possession.

If prolonged indifference and lack of possessiveness are deemed to define dispossession, then possession would be some form of negatively skewed quadratic function of attentional relaxation. That is, very high degrees of possession may suddenly plummet to dispossession at some critical level of inattention. In fact, possession and lack of possession

are sometimes objectively indistinguishable. Relaxed attention to a property is characteristic of the indifference of very secure possession, but it is also characteristic of abandonment and dispossession. This would explain the psychological shock and the extreme sense of injustice of land owners who lose title to squatters by adverse possession or of children who lose dessert by having left it too long on the table. They were so sure of their property rights that they paid little attention to their property, which signaled abandonment, and dispossession.

Risk homeostasis

Of course, all of the hypothesized relationships between possession, possessiveness, surety, and attentional relaxation will be further complicated by the introduction of the value of the object of possession:

> 'Possesseur ou possédé, la détente que nous éprouvons se traduit par un sentiment de quiétude, de sécurité, ce qui ne veut pas dire que ce sentiment exclut complètement l'inquiétude ou le manque de sécurité. Il n'est jamais absolu. La propriété ou la fortune, petite ou grande, peu importe, reste toujours exposée à d'autres risques et dangers que ceux provenant de la dépossession ou d'une atteinte au droit de propriété. Elle se détériore par l'action des agents d'ordre physique, elle est susceptible d'une dévaluation, d'un changement de mode, etc., ce qui fait qu'en possédant nous vivons, en réalité, dans une inquiétude perpétuelle, inquiétude d'autant plus forte sans doute que nous attachons une valeur plus grande aux objets possédés.' (Litwinski 1947b: 442)

Property, though designed to reduce risk, is ever at risk, to some degree.

Risk homeostasis theory argues that we not only avoid risk but that we also seek it, aiming to maintain an optimal level of risk arousal (Wilde 1982, 1986). In property terms, the higher the value of an object of possession, the more others will be perceived to covet it, the less the surety, and the more anxious the attention to the object. This leads to the paradox that we have less possession of valuable property, though certainly more possessiveness of it. In a pilot study (Rudmin 1983), respondents were asked to list exemplars of personal possessions and then to identify which best and which least exemplified ownership. Jewelry was most frequently noted as least exemplifying ownership. Jewelry is for the display of wealth, real or simulated, and it is similar to money in its high, transferable value and its easy portability. These conditions would encourage possessiveness since, as Mead (1982: 88)

argues, 'Money is for anyone who cares to seize it and hold it. Its very abstractness puts the possessor in the attitude of defense.'

It is commonly believed that valuable possessions are given public display as status symbols (e.g. Veblen 1899), though the evidence for this is much weaker than is commonly supposed (see Rudmin 1988a). In any case, it follows from Litwinski's theory that the exposure of possessions to risk might play a role in general risk homeostasis. He writes that 'Possession creates ... risks' (Litwinski 1942: 31). Possessions and property may serve in the management of risk by differentially securing or endangering expectations. In particular, valuable possessions may be acquired and displayed in public, not only as status symbols, but also as means of self-arousal by risk, as antidotes to cognitive relaxation. It is exciting to display wealth.

Litwinski (1942) gives another suggestion of the risk and arousal characteristics of possessions when he cites from Abel Hermant's book *La Marionette* the example of a child seizing a playmate's marble:

> 'The two essential methods of stealing or, otherwise expressed, of becoming a possessor by force or cunning, were instantaneously revealed to him. At the same time, he learnt fear, but also boldness.' (Hermant quoted in Litwinski 1942: 33)

Considering this example in light of Litwinski's general theory, it might be hypothesized that children's disputes over possessions serve, among others functions, as means of arousal by risk enhancement. Children may proffer possessions on the one hand and seize them on the other in order to achieve cortical stimulation. In empirical terms, this would predict that object conflicts should increase with the children's level of fatigue and should decrease when arousal is achieved by pharmacological stimulants (see Barkley 1978: Kavale 1982).

Anticipatory problem solving

Although Litwinski placed himself in the British utilitarian tradition, he defined 'utility' not as sensory satisfaction and pleasure but as instrumentality. Possessions do not serve appetites and passions but problems. Possessions are not ends but means to ends. And Litwinski (1947a,b) emphasized that possessions *qua* possessions do not serve immediate and pressing problems but future, anticipated problems:

> 'The simple and easily observed fact, that the animal in general does not encumber itself nor identify itself with the implements surrounding it, is already sufficiently revealing to indicate

that the animal does not possess in the material sense of the word. Because someone has observed some day and somewhere an isolated case of a monkey which on occasion used a stick to pull objects nearer, or a stone to throw, or even to crack nuts because of the feebleness of its teeth, one cannot therefore declare the animal world to be equipped with material implements. But even if it were so, the fact of using these objects, of having the skill and the technique to employ them, is not equivalent, one must hasten to add, to a possessive tie ..

The animal has only a sensory awareness of objects, while man has in addition the awareness of his own existence, that is the say, the awareness of being aware, the sentiment of the "self", of personal identity. Thus he attaches himself or detaches himself from objects, not only in accordance with the present interest of these objects, but also in accordance with their significance with regard to his capacity for the extension of vision and imagination in time, that is to say, beyond the present. The animal, on the contrary, seems to be clearly aware of the limitations of the present. At one moment it attacks, at another it flees, in accordance with its strength and skill. It is rare that it becomes the victim of its own rashness, pride or greed, as is the case with man who tends to imagine too much in view of his fundamental weakness.

In short, to make use of is not to possess.' (Litwinski 1942: 30)

Litwinski (1947a) argued that humans, especially those of European cultures, have adaptive faculties for anticipating future problems and for selecting, acquiring, and securing possessions to solve those problems. However, he himself had historically limited notion of problem solving, based on the associationist psychologies of the British Empiricist tradition and on the writings of French psychologist Charles Blondel:

'Thus, the present value of a thing consists largely in the future services that we except it to be able to render, and this is neither more nor less than what it has performed in the past. So that the conception we form in our mind of a thing is made up both of its past career and of our expectations as regards its future career.' (Litwinski 1947a: 245)

Nowadays, this attitude would be faulted as 'functional fixedness' (Mayer 1977). Nevertheless, Litwinski has done a major service to economic psychology by his conceptualization of possessions as products of anticipatory problem solving. Certainly, in the last decade, the psychology of problem solving has developed to such a degree that there is now a substantial literature with which economic psychology might link itself (see Nickerson et al. 1985). Litwinski opened a door for new conceptual development and empirical research in marketing and consumer psychology.

For example, in marketing, it is common to conceive of a market as a population of people who have common needs or wants. However, this reifies and overdefines a market. It might be more useful to conceive of a market as a theoretic population of anticipated problems,

which reside at various times, to various degrees, and with various probabilities in populations of people. Litwinski hypothesizes that people maintain, in accordance with their future-projected personalities, inventories of anticipated problems for which they acquire and maintain inventories of possessions, be they objects, ideas, or relationships. Thus, the primary task of marketing is to identify and understand anticipated problems. There is also the paradox that profit can come from creating fictional problems in order to proffer solutions for them (Marcuse 1964).

Also, we now realize that there are numerous problem-solving strategies and that it is possible, even preferable, to have options in solution strategies (e.g. Anderson 1980; Bransford and Stein 1984; Hayes 1981; Rubinstein 1986). For example, the marketing device of 'the starter home' might appeal to consumers who solve problems by forward proximity methods – from initial state to goal state by criteria of successive approximation – but not to those who solve problems by fractionation – no action until all of the steps of the entire solution processes are known (Hayes 1981).

Conceiving of possessions as problem solutions also sheds new light on various disorders of consumption. For example, impulse shopping may not be as unplanned as commonly believed but more a response to weakly articulated or sub-consciously anticipated problems. Compulsive collecting may represent a problem-solving compensation for 'functional fixedness'. That is, possessions are saved because they may have some future use, in some unforeseen fashion, for some unknown future problem. The person who collects and keeps a great variety of 'junk' may appear to suffer a disorder of consumption, but may be a sophisticated and flexible problem-solver. To the contrary, the lack of an inventory of problem-solving possessions may be the disorder, caused by affluence or by market-induced functional fixedness. Finally, conceiving of disorders of consumption as cognitive disorders, as opposed to released instincts (James 1890) or psycho-dynamic neuroses (Freud [1908] 1949), is less stigmatizing and more encouraging of successful change.

Developmental progressions

Litwinski's theory of possession also predicts a general developmental progression. This follows from his argument that possession and

property are adaptive processes designed to make better use of limited cognitive capacities (1942). Attention is subject to an economy: if more is expended here then less must be expended there. At the lowest level of material relations, the occupation or physical possession of objects needed for future utility is adaptively inefficient because it impedes mobility and can preserve relatively few resources for future use. With the transition to true possession, cognitive control replaces physical control, and more objects can be conserved for future use. But each possession still requires some minimal though intermittent amount of attention, and at some point cognitive resources must become satiated. With the transition to property, social and legal sanctions reduce the amount of attention necessary per object, but there is still a cognitive load to be borne.

Litwinski's theory of such a hierarchy of material relations based on adaptive cognitive efficiency suggests that further mechanisms of efficiency might be sought. One such possibility, mentioned by Litwinski (1947b), is money. For utility, money is more adaptive and more flexible than material possessions:

> 'Mais, l'argent a le pouvoir de reculer ce moment. Grâce à l'argent nous accumulons, nous conservons, nous transmettons, nous disposons, nous aliénons notre fortune beaucoup plus aisément que lorsqu'il s'agit d'objets.' (Litwinski 1947b: 451)

And money is cognitively less demanding than material possessions: it is difficult to conceive of a point of possessive satiation. The immaterial wealth which modern people seek in money may be equivalent to the incorporal wealth that other nomadic peoples seek in names, songs, dances, incantations, power objects, etc.

> 'While with us, young men are exhorted to open a savings account, among the Blackfoot they are advised to become owners of medicine bundles.' (Wissler 1912, quoted in Lowie 1948: 132).

Other types of immaterial possessions might include professional licenses and academic degrees (Bala 1990), or perhaps club memberships and interpersonal relations of various types (Litwinski 1942).

Although not discussed by Litwinski, another mechanism of cognitive efficiency in material relationships would be cognitive territoriality, to be distinguished from physical territoriality. The latter is based on physical occupation of actual territory by the owner, as is common in

the animal kingdom (Tiger and Fox 1971; Edney 1974). The former is based on cognitive representation of boundary conditions, defined by physical restraint and/or socially recognized marking signs. Sack (1983) has argued that territoriality is cognitively efficient because it avoids the enumeration of the possessions to be controlled, it is easy to communicate by boundary markers, and it enforces control at the boundary rather than over each individual object. Examples of cognitive territorial possessions are a toy box, desk, closet, room, house, car, real estate, etc., anything which contains or encloses. When people are asked to list exemplars of personal property, such territorial possessions are mentioned early and frequently (Rudmin and Berry 1987).

By Litwinski's argument, the higher, more sophisticated, and efficient levels of this progression would describe higher security and correspondingly higher attentional relaxation. However, George Mead (1982) has argued that higher, more abstract possessions put the owner in a defensive attitude towards all the rest of humanity because the more abstract the property, the more universal is utility, and the more numerous and unknown are competitors for that property:

> 'Abstractness always carries with it a degree of hostility. The attitude of the possession of money is an attitude of hostility toward all the rest of mankind. Money is for anyone who cares to seize and hold it. Its very abstractness puts the possessor in the attitude of defense.... The abstractness of the relation of property always carries with it hostility just in proportion to the abstractness.' (Mead 1982: 87–88)

Marcel (1949) made a similar argument based on an existential, phenomenological analysis. Thus, it may be that corresponding to Litwinski's progression of increasing cognitive efficiency in securing resources there is a counter-balancing increase in abstractness and the numbers of competitors for the resources. That property produces paranoia and not cognitive comfort certainly gains credence from the biographies of the very wealth, such as Howard Hughes (Phalen 1976).

Litwinski also proposed specific progressions of individual development. For example, he claimed that between 32 and 36 months of age, children develop differential possessiveness of toys, some to be shared and others to remain exclusively personal and private (1942). For children who fear separation from their mothers, Litwinski (1952b) claims that before age three they can differentiate their own possessions from others' and can negotiate to get objects they desire. From age three, they can distinguish what is lent from what is given. From age

five, they enquire about objects of uncertain ownership, such as letter boxes, park benches, and the park itself. Although there is now a large empirical literature on economic socialization (see Rudmin 1986; Rudmin et al. 1987), these particular claims have yet to be verified with systematic data.

Defendence motivations

The fundamental motivation for possessions, according to Litwinski, is individual security (1913a, 1951a). By nature, we are weak and vulnerable and we seek to secure our futures by the assured utility of possessions broadly considered:

> 'Visant à une existence moins dure et plus durable, l'individu, considéré au stade du moi réfléchi, passe à l'action; il cherche à se donner une armature ou un équipement supplémentaire par rapport à celui dont la nature l'a doté.
>
> En être prévoyant, l'individu explore à cet effet son milieu physique et psychique. Par le truchement des jugements de valeur, il sélecte, pour autant qu'il y a du choix, les choses, les personnes, les groupes, les idées, etc. pour s'en entourer, s'en armer et étendre son empire.' (Litwinsky 1949: 199)

Although the idea that possessions serve self-preservation was well articulated within the utilitarian tradition, especially by Hobbes, it has tended to disappear from theoretical discussions of property (Attali 1988). In Litwinski's re-articulation of this idea, he extended possession beyond mere physical objects, and he took the discussion into the domains of self psychology and developmental psychology.

First, he drew upon James (1890) and others to argue that possessions are an integral part of the Self. However, Litwinski (1951a) did not consider the Self to be an extension of the past, manifest in a personality based on a history of habits or of psycho-dynamic tensions. Rather, he theorized that the Self was a projection into the future, manifest in the selection and acquisition of possessions, both material and immaterial:

> 'Generally speaking, psychologists classify acquisition side by side with other basic needs like affiliation, retention, recognition, seclusion, etc. To my mind, acquisition may be conceived differently, i.e. as a fundamental tendency of the person to create prospective links with various activities in order to gratify mainly the need of security taken in its most comprehensive sense. These links express tastes, preferences, affinities, style of the self. Thus affiliation is a kind of acquisition.' (Litwinski 1951a: 247)

Second, Litwinski engaged the psycho-dynamic discussions of defendence. He generally argued against the anal-retentive theory of possession promulgated by Freud ([1908] 1949) and Jones (1919):

> 'In our opinion, what is remarkable about childhood is not the tendency to retain an object through anxiety about the future, but rather the desire to master it and to control it, in the absence of such anxiety. This mastery even goes as far as the destruction of the object retained. Thus the child derives a curious pleasure, not from retaining a toy, but from smashing it to pieces ... [T]he nature of possession does not lie in knowing how to retain, in securing a temporary mastery even at the risk of catastrophe (parents, nurses, and laundresses would have a tale to tell!), but rather in ownership in duration. From the purely hedonistic point of view, to retain is a pleasurable experience, whereas to conserve is to refrain from a present satisfaction in order to secure a later one.' (Litwinski 1952b: 462–463)

However, Litwinski did agree with Adler (1930) that insecurity was the source of personality disorders. Citing Fromm, Horney, and others, Litwinski (1952a,b) argued that possessiveness may arise from separation anxiety and other forms of disrupted social affiliation:

> 'If the child is frustrated or handicapped in its desire to belong to someone, he will try to protect himself when he grows older. In order to achieve this he will, as a rule, either withdraw into himself ... Or he may, on the other hand, turn towards the objects of the material world, or towards ideas; that is to say, he will gradually become the jealous possessor of objects, or the permanent champion of ideas which he will consider more or less his own property.
>
> The attachment to possessions, which is a peculiar characteristic of exclusivity, is particularly strong when the child has been deprived of the moderating influence of the family, where a great many things are used in common and where ownership is not always well-defined.' (Litwinski 1952b: 461)

In support of this, Litwinski cited Bowlby's (1946) data that childhood property crime is related to separation from the mother during infancy. However, recent data more directly supports the defendence theory of possession. Rudmin (1988a, b) found among two samples of adults that Jackson's (1967) *Personality Research Form* trait of Defendence correlated with Belk's (1984, 1985) trait of Materialism ($n = 185$, $r = 0.47$, $p < 0.001$; $n = 81$, $r = 0.30$, $p < 0.005$). These correlations were little changed by partialling out social desirability effects. Defendence was defined as:

> 'Ready to defend self against real or imagined harm from other people; takes offense easily; does not accept criticism readily ... Self-protective, justifying, denying, defensive, self-condoning, suspicious, secretive, has a "chip on the shoulder", resists inquiries, protesting, wary, self-excusing, rationalizing, guarded, touchy.' (Jackson 1967: 6–7)

Materialism was defined as a composite of possessiveness, envy, and non-generousity. It was the non-generousity items that were most highly correlated with Defendence. This would suggest that Litwinski (1952a,b) was on the right track, particularly in his emphasis on the 'exclusive' aspect of defensive possession.

Ideas as possessions

It is common to consider only material, physical objects to be subject to possession and ownership. However, there are long traditions and wide literatures in anthropology and law on immaterial possessions. In psychology, the consideration of ideas and other cognitive objects as possessions has been relatively infrequent. For example, in the *Theaetetus* (1961 ed.), Plato made the analogy that ideas were like possessions. In the modern period, Cooley (1902) and Allport (1937) in their discussions of the appropriations of the Self considered ideas to be possessions:

> '... this extends from material objects to lay hold, in the same spirit, of the attentions and affections of other people, of all sorts of plans and ambitions, including the noblest special purposes the mind can entertain, and indeed of any conceivable idea which may come to seem a part of one's life and in need of assertion against someone else.' (Cooley 1902: 148)

> 'Possessions, friends, one's own children, other children, cultural interests, abstract ideas, politics, hobbies, recreation, and most conspicuously of all, one's *work*, all lead to the incorporation of interests once remote from the self into selfhood proper.' (Allport 1937: 217)

However, Prelinger's (1959) data showed ideas not to be possessed as part of the Self. Altman, in 1970, listed ideas among the objects of territorial possession, and most recently, Abelson (1986) has argued that beliefs are like possessions. He notes that the possession of a belief may be induced by various processes of cognitively elaborating the belief or of establishing social recognition of its possession. This is not unlike McClelland's (1965) description of the acquisition of a motive. Prentice (1987) has provided empirical evidence that there is a psychological correspondence between the possession of material objects and such mental objects as attitudes and values.

Although such work is presented as new and innovative, Litwinski had already presented unequivocal arguments that cognitive objects are possessions:

> 'To devote one's attention to "mine" is in fact to understand the essence of personality ... [A]lthough as a rule we confine ourselves above all to material possessions, it is evident that

both ideas and objects can be equally well acquired and conserved, can be worked upon, transferred and abandoned ... As I have satisfied myself that my ideas were wrong, dangerous, ridiculous, I am no longer linked to them, they have become foreign to my soul, I do not expect any good to accrue from holding them any longer.' (Litwinski 1947a: 240–241)

He made the further analogy that possessed ideas are like pieces of cognitive 'furniture'. They have not only utility but also cohesion and aesthetic semblance with one another as well as personal affinity with their owner:

'Afin de ne pas s'enchaîner, de ne pas s'alourdir dangereusement, l'individu peut procéder en sens inverse, c.à.d., au lieu d'acquérir, se débarrasser des choses inutiles ou encombrantes. Il peut, de même, se libérer des idées qui ne sont plus de son temps ou qui oppressent le moi au lieu de l'affranchir. Il "remeuble" à cet effet son cerveau par des idées nouvelles ou son coeur par des sentiments différents. Au lieu de s'intégrer par des affiliations, des adhésions ou des participations, il se désintègre, en se séparant, en se divorçant des personnes ou des groupes.' (Litwinski 1949: 199)

Finally, in what accords well with the recent discussions by Abelson (1986) and Prentice (1987), Litwinski (1950c, 1953a) argued that, just as there are disorders of material possession, so too are there disorders of immaterial possession. Property is to the miser what ideas are to the fanatic:

'L'avare est esclave de l'object qu'il possède comme la tyran l'est de ses sujets, tout en s'imaginant qu'il en est le maître, et le doctrinaire l'est également de ses idées. Ils s'accordent tous pour se laisser étouffer par la puissance d'un attachement plutôt que de s'en libérer. Si nous insistons sur ce point, c'est que cette emprise dangereuse des liens unilatéraux n'est pas irrémédiable. C'est dans la création des liens multilatéraux qu'on peut voir une garantie relative contre les excès de l'unilatéralisme, du fanatisme menaçant soit par l'exaltation des idées du bien ou du vrai ou d'une autre source d'inspiration épuisante par sa monotonie.' (Litwinski 1953a, 166–167)

Litwinski drew upon Marcel's (1949) arguments that it is dangerous to possess ideas as one might material possessions:

'I am thinking in particular of such pseudo-possessions as *my ideas and opinions*. In this case, the word "have" takes on a meaning which is at once positive and threatening. The more I treat my own ideas, or even my convictions, as something belonging to me – and so as something I am proud of (unconsciously perhaps) as I might be proud of my greenhouse or my stables – the more surely will these ideas and opinions tend, by their very inertia (or my inertia towards them, which comes to the same thing) to exercise a tyrannical power over me; that is the principle of fanaticism in all its shapes. What happens in the case of the fanatic, and in other cases too, it seems, is a sort of unjustified alienation of the subject – and the use of the term in unavoidable here – in face of the thing, whatever it may be.' (Marcel 1949: 166)

In an age of mass-media, when ideas and ideologies are marketed like other potential possessions, it would seem important that economic psychology direct more of its attention to the processes and the dangers inherent in such activities.

Conclusion

This discussion of Litwinski's work on the psychology of possession and property is by no means exhaustive. He touched on numerous other issues of importance. For example, his theory of the cognitive cost of possessions accords with recent advocacy of voluntary simplicity (e.g. Elgin 1981): 'Le vrai sage balance entre le détachement excessif et l'attachement inconsidéré (Litwinski 1953a: 166). However, Litwinski's theory of simplicity is focused on cognitive costs, rather than ecological costs, and is not averse to mass-production, mass consumption:

> 'Possession creates cares, burdens, risks. The Americans who lead the way in material progress try to simplify the existence of civilized man by ridding him of certain of the anxieties of the possessor. In seeking a new formula for this, one no longer gives oneself the trouble of sending handkerchiefs to the laundry; they are immediately replaced. It is more economical and at the same time simpler. It is a notable example of progress. Not to possess too much will one day be the criterion of progress, of independence and of liberty.' (Litwinski 1942: 31)

Though paradoxical, it has been well established that motives of material simplicity serve mass production and mass consumption (Rudmin and Kilbourne, in press).

Similarly, Litwinski's theory, with its emphasis on the preservation of resources for future utility, leads directly to considerations of the stewardship aspects of possession and property:

> 'Furthermore, the feeling of "mine" is more a desire to preserve than it is a fear of loss, as is shown, for example, in Solomon's judgement when the true mother surrendered her child rather than have it destroyed.' (Litwinski 1942: 37)

Stewardship was historically a major part of Western theories of property, particularly within the Christian traditions (Avila 1983; Schlatter 1951), but is has rarely been the subject of psychological discussion or research. On the topic of transition objects, Litwinski (1947b) theorized that crises, transitions, and any events that unsettle

the future result in aroused possessory attachments, but also in important opportunities for dispossession. Litwinski (1949, 1952b, 1956a) also began to develop a discussion of gender differences in the psychology of property, though clearly within the sexist limitations of his times. And in his discussion of asomatognosis (1956a), he added a bit to the minuscule neuropsychological literature on possession and property (e.g. Luria 1973).

Finally, Litwinski (1942, 1947a,b, 1949, 1952b, 1956a, 1957) discussed the psychology of 'belonging' throughout his writings on property. Generally, he saw 'belonging' as a unification of the individual with some aspect of the world, initially a passive unification with the mother or the family, then an active domination of possessions, and ultimately an independent and free belonging to oneself. Heider (1946, 1958), contemporary with Litwinski, developed his cognitive balance theory of ownership around the concept of 'belonging'. But 'belonging' for Heider was more a perceptual phenomena, a function of unit formation processes. A revival of cognitive research on possession and property might well begin with an analysis of the concepts of 'belonging' used by both Litwinski and Heider.

Leon Litwinski opened many doors for economic psychology, doors into its political economic origins and traditions, doors into its different national styles and methods of research, doors into cognitive theory and subsequent cognitive experimentation, doors into many of the psychological issues related to possession and property. He was a remarkable scholar, especially considering the difficult and isolated circumstances of his scholarship. Although his ideas are now dated to the past, they are nevertheless new, new in relationship to the centuries long tradition of which he was a modern extension and new to contemporary economic psychology. Litwinski's cognitive theory of possession and property deserves recognition and reconsideration.

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