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Half a Gemini

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Abstract

The essay touches upon the topic of identity within dizygotic twins. The complexity of how the twins see themselves. There is a shared identity and there is a united identity. This paper touches upon the topic to be able to give teachers awareness of an identity problem that dizygotic twins may have; in hope of being able to accurately help students develop in the best way possible. The essay question is what is the relation between religion and the creating of a dizygotic twins identity?

Female dizygotic twins and a researcher in genetics was interviewed to be able to give results from an inside perspective as well as an outer perspective. This qualitative study used the snowball effect method and gave results of dizygotic twins feeling different about their identity relation depending on how old they presently were. The subjects found that society were responsible for creating their shared twin identity. Just as preconceived notions label and group people, dizygotic twins are no different, and therefore also forced into having to battle with these notions.

Keywords: Dizygotic, Identity, Religion, Twins.
Half a Gemini

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Preface

Bismillah Al-rahman Al-Raheem.
I would like to start this essay in the name of God, most Gracious, most compassionate.
I would also like to thank everyone who was involved in the creating of this essay. It took a lot of patience as well as a lot of team effort to be able to hunt down various people to be able to complete this work.
A special thank you to my family, friends, and loved ones who kept providing me with positive energy when it was needed the most.
Minoo Swan, Merve Gencer, Judy Osman and Patrik Magnusson for offering inspirational information that was vital to create this paper. And a final thank you to Anders Lindh for being my mentor during the process.
1. Introduction

Studying to become a gymnasium teacher in science of religion has not been my easiest journey. To add to the equation I am a dizygotic twin. Always having someone next to me has been a very important part of shaping my identity. The psychological aspect of having someone physically next to me brought inducing thoughts to my mind; but the manifestation of these thoughts would come to be displayed during a later phase in my life.

Being a twin amplified a specific identity that seemed very exclusive to my surrounding. I had witnessed a bond between my friends and their siblings, but it was unusual for them to have their sibling(s) dress in similar clothing and partially looking the same way that they did. The constant need to answer questions like are you twins? Caused a lot of questions about my personal identity. We were two people but were treated as a unit.

1.1 School in Sweden

As school is mandatory in Sweden¹, this was the place where the most time was spent together with other children to interact. This is where I would experience that being a twin had extraordinary meaning. Teachers would assign us to share the time during the parent – teacher conference, and speak about how one of us were developing while the other would sit silently and wait to be assessed. The assessment would speak about the curriculum but would always add the dimension of highlighting our twin relation.

My sibling understood how to use mathematical theorems while I would endorse in other activities that were not as structured. I would enjoy stories that teachers would share which would also outweigh a poorer performance from my side during subjects such as mathematics.

As the problem grew, the will to “fix” the problem became even greater. Certain solutions were stressed; such as to ask my sibling for help, but I refused just because he was my twin. Richard Jenkins writes in his book *Social Identity* about the need of being an individual. There is a significant meaning to the building of one’s own perceived identity when being able to stimulate and understand the personal identity.²

1.2 School in Unguja/Zanzibar

Every summer would also include traveling to Unguja. Spending nine months in Sweden gave a different sense of friendship towards other people. We had similar interests but also different best friends. In Unguja we only had each other. This also included us only having each other during the religious studies that our parents enrolled us in the so-called “Daar’sa”. All students wore the traditional clothing such as the Kanzu, but often wore the Kanzu differently. A sense of individualism was present even if it was barely noticed by others.

The kindergarten as well as the religious schools where firm practitioners of caning their students. Often our pupils would physically be corrected, the twins where never to be touched. When collective punishment was executed we would confirm each other that no physical beating would happen to us. The comfort would lie in that we were the twins; a member of a society that we were chosen into. Consciously we understood that there where benefits, but to understand what those advantages indicated would not be understood until a later stage in my life as well as to understand the disadvantages.

1.3 Religion and Identity

One of the advantages receiving a label from others is that I would seek understanding in this group rather than questioning the group. For instance I would try to legitimize my twin identity and semantically seek a personal understanding rather than question why none else was born a twin.

Parallel to trying to understand my identity as a twin I was also raised in a practicing Muslim family. As mentioned earlier I used to enjoy listening to stories rather than working with subjects such as mathematics. I grew up to become very fond of religious teachings and would question the Islamic fables that were taught. When questions were asked on the topic of behavior, the answers were often entangled religiously; evidential my understanding of morality was solemnly channeled to Islamic tutoring.

Religion taught me to be patient but so did being a twin. There seemed to be expectations from me because of my twin identity. Questions like *where is your other half?* Or *why are you not together?* Are questions that I am constantly being asked. When confronting the inquirer why they believe that I ought to know where the person is *just* because I am a twin, they often get offended that I fail to understand *how* they perceive us as a unit. You fight similar incidents when citizens are asked to justify their behavior due to ethnical heritage.

The ethical muse is that I grew up believing that my views on morality were fundamentally based on religious views, but could also be that the expectation of being a twin equally shaped my view of my individuality. The relation between external factors and internal ones seem to coexist, and I was not aware of it.

1.4 Understanding the Problem as a Teacher

As a teacher it is important to master different pedagogies to be able to create the best environment for the children to learn. Classes in religion tend to concentrate on understanding the different religions and being tolerant with the others. Often an external explanation from non-practitioners is what is being read to explain a religious deity. In 2010 I remember having to read *Gudsbild, talsituation och litterär genre, exempel från Maasai folket i Kenya* that spoke of this very matter. It was about non-

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1 King Fahd, *THE HOLY QUR-AN, English translation of the meanings and commentary*, 1985
2 When one of us was being dressed, the other one had to stand and wait patiently.
4 Socially, such as friends, family and society.
Kenyans who went to outlines of Kenya to study about the Maasai and their ways of being. As teachers are the individuals who spend many hours with students in class, they are also partially accountable for creating a student’s identity. As mono and dizygotic twins are not as common as single egged children; more studies are needed for the topic. Statistically there ought to be a twin in at least every second class in Sweden. This should make teachers more prepared about the relation and identity situations that a twin may face.

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9 scb.se/statistik/_publikationer/BE0801_2007K03_T1_04_A05ST0703.pdf www.scb.se, November 6, 2014
2. Purpose of the essay

2.1 Purpose and Research Question

The aim of this study is to provide teachers and pedagogues with a better understanding of the situation of dizygotic twins. It also intends to offer tools by which pedagogues can assist twins and enhance their wellbeing in an educational context. These aims will be realized through an examination of the situation of dizygotic twins and especially the relation between religion and the identity formation of a dizygotic twin.

2.2 Teaching

If dizygotic twins have certain ideas due to their identity view of themselves, then this is important for teachers to consider and have in mind. Schools are set for the individual to develop in the best way possible. Working as a teacher with dizygotic twins may cause more harm to the child due to inconvenient knowledge of how to understand the child and what they are going through. As there are more studies about monozygotic twins there is a special necessity to include this sub-class. Teachers could not only have students who are monozygotic twins but dizygotic twins as well.

12 http://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/forskning/artikelarkiv/inkluderande-skola-1.173803 www.skolverket.se November 6, 2014
3. Method

3.1 Qualitative Study

This is a qualitative study where the twin subjects will be interviewed using the same questions. The questions have been selected to fit identity reflections upon themselves in relation to their twin. To be able to pick between the twin subjects a paper was placed in one of my hands. The subject then picked a hand. The person who chose the hand containing the paper was selected for the study. The sibling was asked to leave the room as the questions where created about the individual’s reflection on the topic. This method was done for two of the subjects (ages six and twenty-six). The only exception was the sixteen year old because her sibling is male and not female.

Recording information from the individual subject without the sibling being present provides a detached reflection of the bond that connects them. Separating the subjects removes the chance for the other sibling to answer the inquiry if they fail to provide an answer without help. This forces the subject to give an answer even if she does not know the answer.13

Three sets of female dizygotic twins where selected using the snowball sampling method which indicates that one set of twins introduced me to another set of twins. The reason for this method was to be able to find twins that were suitable for the essay.14 The first pair are aged six. The second pair aged sixteen, and the final subjects are aged twenty-six. Having subjects that are ten years apart from each other they speak on behalf of the different period within their lives.15 The technique used was a semi-structured interview. The purpose of this was that the informants would be able to provide more information about the relation that they shared between themselves and their sibling. This specific technique also allows me to interpret their answers more. As I am trying to see the relation that twins may have, it is vital that they have a chance to express their views in more than one way.16

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13 The professor mentioned in an informal discussion afterwards that twins supplement each other verbally when they cannot produce an answer that is asked towards them both.
14 Larsen, Ann Kristin, Metod helt enkelt, Gleerups, 2009, p.78
15 Bainbridge, David, Teenagers : A Natural History, GreyStone Books, 2009, p.10
16 Steinar & Brinkmann, Svend, Den kvalitativa forskningsintervjun, 2. uppl p. 9
3.1.1 Gender

Historically we see how women have been deprived and excluded from modern day textbooks that students read today in class. When studying history in gymnasium we often learn about men like Adolf Hitler who governed land, men like Socrates who were acknowledged philosophers or men like Mohandas.K.Gandhi who challenged the norms and fought for change. We often read more about men than women in the textbooks.

This essay gives me the opportunity to include more females in academic papers. This is why the majority of interviewees are females.

3.1.2 Specific Ages

In Sweden you officially start the first year of school at the age of seven. Prior to this, there is a pre-school class that children can be enrolled in from the age of six. This gives children an opportunity to be introduced to the school system mixed with activities such as playing. At the age of sixteen, students are generally in the first year of gymnasium, exposed to new challenges and being the youngest of the new learning system. Ninth grade is the final year of the compulsory governmental schooling in Sweden. Gymnasiums are often separate buildings from the previous schools. This gives gymnasium children a remote area to be and see other students who are in a similar age group as they are. A reduction from the possibility of being a part of a school system where the chances of feeling included with younger students is less. After generally three years of gymnasium you graduate at the age of nineteen, and some begin studying at universities in their early twenties.

3.1.3 Interview Answers Simplified

The subjects answered several questions during the interview and below are the answers collected from the questions asked. At times the subjects answered a previous question earlier in the interview and therefore the answers provided are collected to answer my specific question.

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18 § 3 and § 4. Skollagen 2010:800
As the subjects did not always understand the questions asked, they had to be re-questioned for suitable answers.

3.1.4 Ethics

All subjects were informed about their ethical rights to being interviewed. They were informed that they are able to stop the interview at any particular time without having to explain why if they felt uncomfortable. They were also informed about the choice of being anonymous. The six year old had her rights read to her while her guardian (mother) was present in the room and agreed to the interview. The sixteen year old had her rights read to her while her guardian (older sibling) agreed upon the interview. And the final subject (26 year old) had her rights read to her. The professor from Karolinska institutet knew his rights and we had a verbal agreement that we both were aware of what were legitimate. All subjects agreed upon the usage of their names and age for publishing purposes.

Minoo who is six years old had not started school yet, but was given learning exercises at home with her mother. Merve who is sixteen years old is in her second year of gymnasium studying social science. Judy, who is twenty-six years old, is studying her final semester at the University of Malmö.

3.2 Criteria for being selected

1. The subject has to be a dizygotic twin or researched about twins.
2. The subject has to have reached the age of at least five, as this is age that children start to be aware of themselves.  
3. The subjects sibling must be alive, to avoid death anxiety.
4. The subjects must be able to understand English or Swedish.

3.3 Interview Questions

The reasons for selecting these questions are because the subjects may give vital information to answer my essay question when answering other questions. Example question two may answer if the subjects even see themselves as to having a bond or not.

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19 Davids, Jenny Developmental Psychology: Nursery Age Child, 2010 p. 27
1. What does it mean to be a twin?
2. How would you explain the bond between you and your twin?
3. Are dizygotic twins treated differently from monozygotic twins?
4. Do you have any allergies or habits that are different from your sibling?
5. What types of questions have you gotten from people?
6. How do you present your twin-identity to others?
7. Which expectations do people tend to have when they find out that you are a twin?
8. How has being a twin formed your identity?
9. Has religion formed your identity? If yes how?
10. What are the benefits (in school) of being a twin?
11. What are the benefits of being a twin when you are outside of school?

3.4 Interview Questions from an Authority / Commentary

12. Why have you chosen to study about twins?
13. What type of behavior/characteristics do twins tend to have during class that non-twins do not?
14. What are the biggest misconceptions about twins?
15. What can twin relations teach people who are non-twins?

3.5 English/Swedish Language

The idea of asking the questions in English at first was to give the subjects a chance to not have the questions or answers changed into Swedish. This gives the subjects a chance to answer my questions in English, or change to Swedish if they felt that they would want that.

I changed the asking-language during the interview when I saw that the subjects could not cope with the English language. The six year old was presented with the questions in Swedish. The sixteen year old was presented with the questions in English, and then in Swedish. This was done in hope of making the subjects feel comfortable. It was expressed (off the record) that some of the interviewees were feeling nervous of being recorded. The twenty-six year old subject was presented with the questions all in English, and when she asked if she had understood the question correctly it was asked in Swedish.

It is worth mentioning that English is not the first language for any of the
interviewees, which could also be a reason to why they answered the questions as they did. Having the questions being asked in English then in Swedish gives the subjects a chance to answer in the same language that the rest of the essay is written in. It gives the subjects a chance to also be quoted in a way that they choose instead of having to translate what they said.

3.5.1 Word Definition

**Monozygotic vs. Dizygotic**

*Twins* is a terminology used to define a set of pairs. Even within twins there exists a class of “sub-twin”; these are defined as *Monozygotic* and *Dizygotic*. Monozygotic meaning *developed from a single fertilized ovum, as identical twins.* It is different from the dizygotic definition. This paper concentrates on the later form, meaning *developed from two fertilized ova, as fraternal twins.* As the terminology does not separate the different classes, one cannot solemnly know which type of class the subject is a part of. If the same terminology is defined for both monozygotic and dizygotic, then there is also a risk that one can exchange understandings of the classes. The philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein writes in his work *Philosophical Investigations* about the usage of language. How we define language and that we “class” different words to be boxed in certain categories for a better understanding. He calls it “language games”. To be able to define a twin in the “correct” class, you need to have a preconceived knowledge when you first receive the title. Twins do not introduce themselves as being a part of a certain class but a part of both classes.

3.6 Environment

The Norwegian scholar in religion Trude A. Fonneland claims in the preface of her book, “If you take a Muslim to the mosque the form of the conversation will be different then if the conversation took place at a local café”. Her claim was vital in picking the rendezvous for the meeting. It was very important that the subjects felt

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20 http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/monozygotic?s=t
21 http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/dizygotic?s=t
23 Judy Osman Interviewed by Saleh Mbamba 2014 (can be found at 23.20 min)
fully comfortable in the environment that we were located in when answering personal questions.

The six year old twin had the interview in her resident where her mother was in the other room and able to access our conversation if the child became uncomfortable and wanted to leave. The sixteen-year-old chose to have her interview recorded in her elder sisters home, as it would provide a comfort for her to be able to leave if she felt stressed. The twenty-six year old chose a neutral meeting area, and the conversation was done at Malmö University in the building named “Orkanen”. The final interview with the professor was done at his office at the Karolinska Institute for research in Stockholm.
4. Literature

4.1 Twins

4.1.1 Twin Roles

The social scientist Elisabeth Schönbeck writes in her book *Äldst, yngst eller mittenbarn* about the importance of the people around twins to understand the roles in which twins see themselves. Understanding that twins should not be taken as “regular” siblings, they are beings that are a part of a special form of society. The amount of self-confidence, which is evident amongst them, cannot be misunderstood. Due to the relation and bond that they have between each other, twins attract non-twins to surround them.

The positive attitude that twins effuse is usually interpreted for others to have a desire to be amongst them. As twins are born with a small period of time between each other, one has to exit the mother’s womb before the other. Amongst twins, this procedure is considered to be able to define who the eldest is. As this effects the child’s perception about roles, this can also effect the twins perception about what is expected from/of them. One may take upon the role of being more protective over the other; by planning and seeing that certain things are done. The other one becomes more passive in this sense as one of the siblings does the work and they are both included in the outcome.

When it comes to helping with household errands, twins can have different roles. If one gets to do the dishes and the other one gets to dry the plaits; the roles can become static for the twins. They become experts in that role and find less comfort in swopping the errand. For practical reasons, parents/guardians expect the dishes to be washed and therefore it becomes a job for “the twins”, while when dissecting the actual work, one twin gets to do more of the specific work within the dishwashing

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26 ibid p.107
27 ibid p. 109
then the other one. This can have a great effect on the twin roles as well as the self-consciousness. If we were to look at the twins from a physiological perspective then we could see that one of the twins might be physically bigger (in comparison to the sibling) which could lead to more “work” such as the actual washing of dishes. If the sibling who is not as big could not wash the dishes (due to example body structure in height) he/she could not reach the area in which dishes are placed and might put them to dry and wait passively instead. These actions and roles between the twins may stay with them throughout their lives, though could be nourished with similar behaviors such as the dishwashing.28

4.2 Religion/Society

4.2.1 Television/Bible

Many children spend a lot of time watching different programs at various times of the day.29 A program that is frequently watched is the Swedish program “Bananas in pajamas”, displaying two twin brothers. One goes by the name B1 while the other one is called B2. The two characters share telepathic powers and usually think alike. There could be an association that the viewers may have with human twins because of the cartoon-twins. If you are a twin there is a risk of associating yourself with what you see on the television.30 If one character is labeled with the number one the other character would naturally become number two. There is a gradual increase or decrease in the worthiness of the characters. When reflecting upon human twins, the first-born may be associated with being labeled as B1 while the second born may be labeled as B2 by society.

A similar example of twin siblings being labeled differently is written in the biblical story of Jacob and Esau. The story tells a tale of two twin brothers who grew up being loved differently by their parents. The story writes of one brother clutching onto his brothers heel during birth as to stop him from being born first. Indirectly narrated

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28 ibid p.110  
as them quarrelling with each other for their parent’s approval from birth. The story ends with the first-born child selling his birthright to his younger brother.\textsuperscript{31} In another passage it is mentioned that gods Ten Commandments should not only be given to adults but they are to be given to the children.\textsuperscript{32} Children have a literal as well as a metaphorical value in the Bible. So when Jacob desires his brother’s birthright a metaphorical meaning could reflect on the importance of this property. One brother owning the rights to the other could reflect upon his view of value towards the parents. A sense of superiority is being taken into action when Jacob makes his brother give his birthrights to him before he is willing to help him.

4.2.2 Pride

There is a pride of being amongst the majority, or being a part of a group, a form of belonging. The pride in your identity is essential for how you see yourself. A religious identity is an identity that one can carry around concealed from others. Just by observing the human body in its naked form you cannot point to a religious denomination and state that you may be a part of it. But the individual takes great pride in their identity.\textsuperscript{33}

The environment has a great effect on causing specific relations to the identity. An individual can physically move from one country to another but the religious identity can be concealed and move around with the individual. The environment is responsible for modeling the people living within it.

Once an identity has been chosen by a person, that person is proud of it.\textsuperscript{34} The twin pride is always evident and displayed. Both the sixteen and the twenty-six year old twin mention a \textit{must} in mentioning their twin when presenting their identity. Despite circumstance there is a pride in belonging. The geographical trait may be altered but the individual carries a pride of their belonging with them.

\textsuperscript{31} Genesis 25:19-34  
\textsuperscript{32} Deuteronomy 6:6-7  
\textsuperscript{33} G. B Sullivan. \textit{Understanding collective pride and group identity} Routledge, 2014 p. 55  
\textsuperscript{34} Dunning, op. cit., p. 2
4.2.3 Ibeji (double birth)35

Amongst the people of Yoruba there is a belief in twins sharing one soul. It may not be the case that twins die at the same appointed time; therefore a form of soul preservation is needed to be able to maintain the relation between the living and dead. The belief is that before human-birth everyone was created in sets of two. The soul that is in heaven and a physical body that is placed on earth. Before birth, the individual agrees to terms and rules with their soul on what should be done and what should not be done. (Such as keeping away from heaven for a specific time, marriage agreements and other events that will happen in a lifetime)

There is an acknowledgment that dualism is truth. It is believed by the Yoruba people for instance that the bones of a human body are considered male while the flesh is considered female. There is always a dualistic view for society to maintain harmony.36 But amongst twins it cannot be understood which of the two are the spirit and which is the earthly sibling. They are both treated with the benefit of the doubt of beings the “good twin”.37 A more specific view is that when the “contract” was written amongst other humans of who was to be placed on earth and which should become spirit, the twins could simply not let go of each other. If one were to die the believers would create a doll that is understood to be a symbol for the surviving child to have his/her sibling manifested in the figure. The identity of a twin is something that the whole society participates in. When the surviving twin was to ask where his/her sibling is, it is accustomed to create stories of his/her existence, and the fact that the individual has deceased is silenced. As this is a belief that lives within the community and requires that everyone is closely involved in what is happening in society.38 The twins are aware of these rituals as well as what is expected from and of them once an incident occurs.

36 ibid p. 81
37 ibid p. 84
38 ibid p. 86
4.3 Pedagogy/Philosophy

4.3.1 Learning

Children are beings that always search for meaning. During the regression age, children tend to have a desire of being a part of something. An association towards something is vital to the child’s perception of him/herself. This is why there is an importance for the pedagogue to teach continuity.\(^{39}\) The concept of repeating a certain ideology helps the child find meaning in his/her self-awareness. Being able to have an ideology to rely on, a child can always refer to a concrete reason that explains an action. The pedagogues are able to either confirm a behavior or disapprove the behavior.\(^{40}\) As the means to learning change, so does the perception of learning. Children use their teachers as a comfort during a changing phase, which is why the awareness of this phenomenon is vital for teachers. The teachers are the ones who are able to mend and form the child’s identity. As they are amongst those who are present during the changing phases of a child, they are also the ones who are in position to increase or decrease a child’s present view and self-consciousness.\(^{41}\)

The image of a child is based on definitions being put upon the child that they have not chosen themselves. Since the educational systems where created by adults for children and not together with children, there are twists in interest of what would be the best outcome for development. The image of not including children in their development grows from the belief that the doctrine is to accept information and not question. A child’s inclusion in the progress relies sincerely on the teacher. If the teacher is willing to include the child’s desires then they might be able to modify how they are being taught.\(^{42}\)

\(^{41}\) Rinaldi, Carlina op. cit., p. 105
\(^{42}\) ibid p. 91
4.3.2 Tabula Rasa

The philosopher John Locke touches on the topic of identity in his work *The Essay*. Steven Pinker explains the meaning of Tabula Rasa as theory that speaks of the fundamental thought of what creates a person’s identity. The special part about this theory is that it is not based upon your own actions that give an understanding of who you are, but the fact that other peoples actions towards you creates your identity. The blank piece of sheet is a metaphor for cleanness, when born there are no ideas neither customized nor adopted by the child. It is during the child’s upbringing that he/she starts to understand its surrounding. Other people besides the subject are the influences that create a part of the child’s identity. This is a very important view when understanding a twin’s identity. Not only does the theory touch upon the concept of not being responsible for the label that others put onto you, but also it proclaims that there is not much that you can do about it. Being in a passive state you do not question it at first, you accept and learn to adept it; it becomes a part of your identity. Twins can have a certain idea of how they ought to react in certain scenarios and actively work towards upholding the perception of how a twin ought to be.

4.3.3 School

The education administration of Sweden stress the importance of an including school. This means the awareness of understanding every child’s personal needs in hope of their learning progress to develop towards the better. If teachers do not understand the progression of change for a twin then a teacher may cause more harm than help for the child in question.

Students need to be seen as individuals to be able to help their individual progress. Internally a student may believe that the best way to teach them would be in a certain manner, though they have not fully developed an adequate pedagogical view. The external point of view is that teachers may listen to this manner and not reflect upon

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45 Merve Gencer Interviewed by Saleh Mbamba 2014 (7.40 min)

46 Merve Gencer Interviewed by Saleh Mbamba 2014 (10.02 min)

it. If teachers are used to treating twins as a unit more often than individuals, then the 
*unit* will develop and not the individual. Noteworthy are the facts of an increase in 
“psychological help” since the late 20th century. The problem is that students may 
face psychological problems, which are more hidden then the physical problems. If a 
student has trisomy 21 you can sense this as a teacher due to the physical appearance, 
but if a student suffers from an identity condition it can be concealed.

As mentioned in 4.3.2, students may be shaped by *outer* factors such as other people’s 
expectations as well as perspectives of *how* a twin ought to behave. Similarly students 
constantly create *their* perspective about reality. The difference between the theory of 
Tabula Rasa and the psychological concept of *schemas* has to do with influences. 
Tabula Rasa is influenced by external forces, while the individual influences schemas. 
Schemas could be changed, but *how* a student understands a reality can be altered by 
their perception of a schema. Twins, as a unit do not share exact schemas anymore 
than two different individuals may share factors to complete their schema. But being 
unified as *twins* does not guarantee that *both* individuals will receive a specific 
understanding of a united schema. This can become problematic when trying to 
please the shared identity as a twin, rather than the individual identity. One example 
could be if a person was to ask you to think of a chair, there are specific components 
that you are willing to accept that this specific chair ought to be called “a chair” for 
the reason that its components are acceptable within *your* schema of a chair. The 
twins may or may not have the same components for what to accept in the category 
for chair. The twins may think differently as individuals, therefore a stressed point 
from the national education administration is a requirement for teachers to incorporate 
this mentality when teaching students.

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5. Analysis

This chapter will touch upon the answers given from the interviewees. It is a commentary section where I compare the answers given by the twins. The questions asked are mentioned first, than I compare the answers that the twins have provided.

5.1 Interview Commentary (twins)

• What does it mean to be a twin?

Genetics professor Patrik Magnusson from the karolinska institution says:

…There are basically no clear cut genes that differ between twins and non twins. You are more or less exactly the same. There might be some small differences, for example if there are genes in the society, that some people have and some people do not have, the effect, in body size, that could be such a factor that influences the probability that a woman that gets pregnant with twins actually delivers two live births. Because if you are too thin, or too tiny, you will not be able to fit multiple fetuses. So those are the kind of potential differences that might be there, but otherwise, if you compare the so-called Allele frequencies that variant frequencies, at certain places in the genome, in chromosome one for example there might be some difference between you and me. If we measure the frequency in those variants in these positions there is basically no position that we have found in the whole genome that differ between twins and non-twins. Maybe there is a difference, but the effects are so tiny that it is very very hard to say something with certainty.

When comparing the twin’s answers I see a different form of understanding. There seems to be a difference in all three stages. A gradual self-awareness is displayed. A very direct answer is shown from all of the twin subjects. All of the subjects mention a positive relation towards themselves and their twin. Minoo (6years) drew a conclusion that the meaning of being a twin was significant in her outer appearance she said: “It means that you have the same type of hair, and the same type of face. We have the same type of hair and the same type of face.”

While Merve (sixteen years) found contentment in the awareness of everyone in her surrounding already acknowledging that she was a twin.
It means something different from the rest of the other siblings; I don’t know what I should answer. It’s something unique, because you’ve lived in the same tummy for nine months. It’s nothing I really think about, but it’s positive, it’s cool. It’s fun, it’s special you have a form of relation, a bond.

Judy (26 years) is very conscious in the self-identity as well as the shared identity. Even here she makes it clear that she will refer to her sister as “my second half” after mentioning that one is never alone when you have a twin. There is evidence that the group identity needs to be displayed as an entity of its own. Even though they are two different categories they still manage to be entangled and associated towards each other.

It means a lot, it means that you’re never alone/lonely, but, you’re always two despite what ever is concerned. For example when my sister, twin sister is what I’ll call my second half. When she did something bad or behaved in a bad way in school, then I was automatically involved. It felt like a label, as if it’s not just one I’m not alone there’s always two.

- How would you explain the bond between you and your twin?

Minoo (6 years) mentions a friendship, a bond of always having a playmate; an interpretation of this would be that you are never alone. She mentions that there is a form of playfulness in having someone around you all the time and she said: “We are friends, and it is fun to have a twin. We have the same clothes and go together all the same.”

Merve (16 years) understood my question as to explain the position in which they both play. She informs about her protective role, which is to take care of the other sibling. As they are usually found together this is a skill that can be practiced often.

The bond, between us is that I am over protective. We usually hang out together, and I’m like “be careful be careful”, like a mother. I wouldn’t be the same with my other siblings, because they’re older. The bond is different; it’s like they say we understand each other better.

Judy (26 year) touched upon the quality of the bond. There seems to be certain connectivity in understanding how the twin sibling would react and how the sibling
would feel in certain situations. Unlike the second subject it is proclaimed that the bond is *greater* than to a mother. It is stronger as one has always been around the other and therefore the bond is closer to her sibling than to her mother.

It’s not a sibling feeling, it’s *more* than a sibling feeling. It’s *more* than a mother feeling, it’s a person that has been with you all the time, all the time since you where young, your development as child, I mean *child*, during the infant times, when you got older, she has always been around, we’ve always been with each other. It’s a special bond, that everyone cannot get just twins.

- Are dizygotic twins treated differently from monozygotic twins?

Minoo (6 years) does not seem to know the difference between monozygotic and dizygotic twins and attempts to provide an answer in comparing other sets of twins that are in the same class as she is. Worth mentioning is how she speaks about the “others”. She groups the twins as well as groups herself and her sister then provides an answer to the question, she said: 50 “They don’t dare ask, we don’t dare ask questions, and they don’t either.”

Merve (16 years) and Judy (26 years) both agree to the phenomenon of *first sight*. They both state that the differences between monozygotic and dizygotic twins are the physical appearances. The difference between the second and third subject, would be that the second subject believes that there is no difference in how twins are treated. She believes that twins are treated exactly the same because despite twin-ship everyone ought to be treated in the same way. “Usually you mix monozygotic twins because they look so alike, but with dizygotic twins they do not look a like. Fraternal twins could be guy and girl. But they aren’t treated differently, they’re still humans.”

The third subject claims that this is not the case. She states that she was treated as an individual *until* her network was informed about her twin status. After this information was passed on the network would combine her together with her sister and they would be “the twins”. Even here the subject shifts between talking about herself in first-person singular and talking about the twin identity in first-person plural.

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50 Minoo Swan Interviewed by Saleh Mbamba 2014 (can be found at 2.38min)
Always when we hung out with each other at other places we’d receive the label when they knew that we were twins. It’s troublesome, even amongst friends. Say we meet new friends, and they know that we’re twins then it’s “aha ok the twins” it’s the label.

Professor Magnusson agrees with Judy’s claim, he states that:

…The special thing between those two classes is that monozygotic twins are very similar to each other, not only genetically but also physically and personality wise. They tend to be similar, when we meet monozygotic twins, who look identical, many times what people often focus on are the small differences that they actually show. So for example if one is very extravert than the other, then that is kind of “oh this person, this twins is so extravert, and other is not.” But that is actually not true if you compare it to the rest of the population, then they are probably both extravert or both introvert.

We see how the focus is based upon the differences between twins. The understanding that twins are by default supposed to be similar in a sense, the people around desire to concentrate on the differences rather than the similarities. The relation between religion and the identity of a dizygotic twin is more likely to occur with dizygotic twins than monozygotic as they differ completely. The professor continues the conversation by stating that dizygotic twins are no different from regular siblings. “And the fact that we know that monozygotic twins are identical, and dizygotic twins are like siblings in general, they share fifty percent of their genes, only fifty.”

This states that monozygotic twins are in fact regular siblings. The theory of Tabula rasa plays a big roll in this claim. If dizygotic twins are genetically seen as regular siblings, then the special bond that Judy speaks about is created by an outer influence. The tabula rasa proclaims this. Being seen as something special though the twin identity is associated with the twin can bring great confusion to how twins perceive their own identity. If there is confusion within the twin identity, the religious identity can fill the missing gap. I will touch more upon the association in the bottom question how has religion formed your identity.

• Do you have any allergies or habits that are different from your sibling?

Minoo (6 years) has not reflected upon the differences between them, but said that they do everything together; the we identity is nourished and gets an opportunity to grow. The sense of belonging is also practiced and understood by the subject therefore she also claimed that it is something considered as fun. “We do something’s differently but I don’t know, I have to think about that for a while… I don’t know.”

Minoo Swan Interviewed by Saleh Mbamba 2014 (can be found at 7.20 min)
have to think about it, I’m still thinking, but I think we do everything together, I don’t know.”

Merve (16 years) explained that she would mention to her sibling how she felt about certain situations, such as swimming. It becomes one-sided that she keeps telling him to be aware of certain dangers while he is silent. No sense of confirmation is verbally spoken of, but the physicality is expected. It is expected for him to protect her when she is in need of this service.

I generally care more, if he goes out I ask “where are you going, who are you going with, why”, he is also like this but if we’re out and swimming, I’m the one who says “don’t jump in the water with your head first”, he wouldn’t say that to me, even though I know that he thinks like this that I shouldn’t do it either.

Judy (26 years) has a similar reasoning, stating that the emotional role amongst them is different. One would show emotion while the other one would not. A sense of dualism is displayed. One twin has the role to be silent while the other one compensates this by informing the other in various ways. One of these ways would be to cry in front of the other sibling while watching a movie. “Our habits are similar but I am more social than she is, and we have similar interests, but more the social part, I’m more internally sensitive, she is also but I am more like if I watch a movie than I can cry but she can’t.”

• What type of questions have you got from people?

The subjects all focus on the twin identity when answering this question. There is a form of curiosity from the observers about twins. Treated as if they were ambassadors to speak about the relation between them. Both Merve (16 years) and Judy (26 years) sighed when answering this question. Though Judy gave more insight in understanding why people would want to separate twins. “She’s married and has children, and maybe couldn’t go out this specific evening; maybe they’d tell me “we’re going out but don’t tell her”, so this is not that they separate us, but more done so that she doesn’t get hurt.”

A form of consideration from family members and close friends is shown. They
acknowledge that they are not always perceived as twins, but the individual identity is also mentioned. This is positive as preferences are separated and the twins are not always treated as one unit. This would also mean that the close friends and family members are not only aware but also act upon the twins as individuals.

• How do you present your twin-identity to others?

Minoo (6 years) and Merve (16 years) both state a form of exciting in presenting their sibling. They believe that it is something fun. Both of them believe that other people label them before they present themselves. As others know that they are twins they only need to confirm the theory. Judy (26 years) presents a theory that provides a new perspective to the identity question in this essay. She says that she is herself and has a twin sister. It is presented as to being a part of a collection.

If I present my self, it’s important for me to always mention, “I have a car, I have a house, I work as a teacher and I am also a twin”. It’s important because it’s something done automatically it’s a part of me. It’s something that happens automatically, it’s a part of me. The importance for me is that I have a job, that I have a twin sister and it’s important to mention that I have a twin. So that you see, even if we’re the same sometimes, than it’s...yeah, I have a twin. It’s just something that just happens automatically, why I say it? I don’t know, it’s just something that I say, because it feels like it’s important.

Mentioning items and achievements that she has and adds the twin title. There is a difference in believing to being a part of the twin identity at all times, and being yourself as an own identity and to have a twin identity. This form of reflection seems to mature with time. In comparison she has more life experience then the other two subjects, which could be the reason for her answer.

• Which expectations do people tend to have when they find out that you are a twin?

Minoo (6years) has difficulties of seeing herself outside of the twin identity and therefore continues to answer collectively. Though modifying the question to suit her lack of understanding certain words, she answers that it is expected of her to be happy for being a twin. Merve (16years) compares herself to her brother and that people
would want to see evidence of them both to be able to compare them. “They react with “oh is it true? how fun”. When they ask if it’s a girl or boy say it’s a boy, than they ask me what he looks like, if we look alike and if they can see a picture.”

Judy (26 years) acknowledges similarites as people would ask her and have a desire to have their questions answered. To be able to see if they are preconceived notions about twins being the same are correct.

It’s always like we’re the same. “Is she also like this, does she also like music? Does she also like to dance?” Is it the same? Does she also study to become a teacher”? It’s always the same. That’s what I always get to hear, is she also like this is she always like that, it’s always the same.

• How has being a twin formed your identity?

Merve (16 years) mentions a form of understanding that she has formed her identity. Even by being together with her sibling from birth and doing a lot of things together, she still believes that she has formed her identity. She even mentions that had it not been for her twin, she would still be the same person that she is. “There’s a lot I think, I mean, I don’t know, I don’t understand. What being a twin has had for meaning in that? No it hasn’t formed my identity. I have formed my identity, but not because I am a twin.”

Judy (26 years) has interesting answers, as they are very reflecting. She claims that a weaker understanding of the self-identity has weakened. A sense of not being able to have practiced and worked on the self-identity has made her weaker.

It has formed it a lot, privately, socially; I need to find the words. I’ve become weak, I’ve become very weak, I will tell you why weak and not strong. Strong is something I became later when I moved away from her, but weak. The reason I became weak and doubtful because we’ve always been two, than you’re strong. It comes from the upbringing.

This information is vital for this study. The subject never had the opportunity to work on herself. This led to a sense of insecurity. Not being able to work on herself has had a major influence in how she worked with her self-reflection. A sense of never feeling complete is a thought that she believes that she will always have with her.
• How has religion formed your identity?

G.B Sullivan mentioned in his work *Understanding collective pride and group identity*\(^{52}\) the amount of pride that an individual has in being a part of the majority. As twins are seldom a part of the majority in society there seems to be an alternative form of pride. The religious aspect gives a sense of comfort. Merve (16 years) and Judy (26 years) both believe that their identity has been shaped due to religion. A form of comfort was mentioned in Judy’s answer, she states that religion helped her as therapy to deal with the separation between her and her twin.

...this about how I valued things comes from religion, I think tomorrow God comes, gives me better times and better hope. It has formed me to become a stronger person, because I have always been able to turn to a deity. It has formed me in a way that I have been able to proceed, live my life without her, the separation; just become stronger as a person due to religion.

A form of gratitude of having a religion to rely upon, not only did she mention that she understood that all people will one day die, but that we die as individuals. This is an important realization as the essence of being a twin, is that you are born simultaneously; separation is bond to happen. The identity is based upon the action of birth. The religious view that she has provides hope when she was to be separated from (as she points out) her other half. Religious belief does not only work as a comfort that everything will be okay in the future, but also as a preparation for when the time comes. In this case, Judy finds comfort in the collective of being a part of a wider group. The area, in which her sister usually gave comfort to, can now be given by the acceptance of being a part of a religious deity. Other people who are a part of the religious group can give a similar comfort to the subject as her sister used to.

• What are the benefits (in school) of being a twin?

Merve (16 years) mentions that you can have combined teacher-parent meetings. This is to be seen as something positive and a benefit for the parents. This statement claims that the combination of two different people should be treated as a unit.

\(^{52}\) Sullivan.G.B. op. cit., p. 55
There are no benefits in school. Or yes, for the parents, you can have parent-teacher conferences together. But it depends, it I was in the same class as Burak. When he forgot his homework I could have had the homework with me. Or if I didn’t understand something than he could have helped me with that. He was always concentrated during class.

Judy (26 years) disagrees with this claim. With the example provided, she states that the unit is problematic. When reflecting upon her school years she was not as fortunate as to see the benefits of combining teacher-parent meetings. When seen as a unit, accusations could easily be made on behalf of both individuals even though just one person created the cause.

We had a horrible teacher that was on our case because we were two. She could always say if the one of us, we had a lab, and were supposed to work with it at home, and obviously my twin and I live under the same roof. We did the lab, which had to do with filling an empty bottle with water, and put it in the freezer, than write down what happened. Then come back to school the next day, and we’re reading, she reads what she wrote from her lab notes and she reads “I put the bottle in the refrigerator”, but my twin meant the freezer. Already there I understood that she said wrong, because I saw that she put it in the freezer, I’m twenty six years old and can still mix those two up between the freezer and fridge, it happens. And then the teacher was furious in front of everyone and would say “you two, have never understood anything, how can you call this, and you’re in the seventh grade, don’t you know the difference between freezer and fridge, than you’re not mature for a seventh grader.

It is wiser to be treated as an individual than as a unit. As it is often seen by others that it was expected for them to be together, it was as if something was inadequate when seen without the sibling. Judy does not only advocate for the individual identity but also has a desire to not having to take responsibility for another person’s actions. By mentioning her present age and still being haunted by the incident, a sense of traumatization still affects her in present day.

- What are the benefits of being a twin when you are outside of school?

Minoo (6 years) explains that it is easier to draw when alone. She did not explain why this would be the rationalization. Though, a theory could be that being together with each other as often as they do, self-work could be done when alone. When next to your sibling there could be tendencies of comparing work. Merve (16 years) did not know if there were any benefits. Her fundamental ideology
is that everyone is an individual and therefore also treated as individuals.

I don’t know, it’s nothing I have thought of. There probably are benefits but I don’t know. The benefit? I don’t know. You’re still two different people. You’re like any other regular sibling but you are twins. And maybe you understand each other more than a regular sibling.

Judy (26 years) touches upon the confusion of being in between. Acknowledgement that there is an identity that is shared so therefore needs to be upheld, but also that there is an individual identity that needs to be exercised.

(…)WE’RE NOT like each other but we are, and there are some common grounds that we have but some are different, but she understands it as two different. When she’s calm I am calm, but I have the wilder side, and I don’t want to show her that side, preferably without her, that’s why it could sometimes be straining if we’re going out to party or go out for a coffee with her, and some guys would come to talk than I don’t want to show her how open and wild I am “aah we can go out”. She was more religious some how, she would say “no this is haram”, just come back”. I didn’t want her to have that view of me because it could feel as if it could destroy sometimes, SOME-times, but if it’s shopping that it’s good, so it’s 50-50, depends where we are outside, if it’s shopping than fine.

Not only do other people have a view of how they should act, but there is also an idea of how the twin believes is expected of them to act. In the twin identity there is a certain perspective that the subject sees is expected for her to act upon. Not only does she consciously strive to uphold this view, but she also respects that her sister might have an opinion about a certain topic. Another benefit is that she believes that dizygotic twins can be seen in town and hide the shared identity. By not physically looking alike they can blend in as “usual siblings”. This is seen to being positive, as the individual identity has a chance to develop.

5.2 Conclusion

Twins can find tranquility in being a “younger” sibling and an “older” sibling. If one of the twins enrolls in a behavior that allows for disobedience the sibling tends to balance the portrayed behavior by being very obedient. The understanding of the united identity is taken in consideration by the sibling. Awareness of an us identity is

53 Not allowed
highly vital. They are aware of being portrayed as a homogeneous group and do not desire to risk being put to blame for another person’s actions.\(^{54}\)

As the siblings are being encouraged to be together, they also grow a comfort in the acknowledgment that there is a person next to them. The feeling of having support in the creating of one’s self-confidence is evident as there is another person who is going through a similar phase. There is a sense of comfort in being able to talk about a particular incident, which is needed in the self-reflection phase of one’s own identity.\(^{55}\)

The relation between religion and the creating of a dizygotic twins’ identity is limited. There seems to be evidence that the morals taught from religion are the cause of certain patterns in one’s self-awareness. Though the subjects show that by being born a twin similar justifications can be made. Religion functioned as a solution to the problems that society can cause on the twins’ identity. All of the twins understood that they were different from their peers and an identity was forced upon them.

Two of the subjects used religion as being a form of comfort for when the separation was to take place. Only Judy (26 years old) was very detailed on how religion worked on a concrete level. But also she is the only one of the subjects who has reached a stage in her life where direct separation of the twins has taken place. As this happened she also searched for solutions to fill the gap in which she believes her twin used to fill. She decided to fill this gap with a deeper understanding in religion.

In section 4.2.3 the people of Yoruba found ways of dealing with this problem. The concept of preserving the soul for the living being had its rituals. This is a direct solution for one of the separations. The subjects did not mention death, but Judy (26 years old) mentioned a physical separation, which was difficult for her to cope with. All subjects are in different stages in their lives and seem to be dealing with the problems in various ways.

The first subject (Minoo) is in a stage where the “extra identity” is accepted as being fun and not problematic.

By being a part of a twin society she answered the questions using \(we\) instead of \(I\).

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\(^{54}\) Judy Osman Interviewed by Saleh Mbamba 2014 (can be found at 45.05 min)

\(^{55}\) Merve Gencer Interviewed by Saleh Mbamba 2014 (can be found at 15.50 min)
This shows that she speaks for her sister as well even though she was not physically in the room. A sense of inclusion was important to state. At a very early age she would identify herself together with her sister as if they shared similar thoughts and views of the questions that where asked just to one of them.

The second subject (Merve) was very clear in stating a form of personal identity. It was stated how she in particular acted in one way while her brother was compared to her. She seems to have understood that they were two different people with two different lives though they could find refuge in the identity that they shared together. It was something very positive but also an understanding that their relation was special but it could not be explained why nor how it could be used for anything specific. The fact that her twin shared an upbringing with her shaped her identity in responsibility towards everyone in her surroundings.

Being able to always have someone to be protective about would makes her conscious about what is happening in the surroundings around them both. A belief that everyone should be treated the same as individuals; the reasons provided are never compared to other sets of twins but to non-twins. This is particularly interesting as it shows traces that the only sets of twins that are compared to non-twins are the specific individuals asked for this study. A form of self-awareness without being clear that she saw herself as an ambassador for all twins. Yet, she states an importance in always mentioning that she is a twin. Subsequently she claims that she created her identity. But by being a twin it has not formed her identity, but the first reaction to the question was that it had not only formed her identity but also it had formed it a lot. A dualistic understanding is presented as this particular age shows evidence of wanting to grow as an individual; this becomes problematic when an “extra” identity is also attached to the individual.

The third subject (Judy) is more versatile and philosophical in her answers. Not only does she refer to previous experiences that she has had with being a part of the twin society. But she also mentions how it has taken away her confidence to develop as an individual. The mere fact that society creates the identity in which twins are placed within has done more harm to her self-confidence than any other experience. A constant need for confirmation from other people is often searched for. A sense of incompleteness has haunted her after they were separated. Her religious beliefs have
helped her to become more confident based on the individual-identity and not the shared identity.

To be able to use the morals that has been taught from an early stage to be able to use it in a later stage in life. Since religious morals where applied to the subject they also include how to find tranquility in not feeling complete. A reminder that even though you may be born together and lived your lives together you will be separated at some point. Elisabeth Schönbeck claims “twins should not be taken as regular siblings.”

The assumption that you will be together is evident. But this contradicts with the theories of the director of the Swedish Twin Registry. Patrik Magnusson claims that dizygotic twins should be seen as regular siblings. The difference between the two depends on how specific the individual is. The researcher is much more detailed while the author unites the two sub-classes and unifies them.

As mentioned in 3.5.1 there is a need to categorizing other people instead of them choosing what to be categorized by is a historical attitude that is currently happening. Preconceived notions about belonging and groupings are daily struggles in societies. As much as grouping is needed in a society, it can also be counter-productive if the assumptions are incorrect with the individual in question.

When speaking about twins as a teacher you have to be correct in understanding which group of twins you are speaking about. When using the terminology twins you could be referring to just one sub-class but mentioning both in trivial speech. As the individual takes great pride in her identity, being referred to something that they themselves do not acknowledge to being correct can cause a disturbance; other people labeling you and placing your personal identity as to being something that you have not chosen. As mentioned earlier in 3.5.1 people have a need to categorize language. It is a way to make sense of one’s surrounding. This can become a problem when an individual is being categorized instead of choosing what he/she should be categorized as.

This is a fundamental problem that needs to be recognized by teachers as well as the general public. If teachers treat “twins” as a unit at all times then this is the category

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56 Schönbeck, op. cit., p. 104
57 Sullivan.G.B. op. cit., p. 55
of identity that the twins will find tranquility in. Teachers need to give their twin students a chance to develop the individual identity. As teachers are in a position to form students, they are also the ones who form the way students may rationalize and perceive themselves. An awareness of the position that teachers have is essential for the twins’ awareness of their personal identity. Teachers need to be conscious about their ability to influence students.

5.3 Future Understanding

I firmly believe that this paper should work as a guideline for teachers and other pedagogical staff to be aware of the potential mindset that a dizygotic twin may have. It is evident that dizygotic twins experience a split sense of belonging, a dualistic view that society treats them differently; a confusing state of mind where no direct expertise can help these children in need. Special pedagogy may be needed in certain cases to be able to develop a twin’s mentality and self-awareness. If twins have a special bond or a bond that differs from their classmates, then there may be lessons to be taught to non-twins by doing more research about twins and their special relations. As there is not much studies done on this topic, twins are forced to confine to pedagogy that are not made for them. Similarly it has to be acknowledged that these types of twin studies ought to be applied to non-twins as well as just for twins. I am very aware of the limitations that this essay may have due to the small amount of subjects being interviewed.

This is not a generalization to speak for all dizygotic twins, but should be looked at as a starting point in an attempt to understand what situations may occur for teachers to be aware of. Teachers should simply see this as a guideline and a welcoming to the world of twins. Both monozygotic as well as dizygotic twins may be affected differently depending on how the pedagogue treats them in their class. This is why it is vital for teachers to have an idea of what could be going on in the mind of a twin.
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Swan, Minoo Interviewed by Saleh Mbamba 16-09-2014 (17.00 min)
Appendix
Interview answers

- What does it mean to be a twin?

Minoo:
It means that you have the same type of hair, and the same type of face. We have the same type of hair and the same type of face.\(^{58}\)

Merve:
It means something different from the rest of the other siblings; I do not know what I should answer. It is something unique, because you have lived in the same tummy for nine months. It is nothing I really think about, but it is positive, it is cool. It is fun, it is special you have a form of relation, a bond.\(^{59}\)

Judy:
It means a lot, it means that you are never alone/lonely, but you are always two despite what ever is concerned. For example when my sister, twin sister is what I will call my second half. When she did something bad or behaved in a bad way in school, than I was automatically involved. It felt like a label, as if it is not just one I am not alone there iss always two. It is both positive and negative. And if someone was to do good than it was never two, than it was always one. It was as if one was an angel and not the other one. If one received MVG\(^{60}\) than the question was what has the other one been doing? If I was to do something good, than it would be Judy did this and not “the twins”. But if it was bad behavior than it was “the twins”. So, we where categorized in one way, and I have never come away from it, how ever much I developed/changed it was never me who “beat up that girl last time at the school” it was my sister and not me, so, you get the label on you that it is the twins. If one is mean than the other one is mean. If one is good than maybe the other one is also good, but not always, but just this thing with bad behavior is always like, “you are not one, you are two” but when I did something good, or she did something good than it

\(^{58}\) Interview Minoo
\(^{59}\) Interview Merve
\(^{60}\) Equivalent to the highest grade. An A, or a 5/5.
was only her who received the attention. So this with attention is very. But how it feels to be a twin otherwise, feels, for me, it feels good, but sometimes heavy. Because sometimes I wanted to be, sometimes it felt like I wanted to just leave without her, but she was always there in my way. It was like “go you two, go you two”, mom would always say go the both of you, so, mom was also very participant in this, it was always us two. It never worked. If I was going to start football practice, than it had to be you and your sister. “is your sister going? No? than there is no football training for you either”. So we had to always talk amongst each other me and my twin and than “ok ok, if I go than we say this”, so it was always like this, decisions came from both of us, it was not good enough with just one. It had to be two to be able to get what ever we wanted through.  

- How would you explain the bond between you and your twin?

Minoo:
We are friends, and it is fun to have a twin. We have the same clothes and go together all the same.  

Merve:
The bond, between us is that I am over protective. We usually hang out together, and I am like “be careful be careful”, like a mother. I would not be the same with my other siblings, because they are older. The bond is different; it is like they say we understand each other better. Friends, surrounding, I cannot describe it, but it is there. When they ask “aah you are twins?” than I say yeah. It is unusual to be a twin. People are shocked when they meet twins. I do not have many twin friends; it is usual to be twins, but not that usual. When you hear that someone is a twin you react to it.  

Judy:
It is not a sibling feeling, it is more than a sibling feeling. It is more than a mother feeling, it is a person that has been with you all the time, all the time since you where

61 Interview Judy.
62 Interview Minoo
63 Interview Merve
young, your development as child, I mean child, during the infant times, when you got older, she has always been around, we have always been with each other. It is a special bond, that everyone cannot get just twins. I think you can only get it if two siblings have been in the same class the whole time, and been with each other all the time, like if there is only a year between them and someone goes repeats a year in school. It was school that made us close to each other, we where in the same grade all the time, so the bond that we have is creepy, we think a like sometimes as well. With codes, sometimes it is enough with eye contact; it is enough that she just smiles and looks the other way and I can understand what it is that she means. It is, it is it is a very strong bond it is very difficult to destroy the bond. There is also trust, because what ever happens, she is always forgiven, because you cannot, well, for me she might have snitched to mom because I have done something, but at the end we forgive each other about things, it is a special bond. We can never lose the friendship but we can get extremely angry at each other. You can do the worlds most awful thing; you would think, “It is still my sis, my twin sister” she will understand me, so, this bond cannot be found everywhere, just with twins, and now we get along very well, not always though. We could also find ourselves in a fight at times, but the bond itself, and the relation has always been good because we had secrets, we had our codes, we knew what could be told to mom and the family, we knew what we could do behind their backs. For me, we understood each other; we knew that if she was going to do something I knew why she would do it. It was a special bond; we always understand each other, despite what it is.64

- Are dizygotic twins treated differently from monozygotic twins?

Minoo:
They do not dare ask, we do not dare ask questions, and they do not either.65

Merve:
Monozygotic twins have more feelings. They share feelings, because they usually look like each other, if one gets hurt than the other one could feel it, from what I have heard. It might be true. They are treated differently from other people because they

64 Interview Judy
65 Interview Minoo
look like each other. Dizygotic twins may have similar features, but they do not look alike. Usually you mix monozygotic twins because they look so alike, but with dizygotic twins they do not look a like. Fraternal twins could be guy and girl. But they are not treated differently, they are still humans. Why would they be treated differently? Everyone should be treated the same. People do not treat twins differently; monozygotic twins just look the same. But they maybe are a little bit more popular because they are “ah you are twins and you look like each other”. At first, but I think it becomes normal afterwards. I have not been treated differently because I am a twin, I have been treated exactly the same as everyone else.

**Judy:**
When it comes to first sight, that we do not look the same, esthetically, it is not everyone that understands that we are twins because we are not alike. I am tall, she is short, I have light her she has dark black hair, dark black eyebrows, she has rough features. She has features that I would say are more like a *latina*, while I am more light, and light brown and more European, so we are not alike, I am tall she is short, so we are not alike but as soon as you knew that we where twins than we would receive the label. Always when we hung out with each other at other places we would receive the label when they knew that we where twins. It is troublesome, even amongst friends. Say we meet new friends, and they know that we are twins than it is “aha ok the twins” it is the label. But worst was in school, because we where in the same class. We where always put in the same class. You know when you are new in class and there are new students, we where always together because we knew each other already, obviously we did not know the others, and when the others came to present themselves to *us* it was automatic for them, than they found out that we where twins, and they have seen us together all the time. We went home together, invited them to us, so already there they gave us the label. Than when we started high school, I changed as we chose different alignments in subjects, so she *my twin* started studying at another high school and I was at another one, so we studied at different schools. But than she did not want to be without me, she really wanted to be in a class close to mine, so she changed. She changed to my class and it was like an evil circle. I could not tell her no, I did not want you here, do not change to my class. It felt secure

66 Interview Merve
67 Interview Merve
but than I felt “ok her again”, because I wanted to be free and have my own friends. Because all of our friends, where the same. It was not as if she had her own friends and I had mine, my friends where also her friends. I did not have any privacy, she was always involved. And this was during the school years, we had similar friends all the time, than when I started high school all the friends that where in my class, and she started a high school where she did not know anyone, so she would search back to the comfort, so she started in my class. Somewhat because I was there, but also somewhat because all of her friends where there. When she came back, the label *aah the twins* have now started in the same class again. Now I am 16-17 stop calling me for “the twins”. She is her I am me, and you can never get away from it. It never mattered if she changed class but it is the label that the students put upon you. It could be a new person, but he would understand the label very soon that “it is the twins”. Why? I do not really know, because we are always together, we grab the buss together home, and so do friends, but I think we had the same jokes, the same personalities, we had the same…not clothing style but we spoke the same way, how you gesticulate with hands and so, we where the same in these ways and that is why I think it becomes an extra thing how we, *them* are the same.

The only difference would be the first time they see us, the esthetical part. That we do not look the same. But I had friends who where monozygotic twins, two of them, guys, monozygotic twins, and two girls who where monozygotic twins, and we where treated the *exact* same way as they where. So I do not think there is a difference, only the esthetical part, that *they* look like twins directly, and they receive the label, and for us it maybe took one or two days, or as soon as they heard that these two where twins than it became that we received the label. But not as if we where in town together and people saw it, but the only difference was the esthetical look, as for how we where treated I do not think there is a difference at all.68

**Do you have any allergies or habits that are different from your sibling?**

**Minoo:**

We do somethings differently but I do not know, I have to think about that for a

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68 Interview Judy
while… I do not know.\textsuperscript{69} I have to think about it, I am still thinking, but I think we do everything together, I do not know.\textsuperscript{70}

**Merve:**

He had asthma in the beginning, when he was small. Than he, has not had it for a while. And now I have asthma. Our habits are different, I am more emotional, I care more, or I show that I care more than he does. I generally care more, if he goes out I ask “where are you going, who are you going with, why”, he is also like this but if we’re out and swimming, I am the one who says “do not jump in the water with your head first”, he would not say that to me, even though I know that he thinks like this that I should not do it either.\textsuperscript{71} It is a form of protection, I think we both protect each other, but he does not say it that much, he shows it instead, like, sometimes. I cannot protect him I am a girl but I mean, if he was to be in a fight I cannot protect him, they will hit me, but if for example if I am in a fight or if I am outside, and I tell him that some guy came and wanted to hit me than he would protect me, THAN I see that he cares, because we have difficulties with showing emotions live.\textsuperscript{72}

**Judy:**

I have no allergies, but she has asthma, and her skin is very sensitive, sensitive for the sun and always starts to scratch her self when it is too warm so she is much more bodily sensitive, she gets irritations and so on. She has also had asthma. Our habits are similar but I am more social than she is, and we have similar interests, but more the social part, I am more internally sensitive, she is also but I am more like if I watch a movie than I can cry but she cannot. So this sensitivity, but I am more social when I talk to people than you see that my personality is like this, I am very generous, but with her she is more cold when she talks to people so it is more about the social parts that differ. But habits are similar, our musical taste is the same, we love dancing, we love going out, we love being amongst people and being with friends. We share all these attributes and interests, fixing our hair and clothes, it is the same, but the internal parts with emotions are a little bit different.\textsuperscript{73}

\textsuperscript{69} Interview Minoo
\textsuperscript{70} Interview Minoo
\textsuperscript{71} Interview Merve
\textsuperscript{72} Interview Merve
\textsuperscript{73} Interview Judy
• What types of questions have you gotten from people?

Minoo:
(Have other people asked you how it is to be a twin?) 74
It is good that they ask, I tell them that it was kind of them to say so.

Merve:
“How does it feel to be a twin”, like that, and, if he gets more things because he is a guy. They ask how many siblings I have, I say five siblings and one twin brother, than they say “aah how does it feel to be a twin, is it true”. There is always a focus on the twin identity, I do not know why. It is not that every family has a twin. It is maybe one in every four that have a twin. 75

Judy:
It could be, do you think the same? How does it feel to be a twin? If you get hurt does she also get hurt? It is these types of questions. Sometimes it could be, “why do you do like this?” If we did something, in a way, why are you laughing? Why do you think this is funny, while nobody else thought it was funny, only us two. Why do you think it is funny? But questions are mainly about how it is to be a twin, and if you are injured, it is classical questions. Do you think a like? It is the same type of questions. Us as a pair are usually the questions. I have got questions sometimes, than she has got questioned sometimes. It could be questions like “could you please come with us out, but do not tell your twin”. We are separated by few, but it is by these friends-friends who have had us as friends since we were children. I think it could be like this amongst friends too, but I think it is mostly through family, because maybe, she is married and has children, and maybe could not go out this specific evening; maybe they would tell me “we are going out but do not tell her”, so this is not that they separate us, but more done so that she does not get hurt. But questions that I have got, she has also got from friends and siblings, but this is more if you are going and do not want to hurt the other person, because we went out and I knew that she could not go out, “please come with us but do not tell her”, so in this was there is a difference but

74 Interview Minoo
75 Interview Merve
not in other ways. Within the family if we would go out swimming and she could not go swim at the moment than maybe it can feel unjust for her that “the whole family is going swimming, and not you”, so it was like “Judy you can come with us but do not tell your sister that we ate ice cream over there as well,” so that she does not get hurt and gets a picture that we had lots of fun without her, and vice versa. Often during parties “do not tell Judy so she gets hurt, she lives far from here”, those types of things, otherwise we always get the same questions from friends and so on. So there is a difference with questions. 76

- **How do you present your twin-identity to others?**

Minoo:
(Do you usually tell people who you have never met before that you are a twin?) 77
They usually say, “you are twins”, they say it first, because they think that we look alike, I think it is good because we are. 78 If they ask me if I am a twin I tell them that yes I am a twin. It is fun being a twin, because we are similar. It is fun being the same. We can put on similar clothes and they can guess who is Boo (sister) or Minoo. 79

Merve:
I say that it is fun. If they ask than I say what all my siblings’ names are, than I say “my twin brother Burak”. I do not say, “ah I have a twin, I have a twin, his name is Burak. It is not like that.” But it always comes as an obviousness that I have a twin. It is not important that I present him as my twin, but it is just something I do because it is fun. I have never tried presenting him just by his name. Most people know that we are twins, but if it is someone new I let him present himself. But if he is not there than I always say, “yea my twin brother.” It is a habit that I have maybe. It is important to me, nothing I have thought of, nothing I put time on. 80

76 Interview Judy
77 Interview Minoo
78 Interview Minoo
79 Interview Minoo
80 Interview Merve
Judy:
Emotional, cannot hold secrets, but that is more towards close friends. But if I was to present her to others I would say identical, inside that is.
I do not really think about it, *I am a twin*, it is more like *Judy, and I have a twin sister*. It is the only thing I say, it is always that way. If I present my self, it is important for me to always mention, “I have a car, I have a house, I work as a teacher and I am also a twin”. It is important because it is something done automatically it is a part of me. It is something that happens automatically, it is a part of me. The importance for me is that I have a job, that I have a twin sister and it is important to mention that I have a twin. So that you see, even if we are the same sometimes, than it is…yeah, I have a twin. It is just something that just happens automatically, why I say it? I do not know, it is just something that I say, because it feels like it is important. It is like saying that, “I have a daughter”, I am a mother…and I am a twin. It is this feeling that I have. Why I do it? I do not know, it is just a feeling that I have, internal.\(^{81}\)

- **Which expectations do people tend to have when they find out that you are a twin?**

Minoo:
(Do you know what expectations mean? People want you to be in a certain way, do you understand what I mean by that? E.g. If mom puts food for you, she *expects* you to eat it)\(^{82}\)
They expect me to be happy.\(^{83}\)

Merve:
They react with “oh is it true? how fun”. When they ask if it is a girl or boy say it is a boy, than they ask me what he looks like, if we look alike and if they can see a picture.\(^{84}\)

\(^{81}\) Interview Judy
\(^{82}\) Interview Minoo
\(^{83}\) Interview Minoo
\(^{84}\) Interview Merve
Judy:
“Is she also like you”? is she also social, and nice and caring? It is always like we are the same. “Is she also like this, does she also like music? Does she also like to dance?” Is it the same? Does she also study to become a teacher”? It is always the same. That is what I always get to hear, is she also like this is she always like that, it is always the same. So it is like a look-a-like, for them it feels like a look-a-like. Than it could be that “are you also good at…are you both also good at different qualities? Is she also educated?” so it always comes in. So they see me and compare me to her. It could be the opposite; it could be if someone knows that she is a twin, than they ask her “is she the same like you”? What I experience she also experiences, so she is also used to it. “Does she also have kids? Is she also married?” to her that is. It is always the similarities, “is she like this, is she like that”? That is their expectations; they think that we are the same.85

- How has being a twin formed your identity?

Minoo:
(Do people want you to be a certain way because you are a twin?)
mmm
(When people see you and say “oh you are a twin” what do you tell them after that?)
Do you mean what I say to them? I tell them yes I am a twin, and they say “oh how fun” and I tell them yes it is fun being a twin, because we are the same. It is fun because we can put on the same clothes and they can guess who it is, if it is Boo or Minoo.86

Merve:
There is a lot I think, I mean, I do not know, I do not understand. What being a twin has had for meaning in that? No it has not formed my identity. I have formed my identity, but not because I am a twin. Twin? I am just a twin, I just am. There is a bond, but it is just a bond. I am still the person I am; maybe I would have been the

85 Interview Judy
86 Interview Minoo
same person even if I were not a twin.  

**Judy:**

Wait, I need to think a little bit. It is just this part, I have never (pause) this part with identity, it is really hard. It is a really hard question. Please repeat your question I need to hear it several times.

*How, has being a twin formed your identity?*

It has formed it a lot, privately, socially; I need to find the words. I have become *weak*, I have become very weak, I will tell you why weak and not strong. Strong is something I became later when I moved away from her, but weak. The reason I became weak and doubtful because we have always been two, than you are strong. It comes from the upbringing. Always *you two*, if I was going somewhere she was supposed to always be with me. If she was shopping I was supposed to be with her, so we have always been two. Now imagine, if you are the both of you all the time and someone separates you than you feel doubtful about the reality. “ah to I dare go shopping myself now without her, what if I will need her opinion”? This thing about qualities and skills like in school, imagine if I was good at mathematics because of her? Because she sat next to me and I saw what she did, imagine. Imagine if she was good at mathematics and I also thought I was good at mathematics because I *always* sat next to her and looked what she did. We were always labeled and always together, so we were strong together. It was, it was always us two, maybe I did not get all of the attention but we had it together, and as soon as we where separated than I could feel a little bit lost because I was complete together with her. According to reality and people’s views, and me as well, I was always used to being with her. If was to suddenly travel on my own to Gothenburg or go to school by myself or start in a new class than I doubt myself if I will be able to make this without her, or did I need her? It is kind of like a mother putting her child at a kindergarten. When you have sat at home with a child, than the time comes for you to put the child at the kindergarten than you separate the child from the mother for a few hours. There is a creepy feeling that occurs to the child, it feels lonely, it feels left. It is the same feeling with twins; we have always been together, as soon as I moved I felt alone and not *as* strong like

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87 Interview Merve
when I was with her because we had a strong identity together. I was half she was half, and together we were strong. Identical, it was because we received the label from other people. If I was invited to a party by myself or if we where invited to a party and I went there myself than it would be “where is your twin? Where is Sarah? Why did she not come?” it was never “aha Judy is here now we are satisfied” it was never like this, “why are you here alone?” I could also feel as if I was here alone, imagine now this music me and her would dance to together, not just me, than I would not dare dance. Doubtfulness, and we would encourage each other, always when we went home we would talk about “ah you were good at that dance, uff when you did that you where cool!” but without her you cannot know, does it look good does it look bad? Was I good when discussing? So we completed each other (laughter). With her I received feedback, she was always with me, and we were strong together, it was oh it is the twins, and we had the same humor, so when my humor and her humor was combined we where hilarious, people enjoyed us. Me and her, when she was angry I was angry, we were strong together. She is a part of me, and people had also put this label on us, when I am not with her than I am a little bit doubtful, I do not have anyone to talk to anymore, than I do not know if my humor is enough, is my humor enough? Or do I need to be with her, do I need to work extra hard/force it to be understood as funny? Is it enough with just mine or does hers need to be present? Is it enough with my mathematical skills, my knowledge in the field of mathematics or does she have to be present to teach me, teach that we are strong together. Am I enough as I am? That is the doubtfulness that I got. And to touch upon doubtfulness, people always labeled us constantly as the same, “ah but it is the twins, it is the twins” why did they not see me? It was not individually, you are always seen as two two two. You develop a bad self-confidence, the skills you have the good things that they cannot see, they see something else when we are together. Because ok I am like her and we have similar habits but maybe I am extra social, or extra funny or like to do something more than her, but they could never see that, they could only see us together. That is why you get a negative self-confidence, because our twin look covered these things; the twin personality. For example, she got married before me, and we shared room. After she got married it was the brides night and than she did not live at the apartment anymore, she was at the hotel with her husband. This is when my younger sister came to endorse her bed, and I asked “what are you doing? It was a very creepy feeling, it was my younger sister, but I was heavily against it because I
thought “why did you take her bed now? You cannot do that” and why? I have no idea, because her bed is her bed I have always been raised this way, it is none else’s it is hers. But she did not live here anymore, and that is where it turned black for me. I was at the wedding, I danced, and then when this happened at home, that is when I understood that this is the real deal, she is not here anymore. She is not with me all the time anymore. This is when I started to feel doubtful, how was it going to be now? All our common friends but it is only me. The self-confidence, I felt weak because she was stronger than me, if anyone would mess with us, she was the one who would come in-between not me. I was the kind of “do not do this do not do this”, if anyone was mean to me she would jump the person. So she protected me somehow, she was like a shield, if anyone was mean to me, she would save me, and if anyone would be mean to me physically she was the one who jumped in and received it, she was always like an amulet for me, protection, and without the protection it is like ok, I need to build this protection within myself. I need to protect myself if someone was to come against me, personally if someone would argue with me, she is the one who always protected me.88

• How has religion formed your identity?

Merve:
A lot, my religion has made me the person that I am today.89 Everything from Islamic teachings has formed me. Not to sin, or by praying my five prayers. It has made me the person that I am today; the rules that religion gives, what I ought to do and not do.90

Judy:
What we believe and think, the value assessment or my value assessment comes from how my mother raised me. And mother got her value assessment from religion. It has formed me a lot, I have had strong…let us say during the time period when my twin and I were separated, I had poor self confidence but I could always turn to religion, which made me stronger. This about how I valued things comes from religion, I think tomorrow God comes, give me better times and better hope. It has formed me to

88 Judy Osman, interviewed by Saleh Mbamba 2014 (41.30 min)
89 Merve Gencer Interviewed by Saleh Mbamba 2014 (16.30 min)
90 Merve Gencer Interviewed by Saleh Mbamba 2014 1(18.30 min)
become a stronger person, because I have always been able to turn to a deity. It has formed me in a way that I have been able to proceed, live my life without her, the separation, just become stronger as a person due to religion. Just as a twin, I was weak but I became stronger due to religion, I have always had religion to turn to. Hope, and belief and love, in shaa Allah\textsuperscript{91} and stuff like that, it has made me stronger. It is a lot of hope and belief.\textsuperscript{92}

- **What are the benefits (in school) of being a twin?**

**Minoo:**
(Is there anything you can do in school differently because you are a twin?)\textsuperscript{93}
I can play with balls and jump rope, and Boo (sister) is also very good. I am better than her.\textsuperscript{94} Everyone is good at something; I am good at creating.\textsuperscript{95}

**Merve:**
There are no benefits in school. Or yes, for the parents, you can have parent-teacher conferences together. But it depends, it I was in the same class as Burak. When he forgot his homework I could have had the homework with me. Or if I did not understand something than he could have helped me with that. He was always concentrated during class.
Friends also. I do not know how, OR YES FRIENDS. What was it I thought of, no, I do not know, you have the same friends.\textsuperscript{96}

**Judy:**
In school you where never alone, we had common friends and we were strong together, so we were always two I was never alone, or bullied I never had to feel that, and to feel that in school is good. Me and her we had others that came to us as we were already two, you can say it is negative and positive, for me it was always about

\textsuperscript{91} Islamic terminology referring to "If God allows" in reference to the future.
\textsuperscript{92} Interview Judy
\textsuperscript{93} Interview Minoo
\textsuperscript{94} Interview Minoo
\textsuperscript{95} Interview Merve
\textsuperscript{96} Interview Merve

The word used is "pyssla" and not create. Pyssla is explained as something that you create in a mother roll. Though, used in terms when children cut and make things. E.g. christmas decorations.
the label, if someone was to act negatively or worst in certain knowledge, than it could affect me. Because we were the same according to some teachers. We had a horrible teacher that was on our case because we where two. She could always say if the one of us, we had a lab, and was supposed to work with it at home, and obviously my twin and I live under the same roof. We did the lab which had to do with filling an empty bottle with water and put it in the freezer, than write down what happened. Then come back to school the next day, and we are reading, she reads what she wrote from her lab notes and she reads “I put the bottle in the refrigerator”, but my twin meant the freezer. Already there I understood that she said wrong, because I saw that she put it in the freezer, I am twenty six years old and can still mix those two up between the freezer and fridge, it happens. And than the teacher was furious in front of everyone and would say “you two, have never understood anything, how can you call this, and you are in the seventh grade, do not you know the difference between freezer and fridge, than you are not mature for a seventh grader.” It was me and her, and every time my sister did something negative in the sixth grade, I had to join the meetings with her even though I did not do anything, but because I happened to be there and was always around than I had to attend and be spoken to. “why do you think she did this” they would ask med. There was a very horrible teacher, and this twin thing damaged a lot. “Why she would…and do not you know why”, so they would use me, not as a witness but as a solution to why she did something in a specific way, but I do not know? It has its positive and negative aspects, you are never alone, she is always there but it is this always being two if something happens. Individually I am never seen, that is a negative aspect, none notices when I am alone, its something missing. They would even think this in school, “where is she, where is she today, is she sick?” so we are not complete, always something missing but it has it is positive and negative points.  

- What are the benefits of being a twin when you are outside of school?

Minoo:

(When you are not in school, what is better, or easier for you because you are a twin?)

97 Interview Judy
Drawing is easier.  

**Merve:**
I do not know, it is nothing I have thought of. There probably are benefits but I do not know. The benefit? I do not know. You are still two different people. You are like any other regular sibling but you are twins. And maybe you understand each other more than a regular sibling.  

**Judy:**
It feels, it feels a little bit better and different because you are not in school anymore and when you are out in town, none knows that we are twins, and if someone would find out that we are in twins, they would say it is cool and so, but, if we where to go out, I do not think that it awakens any form of attention. It is positive she is always around someone to hang with we can hang out and shop together. Sometimes if she was to be out with me, the only negative part would be if I want to do something maybe like dancing extra much, or talk to some guy outside; I would not want to do it in front of her. It feels like she should not get that picture of me, I do not know why I feel so, but it was embarrassing, because she thinks *that I am like her*, but if I show that I have a wilder side, than I do not want her to see it, I do not want to destroy the understanding that she has that I am exactly like her and we have each other… WE ARE NOT like each other but we are, and there are some common grounds that we have but some are different, but she understands it as two different. When she is calm I am calm, but I have the wilder side, and I do not want to show her that side, preferably without her, that is why it could sometimes be straining if we are going out to party or go out for a coffee with her, and some guys would come to talk than I do not want to show her how open and wild I am “aah we can go out”. She was more *religious* some how, she would say “no this is haram, just come back”. I did not want her to have that view of me because it could feel as if it could destroy sometimes, SOME-times, but if it is shopping that it is good, so it is 50-50, depends

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98 Interview Minoo  
99 Interview Merve  
100 Not allowed
where we are outside, if it is shopping than fine. If we are eating at a restaurant than fine, but go out to party? Aah, it feels a little bit like, you know you go your way I will go my way. It was this specific part.101

Commentaries from an Authority102

• What is your name?
My name is Patrik Magnusson

• What is your official title?
That is a good one. I am a researched and associate professor, so you can pick between those.

• What is it that you are actually researching?
Well, I do research basically, and I have a PHD from the beginning, so I have an academic position as a researcher. My job is to get new knowledge to the field and the society in general.

• Is there a specific field?
Yes, if you narrow down my field it is called genetic epidemiology. So it is a combination by the old genetics, Gregor Mendel, and the understanding of the genes we get from our parents in our DNA, how that influences us. That in combination with the methods we use in epidemiology often compare people with or without a disease. So we can measure these variables in the DNA and we can have groups with and without the disease for example. Or with people with varying estimates of something like “tall and short people”, or “fat and slim people”. Things that very in the population, we try to understand if they vary and why they very. So it is things that very, for example why are some people ill, in some disease, and some are not. Or how come that some people become very obese, while other people are very slim. What are the underlying factors? My specialty is genetics.

101 Interview Judy
102 Interview Patrik
• Are you encountered to meet twins?
Yes, me personally I am not directly involved in the meeting with the twins and so on, but we have been leading projects where twins are contacted, and twins are either coming here or going to a hospital and measured, leaving samples and stuff like that.

• Is there any form of teaching, which is found where genes from twins vary from people who are not twins?
Aah, that is a very interesting question because we have been investigating that quite thoroughly, and if you make a long story short there is basically no clear cut genes that differ between twins and non twins. You are more or less exactly the same. There might be some small differences, for example if there are genes in the society, that some people have and some people do not have, the effect, in body size, that could be such a factor that influences the probability that a woman that gets pregnant with twins actually delivers two live births. Because if you are too thin, or too tiny, you won’t be able to fit multiple fetuses. So those are the kind of potential differences that might be there, but otherwise, if you compare the so-called Allele frequencies that variant frequencies, at certain places in the genome, in chromosome one for example there might be some difference between you and me. If we measure the frequency in those variants in these positions there is basically no position that we have found in the whole genome that differ between twins and non-twins. Maybe there is a difference, but the effects are so tiny that it is very very hard to say something with certainty. If I should make a long story short, than you can say from a genetic perspective twins are very similar to non-twins. An easy thing to observe or say the same thing is basically if you are in a room, just have random people, it is impossible for someone to just pick out a twin, if not the co-twin is in the room. You can never tell just by looking at a person if that person has a twin-sibling or not. There is no systematic difference between twins and non-twins that is strong. It is the same for dizygotic as well as monozygotic. Then of course monozygotic twins are genetically identical, so they are clones of each other, which is spectacular in its self.

• Is there anything special that you have found with the characteristics of monozygotic and dizygotic twins, is there anything between those two?
Yes, the special thing between those two classes is that monozygotic twins are very
similar to each other, not only genetically but also physically and personality wise. They tend to be similar, when we meet monozygotic twins, who look identical, many times what people often focus on are the small differences that they actually show. So for example if one is very extravert than the other, then that is kind of “oh this person, this twins is so extravert, and other is not.” But that is actually not true if you compare it to the rest of the population, then they are probably both extravert or both introvert.

- What is the cause of that?
I think like most research that we do, point to the fact that the genes are really important for not only how you look but also how you behave, and how you act as a person, and your personality and how you tend to react against things, and act in general.

- Why have you chosen to study this amount about twin?
It is a very powerful method, the twin method, if I may call it that, is that we utilize that we have monozygotic and dizygotic twins and the fact that we know that monozygotic twins are identical and dizygotic twins are like siblings in general. They share fifty percent of their DNA and genes. By assuming that monozygotic twins and dizygotic twins are both raised in the same family, in Sweden now a days, that they share family environment to approximately the same extent, than we can modal the actual correlation, the similarity we see in monozygotic twins and contrast it with the similarity we see in dizygotic twins to understand something about the importance of genes. I need both classes to model, if I only had monozygotic or identical twins than we see that they are almost always the same height, very similar in height, they differ approximately five centimeter, there is a little difference, than we would not know if it is the fact that they are raised in the same family that create this degree of similarity, or if it is the fact that they share genes. So by having both classes we can contrast and try to remove the effect of shared environment.

- What type of behavior/characteristics do twins tend to have during class that non-twins do not?
I should start by saying that is defiantly outside of my comfort zone, I do not know the answer because I have not studied that at all, but if you generalize from what we
have seen in personality research in general, it is so that monozygotic twins are more similar than dizygotic twins in personality, so I assume that you would see the same kind of effect in class. They would tend to be similar to each other, if one is very out-acting aggressive and so on, than the other monozygotic twin would tend to also be out-acting and aggressive while that is not the same for dizygotic twins to the same extent. Than if you mean how they respond to the fact that they have their sibling in the same classroom all the time? I do not know very much about it, but of course it might be an issue, for some twins it might be super good that they have a comfort in having their twin sibling in the classroom. They would feel calm and good about it, but in some instances with some personalities than some twins might find it very bad, because it might be a reason for bullying, might be a reason for mixing them up; all the time they hear the same thing that “oh you are so similar, I do not know who is who”, stuff like that. For some twins it might be good for some it might be bad basically, that is my guess.

• What are the biggest misconceptions about twins?
I do not know about the biggest, but one that I have stumbled into several times, because it is so attractive as a thought, is that there is some kind of over natural or telepathic ability; that comes with the twin, twinning per-say. There are groups that try to study these things often in maybe not the perfect scientific way, but in some kind of scientific way they want to get evidence for some kind of some non-over-natural-telepathic ability, but I see it as of course they are genetically identical, they are raised in the same family, they will have hormone levels that are super equal to each other, and from those kind of biological mechanism they might be very good in understanding how their twin brother reacts given a certain treatment or exposure, because they would react exactly the same themselves. That is not weird, “oh now I feel that you are embarrassed” because they have exactly the same response to a certain stimulants and I think people tend to over interoperate that in some kind of “oh they have some sort of (sound) ability that some people do not have”. I do not know if that is the biggest misconception but another big misconception is that it is so genetic, that if you yourself is a twin that you are bound to get twin offspring, some people believe that, and that is wrong. There is some tendency that if you are a twin yourself there might be slightly increased probability that your kids also might be twins. But it is almost neglect-able I would say, it is that low. The probability when you get your
first kid, the probability that it would be a twin birth is approximately one in seventy-five. This is in general, but if I know that you are a twin, than maybe I would say that your probability is maybe one is sixty. The difference is not important for an individual; because the most probable is that you won’t get a twin. You have to get sixty kids before you can expect one twin. People believe that it is almost for sure that you will get, because your mother was a twin and you are a twin than they say “oh I will defiantly get twins” and they do not, most of the time.

- What can twin relations teach people who are non-twins?

As a researcher working in this field, I would of course say what we learn thanks to the twins that help and participate in the study that we conduct, we have learnt so much, we have learnt that schizophrenia as a disease is not something, you are not haunted. The main reason why people get schizophrenia is because they are bad luck when it comes to which genes they get from their parents. And I think that is a very important message, because people have felt personal guilt, shame and all those kind of things for all those different traits that we have, and we cannot really be blamed for them. I think I see that as a researcher, but than of course it might be that if you study personally or twining, as a concept there might be other things that I am not so aware of, like for instance the closeness that some twins might have. Monozygotic twins I think, what we observe a lot are when one twin passes away, that is super tough for many monozygotic twins because it is almost like losing yourself.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{103} Interview Patrik