Introduction:
Rethinking Subjectivity

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This book is an extended conversation about contemporary forms of human experience and subjectivity. It examines the genealogy of what we consider to be the modern subject, and it inquires into the continuity and diversity of personhood across greatly diverse societies, including the ways in which inner processes are reshaped amid economic and political reforms, violence, and social suffering. It is an ethnographic conversation, with authors confronting specific forms of social life in particular settings, and it is a theoretical conversation, exploring the debates and disciplinary disagreements about how we think and write about human agency today.

The writings in this book suggest that contemporary social formations, with their particular ways of being and the theoretical frames available for analyzing them, have destabilized our observation, thinking, and writing about subjectivity. In editing this collection, we have sought to show the multiple ways in which scholars address the diverse phenomena we call *subject* and *subjectivity*. Striving for a single analytic strategy would have been limiting and premature at best. This volume is thus exploratory, aiming to provide new directions for studies of subjectivity and intersubjectivity in today's distinctive conditions.

In the many settings in which anthropologists now work, the vagaries of modern life are undoing and remaking people's lives in new and ominous ways. The subjects of our study struggle with the possibilities and dangers of economic globalization, the threat of endless violence and insecurity, and the new infrastructures and forms of political domination and resistance that lie in the shadows of grand claims of democratization and reform. Once the door to the study of subjectivity is open, anthropology and its practitioners must find new ways to engage particularities of affect, cognition, moral responsibility, and action.

REGARDING OTHERS

Examples of remaking subjectivity are everywhere. "Amid China's Boom, No Helping Hand for Young Qingming," reads the front page of the *New York Times* of August 1, 2004. Fearful of being left behind in China's fast-paced but deeply uneven economic boom, Zheng Qingming threw himself under an approaching train in his rural village on June 4. That day, Qingming had learned from a school administrator that he would not be allowed to take the annual college-entrance examination. "I don't have the money," he had said. "I don't care if you sell a life," the supervisor had replied. One of Qingming's friends reportedly offered to sell blood to help him out.

Without the needed eighty dollars and with his hopes of a college education and mobility cut short, Qingming fled the school and spent the day wandering through the village. Strangers who saw him that day said that Qingming had talked about working for Interpol—a fact the authorities used to justify their claim that the young man had "lost his mind." A mental condition (possibly traceable to the "mentally retarded" relatives who adopted and helped raise him) thus became the official explanation for this young man's profoundly willful act of ending his life.

To the grandfather who is now suing the school, the boy he had raised to be a healthy and hard-working man was "upset, not insane." A scrapbook the grandfather now keeps as a memorial gives some insight into this young man's subjectivity and his response to the vanishing of familiar values. Qingming had pasted in a magazine article about a farm girl who had been raped and then abandoned by her relatives for the shame she inflicted on them. In the margins of the text, Qingming had scribbled, "We must extend our helping hand to any innocent underdog. Only by so doing can that person find a footing in society."

Chinese society is undergoing immense change. From a poor agricultural society beset with political chaos, China has, over a twenty-year period, become the world's third-largest economy with an established, if undemocratic, social order. But China's turn to capitalism has delegitimated the still-dominant Communist ideology just as radical Maoism undermined traditional Chinese cultural traditions. The upshot is a culture of self-interest, rank materialism, and growing cynicism that has prompted widespread comment and criticism among the Chinese themselves. In the economy, health-care sector, social-welfare programs, and everyday lived experience of peasants and urbanites, the public emphasis on social solidarity and the righting of historical social inequalities to help the poor and the marginalized have given way to gated communities, deepening health in-

equalities, and a symbolic distance between rural and urban realities that harks back to the 1930s, if not the final decades of the Qing dynasty. A bitter joke is making the rounds in Beijing: "What is the definition of Communism?" Answer: "The longest and most painful road to capitalism."

In this setting, side by side with an improvement in infant mortality and adult mortality, China has seen the emergence or escalation of social-health and mental health problems, from substance abuse and sexually transmitted diseases to violence, AIDS, depression, and suicide. Suicide in Chinese society has always been associated with public and domestic injustice, so much so that many people at the margins see it as an acceptable way of coping with failure and hopelessness. Thus, to understand the suicide of Zheng Qingming, we need to see the act as rooted in a particular constellation that connects cultural representations and political economy with collective experience and the individual's subjectivity.

Suicide as social protest and resistance is a historical reality among Chinese. Only under the impress of the current phase of globalization is it beginning to be reinterpreted as the result of a mental disorder (usually depression but also any mental condition). That change comes from the infiltration of technical psychiatric categories from North America, biomedical practices, and the media into the daily affairs of the Chinese. A tragic irony exists, however, inasmuch as the mentally ill in China carry a deep stigma that marks them as not fully human and thus, among other things, not capable of rational suicide. Hence, in Zheng Qingming's suicide we see three aspects of subjectivity that illustrate differences across time and cultural spaces: historically situated differences in social sensibility and what it means to feel and regard oneself as human; cross-cultural differences in cognition, affect, and action; and the peculiarities of each individual.

For the purpose of this book, we need to see the increasing medicalization of depression and suicide not only as the state's response to a perceived new public-health crisis but potentially also as the spread of a form of diffused governance that substitutes everyday commonsense categories and practices for rational and technical ones so as to vitiate the moral and political meaning of subjective complaints and protests (chapters 2 and 6 in this volume). This form of self-governance—new to the modern Chinese state but well established in the West—is linked to the unmaking of time-honored value systems and occasions novel forms of control (Anapnost 1997; Lee 1999; Yan 2003). Subjectivity thus becomes the ground on which a long series of historical changes and moral apparatuses coalesce—in the emergence of new kinds of public-private involvements as well as a new

kind of political authority. The unintended consequences of this process of societal and personal transformation may include the creation of hyper-individualism, which itself intensifies attention to human rights and, in turn, places new pressure on the nondemocratic state. Equally unintended may be the remaking of the habitual inner sense of endurance and the creation of new forms of desire that go beyond commercial interests to structure new ways of feeling and living, that change the world.

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In her essay "Regarding the Torture of Others" in the *New York Times Magazine* (May 23, 2004), the late Susan Sontag writes that the horror of the Abu Ghraib photographs "cannot be separated from the horror that the photographs were taken—with the perpetrators posing, gloating, over their helpless captives" (26). Sontag angrily condemns the Bush administration's attempts to displace the complex crimes of leadership and policy that the images reveal, first onto the photographs themselves—"as if the fault or horror lay in the images, not in what they depict" (25)—and then onto the individuals who carried them out, as if those actions were not representative of a reigning rationality and modus operandi. "The issue is not whether a majority or minority of Americans perform such acts but whether the nature of the policies prosecuted by this administration and the hierarchies deployed to carry them out makes such acts likely. Considered in this light, the photographs are us" (26).

Sontag compares the Abu Ghraib photographs to those of black victims of lynching during the 1880s and up through the 1930s—"souvenirs of a collective action whose participants felt perfectly justified in what they had done" (27). The Abu Ghraib photographs mark a shift in the use of pictures though: "less objects to be saved than messages to be disseminated, circulated. . . . There is more and more recording of what people do, by themselves" (27). For Sontag, this mass-type Internet-emulated subjectivity is captured by the statement, "If life isn't edited, why should its record be?"

These photographs, one could argue, mark a shift in the ways people publicly organize their subjectivities vis-à-vis the suffering of others. The Abu Ghraib artifacts expose the range of moral sensibility operating in the interstices of political and legal domains. The images thus materialize a "culture of shamelessness" and the "reigning admiration for unapologetic brutality" (29). The pictures will not go away—but will be further covered-up by our "infinite digital self-reproduction and self-dissemination," writes Sontag (42). At stake here are no longer processes of memorialization or forgetfulness but rather the normalization of the Other's dehumanization

and the creation of a moral complicity that destabilizes public discussion, making clarification and eventual resolution ever more unattainable.

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This volume offers an interdisciplinary exploration of the inner lives of subjects. It also examines the interconnections among changing modes of subjectivation and transformations of social organization, modes of production, knowledge structures, and symbolic forms. The writers in this book treat subjectivity as both an empirical reality and an analytic category: the agonistic and practical activity of engaging identity and fate, patterned and felt in historically contingent settings and mediated by institutional processes and cultural forms. The book explores the ideas that subjectivity constitutes the material and the means of contemporary value systems and that capital accumulation and governance occur through the remaking of culture as well as the inner transformations of the human subject. The essays probe the nature and reach of these interior processes and new value systems.

The study of individual subjectivity as both a strategy of existence and a material and means of governance helps to recast assumptions about the workings of collectivities and institutions. Refracted through potent political, technological, psychological, and linguistic registers, inner life processes capture the violence and dynamism of everyday life. By attending to subjectivity in ethnographic terms and in comparative social analysis, we encounter the concrete constellations in which people forge and foreclose their lives around what is most at stake. Examination of the complex ways in which people's inner states reflect lived experience within everyday worlds as well as within temporary spaces and transitions—moments of crisis and states of exception—can disturb and enlarge presumed understandings of what is socially possible and desirable. What is life for? What is an adequate life? Such study also helps us understand what psychological processes are about.

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF SUBJECTIVITY

Even a cursory review of the etymology of the term *subjectivity* brings into view multiple historical processes and modifications of subjective form and sense. In the nineteenth century, *subjectivity* referred to an essential individuality, the consciousness of one's perceived states. This exclusive emphasis on the human mind or individual experience also implied a kind of affective domination, in which feelings, thoughts, concerns, and perceptions, all supposedly personal, overcome individuals and "cloud the eyes" (ac-

cording to the *Oxford English Dictionary* of the day). One can argue that this modern quality of defining subjective facts or things existing only in the mind (experienced affectively or symptomatically), is the counterpart to the relentless encroachment of scientific worldviews and things, "the objective" and the objectification of reality (Daston and Galison 1992).

Modern subjectivity, however, also suggests the cultivation of a mode of being that finds its highest realization in art—"the individuality of an artist as expressed in his work." In contrast to objectivity, in this sense, subjectivity does not imply an error but connotes creativity, the possibility of a subject's adopting a distinctive symbolic relation to the world in order to understand lived experience, as in poetry (Milosz 2004):

> When will that shore appear from which at last we see
> How all this came to pass and for what reason?

The current understanding of subjectivity as a synonym for inner life processes and affective states is of relatively recent origin. Earlier etymologies of the subjective do not speak in such radically individual terms. The twelfth-century *suget* (subject) is "the one who is under the dominion of a monarch or reigning prince; one who owes allegiance to a government or ruling power, is subject to its laws, and enjoys its protection." The fifteenth-century Latin *subjectivus* (to be subjective) is first a characteristic of the political subject. Only a few centuries later would one speak of subjective alterations in persons, of subjective and thus peculiar sentiments, and of a subjective certainty of the truth, of knowledge as distinct from "beliefs" (B. Good 1994: ch. 1).

In classic Greek, the term *tò üpokeimenon* referred to the subject of attributes and the subject of predicates, but for Aristotle, the subject was also "the very material out of which things are made" (see chapter 1 of this volume). These simple observations lead us to ask about the legal, religious, medicoscientific and social mechanisms, writ large, through which political domination has migrated into and become an invisible and constitutive part of modern subjectivity. What literally goes into making a human subject? What are the limits of the subject? And how do creative subjective leaps occur (Greenblatt 2004)?

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In examining subjectivity today, we are forced to rethink older formulations and problematics associated with human nature, social control, agency— and culture. Clifford Geertz, in uniting psychological with cultural themes in the Harvard Social Relations Department's tradition in which he was

trained, famously articulated a cultural approach to subjectivity and a subjectivity-oriented theory (Ortner 2004; Shweder and Good 2004). He did so at a time, from the 1950s to the 1970s, when the British tradition of social anthropology banished the subject and when French debates focused on subjectivity's dependence on language (Lévi-Strauss and Lacan), the materiality of discourses and epistemic thresholds (Foucault), or the innate dispositions governing social action (Bourdieu).

For Geertz (1973, 1983; Good and Good 2004), subjects embody culture, not in the simplistic fashion posited by the culture and personality school, but in the sense that people live in a distinct phenomenal world—spirits here, mystical powers there, particular categories of kin in each—and have access to that world through a set of embodied practices (Javanese meditation, Balinese dance, or simply activities associated with growing up in a Balinese household). They encounter realities that "clothe those conceptions with. . . an aura of factuality." Culture shapes "the behavioral environment," as well as the selves who inhabit that environment; the moods and motivations that are part of these selves are not limited to the religious perspective but carry over into the everyday, commonsense world. Anthropology, from this perspective, understands subjective life by analyzing the symbolic forms—words, images, institutions, behaviors—through which people actually represent themselves to themselves and to one another.

But critical appraisals of the Geertzian legacy of cultural analysis—even by Geertz himself (2000, 2005)—have produced a growing consensus within anthropology that conceiving culture as a sui generis symbolic domain is hazardous. Whereas some anthropologists have called for the outright elimination of culture from the analytic lexicon (Lutz and Abu-Lughod 1990), others have insisted on its continued relevance.[1] Maintaining the importance of subjectivity in social life, these anthropologists have rethought culture, seeing it as emerging from institutional and intersubjective interactions and as an evolving phenomenon, constantly remade through social encounters, ethical deliberations, political processes—and writing (Boon 1982; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Fischer 2003; B. Good 1994; Marcus and Fischer 1985; Ortner 1999; Rabinow 1978; Rosaldo 1989; Stoler 1995; Taussig 1986; Tsing 1993).

There is no culture, and all we do is cultural, writes Michael M. J. Fischer: "Culture is not a variable; culture is relational, it is elsewhere, it is in passage, it is where meaning is woven and renewed often through gaps and silences, and forces beyond the conscious control of individuals, and yet the space where individual and institutional social responsibility and ethical struggle take place" (2003: 7). This formulation suggests the need for cul-

tural analyses that make visible differences of interests, access, power, needs, desires, and philosophical perspectives. The writers in this book suggest that ethnographic practices and theories that link investigations of symbolic forms with studies of the lives of individuals can provide such analyses.

Who empirically is the agent of this making and remaking of culture? How is this process mediated by individual lives? What do psychological structures and modes of experience contribute to the work of culture? And how do modes of subjectivity intertwine with particular configurations of political, economic, and medical institutions? In other words, how, under quite new conditions, do people value life and relationships and "enact the possibilities they envision" (Rosen 2003: x) for themselves and for others?

EVERYDAY REFLEXIVITY

In a "world in pieces" (Geertz 2000), older notions of the subject who is cultural "all the way down" seem inadequate. Moreover, "the body" has reemerged in anthropological analysis much as Mauss and, later, Bourdieu conceived it, as a privileged heuristic to historical and social processes, thus extending cultural phenomenology to political subjectivity. The presumed subject of humanist theorizing has been deconstructed by poststructuralist, postcolonial, and feminist writers and shown to be a product of Enlightenment, colonial, and racialized and gendered discourses rather than a foundational reality for investigation. Ethnographic studies (such as Bourgois 2002; Comaroff 1985; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992; Csordas 1994; M-J Good 1998; Kleinman 1999; Lock 1993, 2002; Martin 1994; Scheper-Hughes 1992; Young 1995) have, using varying methodologies, shown how medico-scientific formations, political economy, and social networks are mediated by the body and the sense of psychological interiority. These studies go beyond mentalist reductionism and convey a key understanding of the self as corporeal, with the body as part and parcel of technical, political, and social processes. The "mindful body" (Hahn and Kleinman 1983; Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987) has become an important part of our understanding of the person in diverse, but always specific, times and places.

By drawing attention to the importance of somatic processes for social life, anthropological studies of the body have cast light on some of the blind spots of a strictly symbolic approach. They have greatly helped to reveal human and institutional interconnectedness and to generalize ethnographic findings. Yet by treating the body as a privileged heuristic to reality, such studies have, at times, also produced a one-dimensional picture of individ-

uals, as if they were a socially entrained physiology (that is, as if they were fundamentally determined, "all the way down," by traceable forms of control and discipline). Not surprisingly, debates on subjectivity that begin with this assumption often center on questions of domination, resistance, and social identity.

Essays in this volume build on the anthropology of the body literature and probe the extent to which market logics, institutional norms, and rational-technical interventions actually define the relationship between body and subjectivity. In chapter 3, for example, Das and Das chart the emergence of "local ecologies of care" by tracing the itineraries that the ill follow in their search for therapeutic attention in poor, urban contexts in India. Rather than looking for subjectivity in the embodied experience of illness or healing, Das and Das reveal the dynamic density of the interpersonal ties that become the contours of the sick person's local world and experience (see also chapter 7 in this volume). In this way, people come close to James Boon's "everyday reflexivity (regardless of culture)," disrupting the "comfortably consolidated transdisciplinary theme ('You-Name-It-Of-The-Body')" (1999: 263–65).

A "descent into the ordinary" (Das 1998) of often broken and fractured places has made necessary a rethinking of the terms of anthropological inquiry (see chapter 4 of this volume as well as Greenhouse, Mertz, and Warren 2002).[2] As Geertz has written, "In a splintered world, we must address the splinters" (Geertz 2000: 221). Drawing from Michel Foucault's work on biopower, contemporary studies have turned attention to the centrality of error in (modern) life, charting the emergence of "mutant ecologies" (Masco 2004) and "biological forms of citizenship" (Petryna 2002), in the wake of technological disasters, for example. Studies of media and medical technologies have shown the truly prosthetic quality of such technologies as people deploy them to refigure capacities and value (Biehl 2001a; Cohen 1998; Rabinow and Dan-Cohen 2005; Rapp 1999; see also chapters 6, 12, and 13 in this volume). The body—real or imagined, living or dead, present or hypothetical—can mobilize scientific communities and patient populations in equal measure around quests for profits, knowledge, justice, or simply the will to live (see chapters 11 and 14).

In short, several anthropologists in this volume address the unfinished quality of the body, the surpluses and inadequacies that emerge through the demands made on it. Whether these demands come from institutions, discourses and disciplinary practices, or the subject's own desires and needs, the body, from the perspective of subjectivity, is always more and less than what it seems it should be. Thus, one continually learns and relearns to live *with*

as much as *through* one's body, in its various states of health and illness, youth and old age, boredom and trauma, routine and instability.

EMERGENT VALUE SYSTEMS

By and large, contemporary anthropological writing considers the subject and subjectivity not as original forms but as dynamically formed and transformed entities (Borneman 1992, 2001; Cohen 1998, 1999; Collier 1997; Crapanzano 1980; Das 1997, 2000; Desjarlais 1997, 2003; Fischer 2003; Hammoudi 1997, 2006; Herzfeld 1996; Luhrman 2000; Pandolfo 1998, 2000; Turkle 1997). These insights reflect both altered theoretical sensibilities and changes in the world in which anthropologists do their research and in the personal lives of their informants. Awareness is growing that the kinds of social forms traditionally analyzed by anthropologists and thoroughly critiqued by Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu—the family, village, school, sex and gender, labor and scientific practices, health-care systems—can no longer be the foundation for tracing and specifying delimited "identities" and "subject positions" Arjun Appadurai, for example, argued almost a decade ago that the twin engines of media and migration have so accelerated transnational processes of globalization that, under the aegis of the imagination, the "quickened beat of improvisation" stands to outrun the habitus's "glacial force" (1996: 6).

New information and life technologies enable new types of networks and allow people to imagine and articulate different destinies. Stable or imagined environments (such as nations and communities) are being transformed or displaced by ecological disasters, ethnic conflicts, free-trade economics, developments in the global pharmaceutical industry, terrorism, and war (Fassin 2005; Fassin and Vasquez 2005; Fortun 2001; Greenhouse, Mertz, and Warren 2002; Le Marcis 2004; Petryna 2002; Petryna, Lakoff, and Kleinman 2006; Redfield 2005; Tsing 2005). Anthropologists thus investigate subjectivity in contemporary settings of economic crisis, state violence, exploited migrant communities, massive displacements, hegemonic gender politics, and postcolonial states—settings increasingly familiar to them, though hardly new to the people under study. Research is showing that only through explicating the logic of key emotional and intersubjective constructs do major social dramas become intelligible; likewise, only amid such contemporary social enactments can we understand particular domains of affect and agency.

In the domain of health and medicine, not only are the raw effects of economic and social inequalities ever more devastating, but subtler and more

hidden processes of reconstituting subjectivity are increasingly common-place. In their work on the global trade of human organs for transplantation, for example, Scheper-Hughes (2003) and Cohen (1999) reveal a new moral economy based on devastating global processes that revalue human beings as commodities and in so doing recast the self as market mechanism (as strategizer, broker, buyer). This economy normalizes selfishness and cynicism and pushes hyperindividuality to its autistic limits. At the same time, it recasts the real dangers of social life in the mode of a putative risk society, in which the person, supposedly in a state of anxiety, appraises and assigns valuation to isolatable "risks" such as loss of employment, marriage, the death of a spouse, and other traumatic events that go to the very core of what it means to be human. Self is hollowed out, and society is reduced to a conventional middle-class vision in which individual threats are removed from local worlds, to be managed by drugs and other new technologies of the person.

Meanwhile, such a society denies systemic loss and normalizes insecurity, which becomes the basis for new states of exception, both social and personal. The rueful, the elegiac, that which is lamentably unchangeable in living—essentially, the moral core of experience—is replaced by the progressivist myth that one can find magic bullets to solve life. Zones of abandonment (Biehl 2005) absorb the people whose resources cannot sustain them, and the middle-class scene remains, at the cost of loss, alienation, and deepening inequality that divides selves into separate classes of danger. In this scenario, we see the demoralization of everyday experience via scientific categories such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (see chapter 6) that remake people as objects of technological manipulation without allowing for the possibility of remorse, regret, or repentance.

An anthropology of illness and suffering confronts everyday settings of political violence, dislocation, and social trauma. Theorization of hegemonic states alternates with theorization of the dissolution of institutions—a world of "exceptions" and "camps" in Giorgio Agamben's terms (1998; 1999; see also Mbembi 2003)—and reflection of the forms of subjectivity emerging in underground economies and inhumane settings (Biehl 2005; Das and Poole 2004; Roitman 2005). Even when violence has lapsed, the memory of violence permeates the subjective experience of any number of people around the world. The work of memory and memorialization, as much as the work of repression and forgetting, has become central to anthropology, requiring analytic stances that are at once personal and inter-subjective and that account for political processes and emergent, if fleeting, forms of care (Aretxaga 1997; Borneman 1997, 2002; Caruth, 1996; Daniel

1994, 1997; Das 1996, 1997; Povinelli 2002). Medical anthropology and an anthropology of social suffering are at the heart of this enterprise (Das and Kleinman 2000; Kleinman, Das, and Lock 1997) and are thus a critical part of anthropology.

Perhaps the "long littleness," to use Philip Larkin's (1983) term, of an individual's modernized self in the contemporary West also calls forth new ways of defining the projects of being human. Perhaps the very pretensions and formulations of the term *subjectivity* are pufferies that seek to disguise the anxiety of having to make meanings seem authoritative and convincing despite the fact that they have already lost their special forms of authority. Rather than soothing collective anxiety, the human sciences are challenged to reinstate the uncertainty and angst that life holds when it is actually lived rather than merely studied and theorized (Hammoudi 2006; Obeyesekere 1990; Rosaldo 1989). Perhaps this task is what ethnography, social history, and psychotherapy do best.

SELF-CRITICISM AND RENEWAL

This book grew out of papers and discussions by participants in the Harvard Medical Anthropology Program's Friday Morning Seminar. The program bridges Harvard Medical School's Department of Social Medicine and Harvard University's Anthropology Department. Since 1984, faculty and fellows have organized this seminar, which focuses broadly on issues of culture and mental health and is supported by the National Research Scientist Award from the National Institute of Mental Health. The 1999–2001 seminar brought together anthropologists, historians, literary critics, and medical professionals to investigate subjectivity in the context of current political, economic, medical, and social developments. Our goal was to explore emergent patterns of self-formation and to comprehend how inner life and its relationship to values is changing; how will, thinking, and judgment are evolving in specific settings; how these transformations affect suffering and our responses to it; and what mental health and mental health care mean in this context.

The seminar started with the premise that after nearly three decades of research and writing in medical and psychiatric anthropology, little consensus exists about the relevance of diverse theories of subjectivity to our understanding of the transformative effects of illness experience, social suffering, and medical institutions and practices in the contemporary world. But if ethnographers often fail to engage relevant theorists, crucial ethnographic and cross-cultural studies have even more rarely been taken up by

philosophers, literary critics, feminist scholars, and other theorists writing about subjectivity. The absence of serious engagements across these fields, we believe, has been to the detriment of theorizing subjectivity and studying it ethnographically.

For example, as Evelyn Fox Keller points out in chapter 11, poststructuralist analyses that have focused on the subject and subjectivity rather than on the self and experience have suggested that "subjects are epiphenomena, constructed by culturally specific discursive regimes (marked by race, gender, sexual orientation, and so on), and one might more properly view subjectivity itself as the consequence of actions, behavior, or 'performativity' than as their source.. . . Selves are multiple and fractured rather than unitary, mobile rather than stable, porous rather than enclosed, externally constituted rather than internal or 'inner' natural essences." But this set of dichotomies is equally problematic, substituting a new set of images of the subject, opening space for certain analyses, and closing others. Framing analyses in these terms too often replaces studies of individual lives, diverse forms of intersubjectivity, and political consciousness and affects with studies of discourses and representations, generating not only oversocialized images of human life but also tending to make subjectivity less central than social structure.

Theories of subjectivity are too often overstated, obscure, and even dehumanizing. People who are subject to the most profound human experiences—suffering massive violence and incomprehensible cruelty, the routine degradation of poverty and despair, the terrors of madness and life-threatening disease, or even facing the impossible dilemmas of providing care, whether surrounded by the highest technologies or the near total absence of resources—have too often been transformed into remote abstractions, discursive forms, or subject positions. They become the objects of self-interested professional and disciplinary quarrels and abstractions. Agonistic and open-ended engagements with members of other societies are often largely absent from theorization of the subject, even in writings that address postcolonial subjects and cultural difference.

Writing about illness experience has often had a generalist quality, as though common humanity and cultural understanding, along with recognition of political oppression and global inequalities, are adequate bases for analysis. Social science and humanistic writing too often fails to account for central theoretical concerns about the fractured nature of subjectivity; the ways in which persons are constituted through social experience; the oft-invisible operation, in between institutions and within intimate relationships, of machineries that make people live and die; and the shaping of psy-

chological processes through social encounters. The subjects of ethnography are rarely offered the depth of personhood as vulnerable, failing, and aspiring human beings—people who demonstrate the same qualities that we ourselves display in relationships.

Moreover, anthropology's overemphasis on cultural representation has had the unfortunate if unintended effect of downplaying the conceptual significance of lived experience, even when reports of experience are the major sources of anthropological data. For a discipline that focuses on "experience-near" analyses, the conceptualization of experience is by and large very thin. A more substantial conceptualization of cultural experience is in order, one in which the collective and the individual are intertwined and run together and in which power and meaning are not placed in theoretical opposition but are shown to be intimately linked in an intersubjective matrix.

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The need for developing more complex theories of the subject that are ethnographically grounded and that contemplate how individual singularity is retained and remade in local interactions has become ever more apparent. The subject is at once a product and agent of history; the site of experience, memory, storytelling and aesthetic judgment; an agent of knowing as much as of action; and the conflicted site for moral acts and gestures amid impossibly immoral societies and institutions. Modes of subjectivation are indeed determined by the vagaries of the state, family and community hierarchies, memories of colonial interventions and unresolvable traumas, and medicoscientific experiments and markets. Yet subjectivity is not just the outcome of social control or the unconscious; it also provides the ground for subjects to think through their circumstances and to feel through their contradictions, and in so doing, to inwardly endure experiences that would otherwise be outwardly unbearable. Subjectivity is the means of shaping sensibility. It is fear and optimism, anger and forgiveness, lamentation and pragmatism, chaos and order. It is the anticipation and articulation of self-criticism and renewal—what Albert O. Hirschman luminously calls "self-subversion" (1995).

While recollecting his own history, Hirschman describes the pleasure of discovering a different genealogy of his concepts as well as counterexamples to the generalizations he has worked hard to develop—"a moment of perplexity and concern" at the possibility of a "theory having been 'falsified' . . . . But past this moment, I feel genuinely more alive as I now have new interrelations and complexities to explore." And so our subjectivity orchestrates a field of defeats and achievements into value-feeling states of

hope and hopelessness, robustness and demoralization, inefficacy and competence. Determining how this orchestration of the self actually takes place requires much more descriptive content, attention to processes, and perhaps entirely new forms of ethnographic research, such as projects that combine ethnography with epidemiology and aesthetics. Clearly, however, inasmuch as academic psychology and psychiatry have forsaken this project, anthropology and the humanities must summon the means and competence to take it on.

The seminar thus took on the task of bringing diverse theories of subjectivity and ethnographic data on illness, social suffering, and technologies of care into conversation with one another. We began, as we do in this introduction, with the recognition that no single analytic framework—whether from history, social relations, discourse analysis, political critique, phenomenology, psychoanalysis, economics, or biology—can fully account for the inner lives of people and the intersubjective relations in a local world. We did not begin with a genealogy or definition of the terms *subject* and *subjectivity*, though these terms were present in our discussions. Rather, we took as the objects of our inquiry the contingency of subjectivity and the openness of the term's meaning today. Cognitive theories, theories of affect and memory, diverse forms of psychoanalysis, models of pathology and normality and of rupture or continuity all make truth claims over the sense of psychological interiority. But this area of inquiry has as much uncertainty as does the study of modernity or postmodernity. Indeed, perhaps the ongoing trajectories of persons show us the existential elements in social and individual experience: subjects are themselves unfinished and unfinishable.

We do not seek to impose order in this conceptual disorder or to identify a unifying theory. Such a stance would be forced and false, and it would take us even further away from capturing the dynamic and unsolved tension between the bodily, self, and social/political processes that, we hold, is the core of subjectivity. This volume thus explores not a single point of view but multiple perspectives and ways of addressing phenomena related to the inner life of subjects. Of particular concern are the inward reworkings of the world and the consequences of people's actions toward themselves and toward others. In our understanding, this arena is precisely where the moral comes into view; through the ethnographic study of subjectivity, we attempt to explore what matters most in people's lives in the making and unmaking of meaning. Values and emotions are closely connected and are embodied and projected into domestic spaces, public life, and interpersonal struggles. We look through subjectivity to theorize not an intangible Subject but

human conditions, to make sense of our ethical reflections on them, and to challenge anthropological work.

In the background of these observations and reflections lurk large questions: What constitutes modernity and modern subjectivity? Should we use modernity in the singular or plural? How did colonialism shape European and North American subjectivities? What cultural paths do emergent forms of subjectivity take in non-Western and postcolonial societies (Bhabha 1994; Mitchell 2000; Stoler 2002)? What does the anthropology of the contemporary world entail (Rabinow 2003)? Questions also arise about what methodologies we should use to address the diverse ways in which individuals actually interact with large-scale global processes and local symbolic forms, how to relate psychological constructs to analyses of political consciousness, and how to make both these elements relevant to studies of everyday injury, violence, and mental illness. We hope that the papers in this collection will open these issues for deep intellectual and critical discussion that goes beyond conventional discourse in the popular media about the kinds of personality types emerging in our commercialized era and beyond formulations of human nature that rely on neurobiology and biologically based theories of psychopathology, now dominant in professional psychology and psychiatry. Reflections on contemporary forms of life, subjectivity, and ethics deserve much more.

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We organize the essays in this volume under four general headings. The first chapters (by Amélie O. Rorty; Arthur Kleinman and Erin Fitz-Henry; Veena Das and Ranendra Das; and Paul Rabinow)—in a section we call "Transformations in Social Experience and Subjectivity"—outline historical, philosophical, and cross-cultural frames of subjectivity. They also explore the relation of the individual to the collective and to powerful epistemological and political realities.

The second set of essays, organized under the overly simple rubric "Political Subjects," examines issues of trauma, memory, and therapies that have emerged in post–Vietnam War America (Allan Young) and in postapartheid South Africa (Nancy Scheper-Hughes). Stephen Greenblatt's work on the political dispute about the cult of the dead in early modern Europe and its migration into theatrical representation and into the phantasmagoria of psychological interiority helps illuminate the *longue durée* of sociopolitical workings of memory.

The third set of essays (by Byron Good, Subandi, and Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good; Ellen Corin; and Anne Lovell) appears under the heading "Mad-

ness and Social Suffering." These contributions include detailed analyses of the experience of psychosis in quite distinct settings (in Indonesia, in Canada and India, and among the homeless in New York). The essays find that the lives of persons with mental illness are entangled with social and symbolic violence and with religious activism and global psychiatric trends, as well as with the disruption of families and the dismembering of nations.

The final set of essays, under the heading "Life Technologies," examines how the life sciences and medical technologies are shaping distinctively contemporary forms of affect, identity, and personal ethics (Evelyn Fox Keller, Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good, Eric Krakauer, João Biehl). Michael M. J. Fischer provides a concluding overview of the chapters. Drawing from insights he gained during a journey into Israel and Palestine, Fischer suggests that the subjecthood of the citizen (or political agency), the self (or personhood), and discursive/enunciative positioning of the subject (or subject positions) are all required elements in present-day struggles to guarantee life chance for oneself and others. Differentiated cultural analyses can help articulate new social institutions for an evolving public sphere.

At the opening of each section, we briefly reflect on the central theme of each contribution, placing the essays in conversation with one another and suggesting some frames for reading them. Readers are invited either to use these introductory comments as an orientation to the papers that follow or to move directly to the papers and then return to our reflections on them.

NOTES

1. For a discussion of an anthropology that does not begin with the concept of culture, see Rabinow 2003 and his essay in chapter 4 of this volume. See Boon (1998) on "culture-as-paradox."

2. Veena Das's work on "the ordinary" draws from the work of Stanley Cavell. See, for instance, Cavell 1988, 1981, 1979. For Cavell's commentary on Das's work, see Cavell 1997.

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Transformations in Social Experience and Subjectivity

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Subjectivity is a "vanishing subject," writes Amélie Oksenberg Rorty in this book's opening chapter. As she traces the history of some of the philosophical insights that have shaped current understandings of subjectivity and the subject, Rorty finds not a progression but various contested movements and fragmentary meanings. Self-awareness has a different philosophical trajectory than individuated perception does; scholars have emphasized a diachronically unified persona and at times posed it against a synchronically unified persona; the meanings of emotions, the body, social interactions, and suffering as subjectivity have all been areas of contestation. For example, according to Rorty, "Where Aristotle finds self-recognition through the mutual mirroring of virtuous friends, Hume charts the construction of the idea of self in social practices that have associations with property and propriety." She suggests that current uses of subjectivity and the subject implicitly incorporate distinct meanings and associations that scholars have used differently and historically have posed against one another. Through different meanings of the first person, the mental state, and experience, concepts of morality, social responsibility, and intersubjectivity are thus being reworked.

Rorty applies her insights into the fragmented, recycling history of the idea of subjectivity to assess the contemporary focus on subjectivity in the anthropology of medicine and medical ethics. In different forms, anthropologists, physicians, and professional ethicists work through tensions between universal and individualized aspects of human experience. How can one articulate singularity in a language that aspires to universal reflection?

Though Rorty believes that the rhetoric of personal experience helps increase the sensitivity of medical practice, she finds that evoking "the subject" does not do the politically corrective work that critical social scientists

and medics intend. Because the subject involves an archaeology of bodies, things, interests, practices, and meanings, people treat subjective knowledge in vastly different ways. According to Rorty, the problem with simply "listening to the subject" is that this approach does not tell you how to integrate what you have heard into therapeutic practice, for example. Can we produce an analytics that attends to what matters most to people, and how might such a language make a difference?

At the end of her essay, Rorty offers "respect" as an effective conceptual tool for exploring the differing power relations, desires, aims, and meanings of the subject. A focus on respect allows shared exploration of the parameters of mutuality—whether it be egalitarian or hierarchical, individualistic or collective, among contemporaries or between generations. As we open up philosophical and ideological issues in current uses of subjectivity for productive discussion, we can also open the door to "capturing the moment," the point in time between the subject and his or her sense of being alive.

The heterogeneities, conflicts, and contingencies of moral engagement, states Arthur Kleinman in his essay with coauthor Erin Fitz-Henry, create a local world where uncontrollability and the unknown define human qualities that are inadequately addressed by Western ethical discourse. By and large, this discourse assumes the existence of a unified human nature that is neurologically hardwired and historically unchanging. "Our subjectivities," says Kleinman, "certainly have a biology, but they also, and perhaps more critically, have an equally influential history, cultural specificity, political location, and economic position." As an antidote to the generalizations and abstractions that continue to define much mainstream ethical discourse, ethnography can help us ground and nuance our understanding of the processes by which people forge and negotiate moral predicaments at the dynamic interface of cultural representations, collective processes, and individual subjectivity. For example, in the summer of 1942, an intense ethos of group loyalty, an overwhelmingly anti-Semitic cultural orientation, and an "affectively open" context in which soldiers conceived of themselves as redeemers came together in a way that enabled the members of Police Battalion 101 in Poland to rationalize their participation in genocide.

As part of his effort to move away from biologically deterministic and philosophically atomistic conceptions of the self, Kleinman uses the term *human conditions* rather than *human nature* to describe the inherent malleability of lived experience as it shapes and is shaped by macrolevel social, political, and economic processes (1999, 2006). His notion of social (and moral) experience places the collective and individual in the same analytic

space. Thus, whatever issue is at stake for people in a given moment—be it a religious identity, a political project, the preservation of a native language, or a set of relationships—is always embedded in the shifting exigencies of practical, everyday life as it unfolds in particular sociopolitical spaces. For Kleinman, to speak of the subjective is always to speak of the intersubjective; and to theorize the intersubjective is to decisively reject the notions of a universal human essence and autonomous subject that have historically underpinned ethics discourse.

Human conditions also create a space for analyzing change. Kleinman's analytical tools offer a way to connect the large-scale processes of market logic, global rationalities, and institutions that manage populations with the affect, meaning, and behaviors that convey individual subjectivity in everyday life. "As transnational trends . . . remake the condition of our lives and the parameters of our worlds," he concludes, "so, too, do they remake our most intimate inner processes: emotion, cognitive style, memory, our deepest sense of self."

"Institutional responses tend to fragment these problems into differentiated smaller pieces which then become the subject of highly particularized technical policies and programs, increasingly ones that last for short periods of time and then are replaced by yet others which further rearrange and fracture these problems," wrote Kleinman in his Tanner Lectures (1999: 30). The management of suffering via the practices of global rationality produces physical, institutional, and technical effects. As this logic particularizes and expands, a reciprocal process develops out of technical rationality, re-creating affect that in turn reshapes technical rationality; as moral processes are understood as sites to be managed via bureaucratic, market, legal, and medical logics, the use of these techniques and the perception of this rationality structure the moral process. Through this move, Kleinman importantly links the political economic and social processes by which populations are managed through affect. Thus, bodily affects and subjectivity become the media through which the collectivity is ordered and controlled.

Due to this organizing intersubjectivity, the techniques and institutions of global political economy reorder the landscape of local moral worlds. Personhood is unmade and remade. As suffering is increasingly managed through rationalities of efficacy and technologies of medical intervention, perceptions and experiences of suffering come to play a role in this remaking of lives and worlds. Maintaining these interrelated aspects in focus—the collective and the individual, economy and subjectivity, the bureaucratic and the affective—allows for a more enabling critique of the rationalities and ethical issues of policies and programs.

In her introduction to *Ethnography in Unstable Places,* Carol J. Greenhouse (2002) also calls for studies at the juncture of states, policies, and subjectivities that can demystify the conventions of scale (state as organization, for example) and address the individual, who, after all, cannot be subsumed under institutions, programs, and groups. The ethnographic challenge is to identify these empirical relations and linkages—technical, political, conceptual, affective—and to integrate them into critical analysis and public discussion.

In her anthropological work, Veena Das calls our attention to the contingencies and tensions of inner worlds that take shape amid the unfolding of critical events (1996). How can one reenter altered social realities and guarantee a new chance in life for oneself and others? What is the price one pays for making such life changes? How is inner change integral to local economies, and how does it become part of personal and public memory?

In the essay "Language and Body" (1997), Das observes that women who were greatly traumatized by the partition of Pakistan and India did not transcend this trauma, as, for example, Antigone did in classic Greek tragedy; instead, they incorporated it into their everyday experience. For Das, subjectivity is always a contested field. The self is a strategic means of belonging simultaneously to large-scale events and to familial and political-economic networks. Tradition, collective memory, and public spheres are organized as phantasmagoric-like scenes, for they thrive on the "energies of the dead" that remain unaccounted for in statistics and law. Das scrutinizes this bureaucratic and domestic machinery of inscription and invisibility that authorizes the real—a machinery with which people have to forcefully engage as they look for a place to inhabit in everyday life. Against violent world-historical trajectories, Das's subjects develop a will to live, even as they trauma they bear can do nothing but procalim brutal violation.

In her work on violence and subjectivity, Das (2000) is less concerned with reality's structuring of psychological conditions than with the production of individual truths and the power of voice: What chance does speaking have of being heard? What power does it have to make truth or to become action? For her, inner and outer states are inescapably sutured. An ethnography of subjectivity illuminates the materials of this suturing and the language by which it is experienced: "language is not just a medium of communication or misunderstanding, but an experience which allows not only a message but also the subject to be projected outwards," writes Das with Kleinman (2001: 22).

In their essay for this volume, Veena Das and Ranendra K. Das explore

how illness experiences are a relational testing ground and life experiment for the urban poor in New Delhi. Distinguishing differing medical practices, expertise, and practitioners, they chart the everyday ways in which illness categories emerge through medical interactions and local family dynamics. Das and Das look beyond governmental institutions to show the domestic and personal grounds of the state and medicine. Cosmologies are plastic, they argue, reworked for domestic and personal needs. Das and Das are particularly interested in relating interactions, representations, and practices to the materiality of everyday life for the poor, in which employment, health, and cash flow are precarious. They use the concept of illness experience to explore the way the poor live through and understand this precariousness. Out of illness experiences emerge interpretations that see temporality and the body as integral to the process of ordinary living.

Das and Das thereby connect the materiality of social conditions and the concrete experience of illness in the family and clinic to the symbolic side of sickness, in which people experience the normal and pathological in varied ways. Through that flow of experience, subjectivity emerges in family interactions, employment struggles, and efforts to obtain medical therapeutics for the poor. One's sense of being alive and of well-being forms amid the lack of money, the clash of law and illegibility, technology and affect, malfunctioning institutions, the danger of local life and individual vulnerability. Through symptoms and various forms of care (or nonresponse), a domestic form of citizenship crystallizes. The modern subject of the modern state comes into being. "The domestic sphere. . . is always on the verge of becoming the political" (Das and Addlakha 2001).[1]

Paul Rabinow also relentlessly grounds possibility in current practice. He explores the ways in which concepts, beliefs, and values change shape in the specificity of new assemblages, crucially including his own anthropological inquiries of the life-sciences industry. We must approximate the scientific places in which life forms emerge and examine how these forms catalyze actors, things, temporalities, or spatialities in a distinct mode of existence that makes things function differently in an altered public domain. And, he says, we must place all this activity in past and future perspectives, without adopting the pretense or illusion of an absolute view. Rabinow invites us to consider the contingency of motion as a more productive tool than progress for bringing into focus the specificity and contingency of assemblages, power arrangements, and the mediations of self-formation.

"What if we did not begin with the distinction of subject and object and its secondary assumption that it is the culture that is enunciated through speaking subjects? What if we did not begin with the distinction between a

whole to be captured and an inquiring subject to be rendered transparent? What if we did not assume that our task is to write culture? And what if the search for another form of anthropological inquiry proceeded from a different set of distinctions precisely because its object of inquiry appeared to be composed of forces driving and articulating assemblages defined by accelerated creation, efficiency, and associated stress of and for subjects, objects and the elements that mediate them? What, then, would observation consist in? And what operations would assist that new form of observation?" Rabinow asks.

Taking inspiration from Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian War, Rabinow's methodology foregrounds the individual and collective processes that continually reconstitute subjectivity. He urges us, following Hegel, to let speak "not a borrowed consciousness but the speaker's own self-formation [*Bildung*]." Thucydides transcribed, in unabridged form, the political speeches delivered at each key turning point of the war. In so doing, argues Rabinow, he made public deliberation an object of analysis, identifying the immediacy of selves and relations as they form in the particularity of "discursive moments." This kind of observation does something to the world: the work of thought becomes social action in itself, obliging the reader to find his or her own ethical position vis-à-vis the "immediate history" that emerges.

Rabinow wants the anthropology of subjectivity to engage the new terms of the social scientific enterprise, replacing endless and sometimes paralyzing representational self-scrutiny with the imperative of an interventionist observation. Intervention is a cultural construction of our times that itself has great significance, but we ought to remain attentive to the larger implications of the idea that being becomes human and moral through social action: what happens to the work of thought in the process?

By forging a new relationship to emergent objects of knowledge and means of knowing, we once again come across the older imperative "dare to know," which we must understand in a new way today, savoring its complex bittersweetness. And we must find a way to live with what we find—that is, to integrate the quest for knowledge (of nature, of injustice and folly, and of the self) with a ceaseless search for ways to apply this knowledge to the care of the self and of others.

NOTES

1. Das and Addlakha (2001) argue that the domestic, "once displaced from its conventionally assumed reference to the private, becomes a sphere in which a differ-

ent kind of citizenship may be enacted—a citizenship based, not on the formation of associational communities, but on notions of publics constituted through voice."

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1 The Vanishing Subject

The Many Faces of Subjectivity

AMÉLIE OKSENBERG RORTY

Augustine says, "What then is time? If no one asks me, I know; if I want to explain it, I do not know. And yet I know" (*Confessions,* 11. 14). Augustine introduces his perplexity by noting that though the present is evanescent, and neither time past nor time future exist, he can nevertheless tell the time of day and correct himself if he finds he is mistaken. We can echo Augustine's dilemma in speaking about subjectivity. And indeed time and subjectivity are connected: if no one asks us, we are confident that our experience is ours. But the moment we try to define subjectivity, the sense of certainty vanishes. If subjectivity is an awareness of oneself, it seems to have no stable content: every moment brings a different "self" to light. As Montaigne says, "Anyone who turns his . . . attention to himself will hardly ever find himself in the same state twice."[1] If subjective reflection offers proof of the existence of the self, it does not necessarily deliver self-knowledge. Descartes says, "I know that I exist; the question is "What is this 'I' that I know? (*Meditations on First Philosophy,* II AT 27) Descartes is rightly puzzled: the greater part of the *Meditations* is a detective story that traces the momentary certainty of the momentary existence of the thinker through a labyrinth of arguments to discover that—grace à Dieu—the self is a particular compound unity of a section of two substances, Mind and Body. (*Meditations* VI, AT 81). Reflecting on Augustine, Montaigne, and Descartes, we see that the concept—and perhaps the experience—of subjectivity is historically laden with philosophical presuppositions and controversies. In grammar and in fact, contemporary conceptions of subjectivity—and our experienced sense of ourselves—serve multiple functions and fuse distinctive archeological layers of meaning.

THE SEMANTICS OF THE SUBJECT

Etymology and grammar help identify and distinguish the strata in the history of the conception of subjectivity. Contemporary English usage emerged as late as the sixteenth century, a crystallization of Old French *sougiet* and Spanish *sugeto,* both derived from the Latin *subjectum.* These words are relatively literal translations of the Greek *hupokeimenon*—literally, that which stands or is placed underneath, the material of which things are made. The *Oxford English Dictionary* sees the modern notion of subjectivity—"the condition of viewing things through the medium of one's own mind or individuality . . . dominated by personal feelings, thoughts, concerns"—emerging very late: Coleridge under the influence of Kant.

We can, for the time being, set aside the question of whether our contemporary usages of "subjectivity" designate a family of notions or a genus with distinctive species and varieties. In ordinary speech, "subjectivity" sometimes refers to first-person claims of incorrigible introspective authority. In this sense, it contrasts with objective, corrigible impersonal or neutral descriptions of states of affairs. But "merely" subjective claims of authority can be mistaken: they indicate a local, sometimes idiosyncratic perspective, a voice that requires hearing but that can be rightly overridden by other kinds of authority. Less dramatically, "the subject" is a grammatical term paired with "the predicate," designating the referent of attribution. More expansively, it denotes an area, a domain of investigation: "The subject of this essay is 'subjectivity.' " The ordinary verb usage of "subject" designates quite a different domain. The expressions "Tom subjected Tim to a tongue lashing" and "In his childhood, John was subjected to merciless teasing" and "The Midwest is subject to droughts and tornados" refer to conditions or events that mark some passivity in the face of external forces. This sense of *subject* encompasses the legal use, "falling under the jurisdiction of a law": "Jaywalking is subject to a fine." It is also allied to the political contrast between subjects of an authoritarian regime and consenting or self-legislating citizens. The *Oxford English Dictionary* chronicles all these senses without priority, distinguishing the logical, psychological, grammatical, metaphysical, and political senses without favor.

THE TRANSFORMATIVE HISTORY OF THE SUBJECT

Our philosophic history begins with Aristotle. Of course his Greek *hupokeimenon* isn't straightforwardly translatable as "subject." Grammatically, it is the subject of predication; metaphysically, it is the underlying en-

tity in which attributes or qualities inhere; physically, it is the material of which things are made. None of these senses has a hint of awareness, still less of self-conscious awareness. Aristotle's account of the genesis of self-awareness locates it in perception (*aesthesis*), which has no apparent connection with the subject (*hupokeimenon*) as the "grammatical/logical subject of predication or attribution, the material substratum of objects" (*Metaphysics* 1028B: 35ff.) In the first instance, the immediate direct objects of perception are specific qualities rather than the ego-self or its capacities. Perceptions have direct objects: the mind integrates the colors, sounds, and smells of objects presented by the sense organs. *Aesthesis* is always veridical (*De Anima* 427B: 10ff.): strictly speaking, neither a perceptual illusion of water on the horizon nor the dream of a red chamber is a *perception.* This feature of Aristotle's psychology may stand behind the later-transformed view that subjective reports are by definition authoritative and incorrigible: "If what I claim isn't there, I'm not actually seeing." This construal has the obvious unfortunate ironic consequence of being true at the expense of being empty.

Aristotle's leading idea is that the initial reflexive experience of the perceiving self occurs along with particular perceptions.[2] Aristotle remarks "In perceiving, we perceive that we perceive" (*Nichomachean Ethics [NE]*1170a: 28ff.). This realization establishes only that every act of perception also involves reflective activity. It does not by itself deliver an immediate, continuous perception of the ego-self as a spatiotemporally unified entity. Recognizing that acts of perception are moments in the continuing life of a person involves a much more complicated reflection. The virtuous become aware of themselves—their lives—as well formed and unified through the reflective contemplative mirroring of true friendship (*NE* 1169b30–1170a4). Sharing their lives in deliberation and practical activity, such friends mirror one another's lives as "other selves" (*NE* 1170b6). Only by contemplating (*theorein*) the lives of their friends, their "other selves" do the virtuous come to realize that the sequence of their particular perceptions and actions constitutes *a life*, a well-formed whole.[3] For Aristotle, then, self-consciousness emerges from a special kind of intersubjectivity. But this view has a stringent condition: the content of (what we would call) a subjective sense of the self emerges from the mutual contemplation that occurs in friendship among the virtuous (*NE* 1170b1–14). Through friendship among the virtuous is revealed the role of subjectivity in forming genuine self-knowledge.[4] Aristotle's view may seem harsh and elitist to those of our contemporaries who link subjectivity to epistemic egalitarianism and

who believe that—whatever the genuinely veridical objective truth may be—each person is the ultimate authority on the subjective character of his experience.

Augustine's *Confessions* marks a dramatic change in the conception of the subject. His acute introspective awareness, his questions and preoccupations, are quite different from those of Aristotle or even from those of the Stoics. Although the *Confessions* presents a brilliant example of the phenomenology of self-awareness, the book is not a philosophical analysis of subjectivity. It follows an errant mind's way to faith by reflecting on what that journey reveals about divine benevolence. Augustine's explicit account of self-knowledge emerges in the course of a philosophical argument against skepticism. He uses the capacity for unmediated self-reflection as a star example of something we know with certainty. "Without any illusion or fantasy, I am certain that I am, [and] that I know that I am" (*City of God[CG]* XI.26) We exist because if we doubted that we did, a doubter would exist. Moreover we know that we know at least one thing, because—supposedly without depending on religious faith or philosophical assumptions—we just proved that we do. With similar certainty, Augustine adds with the same certainty: "I know that I love to exist and that I love to know" (*CG* XI.27). Although Augustine doesn't present an argument in this passage for this additional claim, we can speculate on its Platonic turn: we know that we love knowledge because we persisted in inquiring into whether we exist. And if we know we love knowledge, we know that we love; and if we persisted in inquiring about whether we exist, then we care that we exist. Although the defeat of skepticism brings a generalized epistemological assurance, it does not underwrite the truth of first-person psychological reports that go beyond the moment's proof for the ego's existence at that moment. Nothing follows about what else we know or what else we may be. Nor does Augustine's introspective argument by itself ensure that all moments of self-reflection refer to the same entity. An additional argument would be necessary to show that the self whose existence is proven by its capacity to doubt is identical to the person who admires Ambrose, loves his son Adeodatus, and is anguished about his inability to have faith in God's love.

Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* provides a template practical regimen—a set of stages—to bring a person to his true self, to truthful self-knowledge.[5] For Loyola, the faith—and the transformation of the self—that Augustine thought could only be a gift of divine grace is the objective aim of a series of exercises that anyone can undertake for the sake of his immortal soul.

Loyola articulates ideas implicit in the views of some of the early church fathers: in man's fallen condition, his subjective self-perception, his reflective desires, his sense of self are false and corrupt.[6] To achieve genuine self-knowledge—true selfhood—a person must undergo a painful process of catharsis and reidentification. He must subjectively appropriate—subjectively internalize and experience—each sensory moment of Christ's passion.[7]

Loyola's ego psychology remains latent in some contemporary conceptions of subjectivity, such as the idea that an empathic identification that internalizes the psychological experience of an exemplary figure is necessary to develop a fully reflective ego. The empathic imagination in the service of developing an authentic self is fully sensory: Loyola's penitent must take on the burden, the weight of the cross; he is not only to imagine but to feel the pain of the crown of thorns. "Ask for grief with Christ suffering, a broken heart with Christ heartbroken, tears, and deep suffering ..of the great suffering that Christ endured for me."[8] Moreover, the character of the empathic experience, which is physically and psychologically painful, is a mark of its transformative power, of the authenticity of the emergent spiritual self. As Ignatius's penitent experiences Christ's suffering as his own, Freud's therapeutic patient reexperiences his childhood traumatic sufferings and—by claiming them as his own—ideally achieves self-knowledge and selfhood. Like Loyola, Freud thinks that an intellectualized recognition of trauma is insufficient to achieve an authentic ego. The psychological-emotional expression of the recovered traumatic wound is also essential.

Despite apparently echoing Augustine's cogito and Loyola's meditative spiritual exercises, Descartes' introspective reflection delivers a radically different kind of subjectivity, a radically different ego-self. Instead of being a soul in quest of faith in God, the ego of the *Meditations* is a mind in quest of mathematical/scientific knowledge. The cogito reveals a thinking mind that is capable of unmediated introspective reflection. But no evidence is available that this self exists continuously or is individuated; and the self is unified only in containing—consisting in—a unified system of ideas. Like Augustine, Descartes offers the cogito as an answer to the radical skeptic. He has undergone the skeptical purgation: he has doubted he has a body, doubted he exists over time, and doubted whether any of his ideas are reliable, let alone true. He knows that as long as the mind is engaged in thinking, there is a thinking thing. So, he asks, in what does thinking consist? At this point in his analysis, thinking consists of episodes of perceiving, imagining, inferring, believing, and doubting. These activities supposedly tell us something about the powers and the faculties of a thinking being. Descartes'

answer to the question "What is this thing which thinks?" depends on his memory: he must remember that he perceived, imagined, and so on. But the reliability of his memory is still in doubt, as is the trustworthiness, let alone the truth, of perceptual experience. Quite the contrary. All we know is that the thinker is a "perceiver," a believer.

When Descartes follows the rigorous model of demonstration set by the cogito, he recovers/discovers necessary, indubitable truths. Perceptions, memories, ideas of the imagination—contingent ideas that might have been different or illusory—are not a necessary part of the mind: the ego-mind would remain identical had these elements been different (*Meditations* VI. AT 73–74). The more Descartes holds fast to his existence as a reflective thinker, the less essential are perceptual experience and memory to his identity. The structure of the *Meditations* follows the Platonic ascent of the mind from the apparent contradictions of sensory claims to the light of intellectual insight.[9] The mind is contingently individuated only by its perceptions and memories. But if the ego's essential identity as a thinker consists of necessary truths, all minds providentially contain the same ideas. If all Cartesian thinking egos are, strictly speaking, identical, the mind whose existence was proven at one moment will be the same as that of all others. For necessary ideas—the clear and distinct ideas of mathematics—the problem of how to understand "other minds" vanishes.[10] The ideas that compose the essence of any mind are identical to those that compose all others. True self-knowledge cannot rely on the contingent and fallible perceptual ideas that are not essential to one's true self. The only place that Descartes provides anything like an individuated mind is *Meditation* VI, after God has been shown to guarantee/underwrite the truth of clear and distinct ideas. Only then do we tentatively trust the senses as highly fallible clues to the mathematically demonstrable truths of physics.

Descartes also tells a story that locates subjectivity in the passions of the soul. Like all that appears within the soul, the passions of wonder/amazement, sadness, joy, desire, love, hatred are *ideas* (*Passions of the Soul*, 1.27–29). The ego is aware of the conditions of "its" body only through the mediation of passion-ideas. These passion-ideas are functional but fallible indications of what endangers or sustains the compound union of mind and body (1.40). The insistence of the passions marks both their utility and their danger. The passions signal a need to correct an imbalance or discomfort. In a sense, such ideas are immediately and veridically accessible to the mind. (The angry mind has an unmediated awareness of its passion.) Yet passions can be highly misleading because they do not directly represent their causes or objects. (The angry mind may be mistaken about the sources and direc-

tions of its anger.) Considerable knowledge is required to understand—to decipher—the code messages of passion-ideas.[11]

For Descartes, the love of knowledge that Plato and Augustine considered the essence of the soul's experience of itself—its essential drive toward the Good—is an exogenous passion-idea. Like pain and hunger, wonder and desire prompt the mind-body to activities that can sustain that unity but that can also mislead the mind. They are by-products of the *embodied* mind's interactions with Extension (*Passions*, 1. 34–37) The reflective ego is individuated only as an embodied being, which is subject to unreliable passions. The subjective reflection that delivers certain knowledge delivers only mathematical science. The subjective reflections of passion-ideas deliver fallible indicators of the individuated mind-body; and these indicators are only as trustworthy as the individual's grasp of the scientific laws that seek to interpret the confusing information afforded by the passions.

Locke again dramatically and radically shifts the perspective on subjectivity. His analysis of personal identity is that of a physician and a legal theorist. His primary question is not "Who or what am I?" but rather "What are the origins and meaning of the idea of the person? What are the role and function of that idea in ordinary practice?" Locke, not Descartes, gives an account of a self whose individuated subjectivity is fixed by its consciousness, its memory of "its" sense experience. Distinguishing the criteria for the identity of the same *body,* the same *individual* human being and the same *person,* he found the focus of the idea of the "same individual man" in the continuity of consciousness. "It [is] the same consciousness that makes a man be himself to himself. . . . It is by consciousness that . . . the personal self has of its present thoughts and actions, that it is self to itself now, and so will be the same self, as far as the same consciousness can extend to actions past or to come."[12] Consciousness ensures the continued identity of an individual only as long as the content of that consciousness remains the same. But because the contents of consciousness change with time, consciousness cannot by itself deliver the idea of a person responsible for any past actions of which "it" is not conscious. The forensic idea of *a person* responsible for its *own* past actions depends on the continuity of conscious memory. If memory is the criterion of continuing personal identity, a person can be responsible only for those actions that have left memory traces (*Essay Concerning Human Understanding,* II.27.26). There are two possible interpretations of Locke's criterion for the continued identity of a person. If the forensic identity of a person rests on *conscious* (and articulable) memory, his analysis of the conditions for moral and legal responsibility are dramatically stringent.[13] If Locke intends to analyze and preserve the com-

mon practices of liability, he must expand "conscious memory" to include experiences that leave unarticulated but in principle potentially recoverable psychological traces. On this interpretation of Locke's view, a combat veteran suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is identical to the soldier who has experienced a battle trauma, even if he could in principle recover his memory or if his memory consists in the conscious experience of his PTSD symptoms and the .

In the name of common sense ("things are what they are, and not another thing"), Bishop Butler argues that Locke's criterion for personal identity presupposes—and thus cannot provide—what it seeks to establish. The person who reports—or evinces—his memories already has a conception of himself as the proper claimant of those memories. "Living and remembering can make no alternation in the truth of past matter of fact."[14] Butler argues that one might doubt whether an idea is a bona fide memory trace (rather than a fantasy), both the doubt and its resolution presuppose the establishment of a continuous personal identity.

Butler's critique of Locke brings us to their predecessor Montaigne and to their successor Hume. Montaigne, almost as if he were trying to follow Locke's dictum, attempts to find his constancy, his continued identity. Searingly honest man that he is, he confesses failure. Reflecting on himself, Montaigne finds no essence and no identity or continuity. Reflection brings constantly shifting ideas and moods: he is now merry, now serious, now bilious, now light-headed. Butler would ask, *Who* is remembering all this? In his skeptical mode, Montaigne responds, "There is no existence that is constant, either of our being or of objects. And we, in our judgment, and all mortal things go on flowing and rolling unceasingly. Thus nothing certain can be established about one thing by another, both the judging and the judged being in continual change and motion."[15] Arguing from a wealth of erudition, Montaigne ironically mocks the pretention to knowledge and to self-knowledge. "Whom shall we believe when he talks about himself?" (*Essays*, II.17–18) As Montaigne's *Essays* unfold, even his philosophical beliefs shift. Ironist throughout, he is now Stoic, now Skeptic, now Epicurean, just as in his early *Essays*, he was now complaisant, now suspicious, now calm.

Hume develops this reflective exchange further. Like Locke, he attempts to trace the source of the idea of personal identity in the content of experience—that is, in the sequence of impressions and ideas. Like Montaigne, he finds that introspection does not deliver a Self. There is only red here, loud here, discomfort here, pride here. "There is properly no simplicity in it at one time, nor identity in different. . . . The mind is nothing more than a

bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity." It is the imagination, rather than memory that constructs the idea of the identity of a person, "The identity, which we ascribe to the mind of man, is only a fictitious one. . . . It proceed[s] from a[n] operation of the imagination."[16]

Hume faces a dilemma: if the self is nothing but a system or train of different perceptions, , the idea of the self as a responsible agent is a nonsensical metaphysical fiction. But if the common ideas and practices of agency and responsible agency make sense, we must find their origins in the impressions of experience. Hume resolves his doubts: like Descartes, he projects *two* ideas of the self. Descartes' two egos are the self as mind and the self as the union of mind and body. Hume distinguishes the self "as regards imagination and the sequence of ideas" and the self "as regards the passions and the interest we take in ourselves": in short, the self as a thinker and the self who reflects—and acts—on his passions and preferences.[17] The self as a thinker has—*is*—only the habitual association of ideas. The thinker's reflections on the patterns of his passions—particularly those of pride and humility, love and hatred—reveal his idea of himself as an agent, who, in the nature of the case, projects the continuity of "his" preferences from the past to the future. Hume's agent-self remains a reflective thinker, whose agency consists in the associative and projective activities of the imagination.

The passions of pride and humility are natural and irreducible passions; both give rise to the idea of self as their object. "To this emotion [pride], . . . nature has assigned a certain idea, that of the self, which it never fails to produce." We feel pride or humility; those passions produce the idea of their object, which is the self of which we are proud or humble. Hume distinguishes the object or content of pride from its cause. "A hundred different things" can be the immediate cause of pride: ancestry and descendants, looks and bearing, property, achievements, and virtues. But these things produce the passion of pride only when they are related to the self, when they are thought of as *my* ancestors, *my* achievements. The idea of the self as an entity derives from the pleasurable pride of possession. Further, this pleasurable pride, the idea of what is properly *mine*—*my* ancestors, *my* son—is derived by comparison to others and by the social practices of respect and esteem . Pride requires comparison to others: we take pleasure in possessions that are relatively rare and that are "discernible and obvious, not only to myself, but to others also." Where Aristotle finds self-recognition through the mutual mirroring of virtuous friends, Hume charts the construction of the idea of self in social practices associated with property and

propriety. Whereas Hume focuses on the role of pleasurable pride in producing the idea of self as admired for his property, the analysis can be extended to account for the origins of the idea of self as a moral person through the pleasurable pride of being recognized as just and virtuous.[18] With these arguments, Hume dramatically transforms sinful pride into the morally neutral source of all reflective motivation.[19]

Despite sometimes being advertised as the father of subjectivity, Rousseau delivers at least three distinct layers of the reflective self: the presumptive self, the self "in nature," the biological self as it might exist apart from the influence of family or society. This "natural man" has not yet become what nature intends him to become. He has *amour de soi,* the sentiment of his own existence, an instinctual nonreflective sense of his existence and his active well-being.[20] Free, self-reliant, prelinguistic, and preconceptual, natural man does not see himself as an object. He is neither social nor antisocial. A geological or geographical accident—an earthquake, a volcano—brings men into contact with one another. Also by accident, human beings discover the benefits of fire, the pleasures of expressive song, and the kind of minimal cooperation that prompts rudimentary communication. As they form families and societies, they become increasingly dependent on one another. But dependency changes the sense of self: men become self-conscious of themselves as objects, seeing themselves through the eyes of those on whose goodwill and esteem their survival and welfare depend (*Second Discourse* I.1–38). *Amour de soi* gives way to *amour propre:* prereflective subjectivity becomes conscious and is mediated by the judgment of others. The social self is a subject to others and a subject to himself only through others (II.1–30). To regain and fulfill its nature, the self must become rationally self-legislating. Experiencing himself as a citizen, man freely wills actions that accord with the general will. In nature, subjectivity is instinctual; in society, it is emotional; in political citizenship, it is rational and universal (II.31–58).

Fichte's version of transcendental idealism locates the unity of theoretical and practical reason in self-positing, self-constructing subjective reflection.[21] "What was I before I came to self-consciousness? . . . I did not exist at all, for I was not an 'I.' The 'I' exists only insofar as it is conscious of itself. . . . The self posits itself, and by virtue of this mere self-assertion it exists."[22] Through the subjective awareness of its own activity, the Ego comes to recognize others and to acknowledge their moral claims on him. Fichte argues that the subjectivity that pervades all conscious experience is coordinate with—and limited by—the realization of the freedom of others. A conception of justice is, he maintains, implicit in the activities of self-

awareness: the recognition of a universally binding morality follows from the rational reflection of a free, self-positing, and self-constructing Ego, who recognizes that he is a subject to himself only because he is also a subject/object to others.[23]

Sartre sees the subjectivity of the ego-self as inescapably inauthentic.[24] "I am not what I am; I am what I am not."[25] What individuals regard as their core self is a projection of bad faith, fleeing the realization of its nonbeing. Like Montaigne and Hume, Sartre holds that the content of consciousness is always in flux. Indeed, like them, he thinks that consciousness has no essential structure or content. It is, so to speak, a mirror—a reflection—of whatever contingent content presents itself. Sartre's ego is a surprising combination of Hume's fictitious idea of the self and Fichte's self-positing "I." The content of subjective self-ascriptions ("I am a melancholy Albanian waitress") stands some distance from the ego that claims them. Even the ascription "I am an ego who chooses to describe herself as a melancholy Albanian waitress" does not capture the arbitrariness of the radical choice of self-identification. An indefinite regress of selves stands behind any choice or act of self-ascription. The denial of any contingent self-ascription—"I am not really an Albanian waitress because I could choose an indefinite number of other self-identifying ascriptions"—is equally inauthentic. After all, the person may, in fact, be an Albanian waitress. The claims and expressions of subjectivity are, and are not, trustworthy. Like Hume and Fichte, Sartre also sees the act of self-constitution as embedded in social recognition.[26] "The problem for me [in constituting myself] is to make myself be by acquiring the possibility of taking the Other's point of view on myself."[27] This stance generates a set of dialectical conflicts in which the mutual mirroring self and Other construct a "we."[28]

Before turning to some contemporary uses of the concept of subjectivity, let us reconstruct and systematize its history. Our history reveals several distinctive strands in conceptions of subjectivity: it was constituted as a (1) first-person, (2) individuated, (3) self-referential, (4) authoritative veridical report (or expression) of an (5) occurrent (6) mental state (sensation, emotion, thought). These distinctive markers of subjectivity can occur independently of one another; indeed, they demarcate radically different conceptions. The "I" need not be individuated (Descartes and Fichte). The referent of the indexical "I" may have no specific determinate content that remains constant over an individual's biological life (Montaigne and Hume). The report/expression of an occurrent sensory experience need not be veridical (Descartes). Self-positing consciousness may be a condition for experience. (Fichte). The choice of the content of self-awareness may be

transformative or performatively constitutive (Loyola and Sartre). In some usages, subjective reports claim validity; in others, they are fallible. In some usages, subjectivity is contrasted with objectivity; in others, it is a self-constituting performance. In some usages, subjective reflection is individuated; in others, it reveals the structure of any and every mind's necessarily self-validating ideas. These radically distinctive conceptions of subjectivity have dramatically different roles in the phenomenology of reflective experience.

CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE ETHICS OF METHODOLOGY

Although no consensus exists about the proper way to analyze subjectivity, there is a marked contemporary revival of interest in—and legitimation of—the deliverances of subjective reflection. Among those who have recently accorded authority to the first person are cultural anthropologists who consider themselves under a moral obligation to respect and preserve the voices of indigenous people.[29] Concerned that fieldwork in the third world is the continuation of colonialism by anthropological means, these activist anthropologists attempt to preserve the voices, the practices, and the economic integrity of second and third world societies by forming organizations like Cultural Survival.[30]

Other anthropologists—let's call them *methodological purists*—privilege the first-person viewpoint of their subjects, attempting to understand them in their own terms. While continuing to chart kinship structures and exchange systems, purists accord indigenous informants ethnographic authority on the meaning of these relations, without imposing or projecting the psychological categories or explanatory theories of their own cultures onto those of the Other. Instead of interpreting the subjective psychology of their informants in Western terms, they analyze the semantic patterns of indigenous self-representing discourse. Using only minimally interpretive translations, they distinguish and analyze the distinctive self-constituting discourse of men and women, elders, priests and warriors, the powerful and the marginalized.[31]

Philosophically minded anthropologists hold that semantic and pragmatic distinctions—between truth claims and expressive utterances, between literal and figurative expressions, and between beliefs and practices or rituals—do not designate or describe distinct psychological or linguistic categories. They argue that because such distinctions are philosophically theory bound, they distort explanations of indigenous practices.[32] Others

join postmodern literary theorists in questioning the assumptions of es-
sentialist "master narratives."[33] For didactic and expository reasons—be-
cause they are, after all, addressing culturally Anglophone readers—these
anthropologists nevertheless freely speak of "subjectivity," recognizing
that such a category may be incomprehensible to many indigenous peo-
ples.[34]

Other anthropologists, influenced by philosophic analyses of problems of
the indeterminacy of translation, criticize the purist quest as a hopeless
project.[35] These anthropologists—let's call them *ironists*—see purist
attempts to recover indigenous subjectivity as naive and exploitable.[36] Rec-
ognizing that their indigenous informants often engage in the power poli-
tics of self-transformation, they attempt to let their subjects—representa-
tive members of ethnicities, religions, genders, and classes—speak for
themselves, according them the final authority of self-interpretation.[37] Sen-
sitivity to the ways in which participant observers affect social practices and
the dynamics of indigenous power struggles prompted research into the po-
litical ramifications of cultural intrusion.[38] Concerned about the deflections
of the anthropological presence, many purists drift to the ironic view that
there are no politically innocent ethnographies. Rather than taking indige-
nous self-identifying and self-ascribing characterizations at face value, they
interpret these self-characterizations as rhetorically pragmatic and often
political in intent.[39] Other ironists accuse purist ethnographers of either
serving the ideology of their own cultures or using their ethnographies as
thinly disguised criticism of their own cultures.[40] Ironically minded an-
thropologists chart the ways in which indigenous people actively become
their own ethnographers, constructing "essentialist" cultural identities as a
strategy in an internal power struggle or as artifacts for consumption in the
politics of the global economy.[41] They argue that any vital sociopolitical
group is internally subdivided, with no stable nonperspectival identity
markers and with multiple group-specific linguistic practices that shift dy-
namically across subgroup associations.[42] Because individuals are members
of cross-cutting and often conflicting associations, subjective identity char-
acterizations shift widely between multiple perspectives.

While admiring the purism of clean hands and clear heads, ironists make
a virtue of necessity: they see their anthropological intrusions as negligible
in comparison to the mutually predatory raids of indigenous peoples, the
dynamics of their internal power struggles, and the transformative effects
of the global economy. Ironic autobioethnographies openly and frankly in-
clude reflective narratives of their personal and politically charged interac-
tions and negotiations with indigenous peoples.[43] What started as a method-

ological respect for the subjectivity of indigenous peoples sometimes ends as a rhetorical trope in postcolonial and anticolonial politics and sometimes as a confessional moment in anthropological autobiographies. Attempting to bypass the politically charged dialectic of subjectivity, philosophers like Habermas analyze the "logical" preconditions for interpretation and communication, arguing that these preconditions establish the ethics as well as the method of intersubjective understanding.[44]

MEDICAL PRACTICE AND THE VOICE OF THE SUBJECT

The agenda of the recent focus on subjectivity and on "the subject" of medical practice focuses primarily on therapeutic and moral as well as epistemic and methodological concerns.[45] A number of distinctive strands conjoin to give authority to the testimony of subjective experience.

1) Diagnostic and therapeutic reasons exist for granting epistemic validity to patients' illness narratives without automatically overriding them with the presumed objective deliverances of medical authorities.[46] Patients' individual beliefs—sometimes culturally encoded, sometimes idiosyncratic—about their constitutions, diets, occupations, and family circumstances influence their medical conditions. Their interpretations of the sources and symptomatic expressions of illness are experientially as well as diagnostically relevant.[47] Fine-grain details of patients' medical conditions are affected by their perceptions of power, class, gender, family and occupational responsibilities, ethnoculture, and age. Medical practitioners increasingly depend on patients' subjective phenomenological reports, seeing these reports as an essential part of successful diagnosis and therapy.[48]

2) Sensitivity to the experience of pain and suffering conjoin diagnostic considerations in pressing for patients' active participation in the therapeutic process. Some medical ethicists argue that an "I-Thou" dialogic sensibility that responds to the voice of the subject evokes a constructive partnership in healing: it elicits attentiveness, engagement, and sensitivity from medical practitioners and active cooperation by patients.[49] Because patients benefit most from alert participation in their therapeutic regimen, they need to understand that process in their own terms. Uniting the methodological concerns of anthropologists with the practical concerns of physicians, medical anthropologists track the logic and logistics of treating patients as partners rather than as the subject-objects of the work of healing.[50]

3) Many medical ethicists base their arguments for legitimizing the authority of patient autonomy on a liberal political theory that accords individuals fundamental inalienable rights of rational self-determination, espe-

cially in matters of life and death.[51] Nevertheless, morally and politically committed to respecting patient subjectivity, these theorists typically also offer specific normative and regulative principles to guide "rational choice" in medical contexts. Minimally, and perhaps less nobly, the informed consent of the patient has become a pressing legal matter as well as a moral one.

Concern about preserving the authority of phenomenological patient-subjects in medical theory and practice surprisingly reproduces and echoes distinctive strands in the transformative history of the conception of subjectivity. Conceptions of subjectivity over time—the power that Augustine accords to confessional expression, the authenticity that Loyola accords to the unmediated experience of pain and suffering, the epistemic privilege that Descartes accords to introspective reflection, the role that Hume assigns to the social origins of the fictional idea of the self, the egalitarian direction of Rousseau's analysis of the rights of individual autonomy, the dialogical "we" that emerges from the Fichtean and Sartrean self-positing "I"—all reappear in the rationale of contemporary anthropological theory and medical practice. The distinctive moments in the history of subjectivity are still alive and well—and as multifaceted as ever. Despite the transformative history of conceptions of subjectivity—despite the fact that the appears to have no core meaning—the various themes of subjectivity continue to reappear: the repressed subject returns.

NOTES

1. Michel de Montaigne, "Of the Inconsistency of Our Actions," in *The Complete Essays of Montaigne,* ed. Donald Frame (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1966), II.1.

2. See Aryeh Kosman, "Perceiving that We Perceive: DA 3.2," *Philosophical Review,* 1975.

3. See Amélie Rorty, "The Place of Contemplation in Aristotle's Ethics," in *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), esp. 338–91.

4. See Aryeh Kosman, "Aristotle on the Desirability of Friends," *Ancient Philosophy,* 2004.

5. St. Ignatius Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises if St. Ignatius,* ed. and trans. Louis Puhl (New York: Vintage, 2000).

6. Loyola, "First Week: The Examination of Conscience," *Spiritual Exercises.*

7. Loyola, "Third Week: The Events of the Passion," *Spiritual Exercises,*

8. Ibid.

9. See Stephen Menn, *Descartes and Augustine* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1998), esp. II.6.A, 367–70.

10. See Amélie Rorty, "The Structure of Descartes' Meditations," in *Essays on Descartes' Meditations,* ed. A. O. Rorty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

11. See Amélie Rorty, "Descartes on Thinking with the Body," in *Descartes,* ed. John Cottingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

12. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding ,*ed. Alexander Campbell Fraser (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1844), II.27.10.

13. For an extended discussion of interpretations of Locke's criteria for personal identity see J. L. Mackie, *Problems from Locke,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), ch. 6.

14. Joseph Butler, "Of Personal Identity," *Dissertations,* Dissertation I.

15. Montaigne, "Apology for Raymond Sebond," *Complete Essays,* II. 12.

16. David Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature,* ed. David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1.4.6.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., 2.1.5–6, 2.1.2, 2.1.5–6, 1.6, III.3.1.

19. See A. O. Rorty, "The Structure of Hume's *Treatise,*" in *Essays on Hume's 'Treatise,'* ed. Donald Ainslie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

20. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origins and Foundations of Inequality Among Men," in *The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings,* ed. Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), n. 15.

21. J. G. Fichte, "Wissenschaftslehre, 1.1," *Introductions to Wissenschaftslehre and Other Writings,* ed. and trans. David Breazeale (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994).

22. Fichte, "Second Introduction, 9," *Introductions to Wissenschaftslehre.*

23. See Stephen Darwall, "Fichte and the Second Person Standpoint," *International Yearbook for German Idealism,* 2005"; and "Respect and the Second Person Standpoint," *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association,* 2004.

24. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), II.1.1 and 5.

25. Ibid., III.3.3

26. Ibid., II.1.2, III.3.3.

27. Ibid., III.1.1

28. Ibid., III.3.3

29. See Arthur Kleinman, *Patients and Healers in the Context of Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); and Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock, eds., *Social Suffering,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). See especially the papers by Paul Farmer, Allen Young, and Talal Asad.

30. See *Cultural Survival Quarterly,* a journal that has, for thirty years, covered issues of concern to indigenous peoples.

31. See, for example, Sherry Ortner, "Theory in Anthropology Since the Sixties," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26, 1984; and N. B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry Ortner, eds., *Culture/Power/Histor*y (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

32. See Byron Good, *Medicine, Rationality and Experience: An Anthropological Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

33. See, for example, Michel Foucault, *Language, Memory and Practice* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980); Kevin Dwyer, *Moroccan Dialogues* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977); Dennis Tedlock, *The Spoken Word and the Work of Interpretation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983; Sherry Ortner, "Theory in Anthropology Since the Sixties"; Michael Fischer with Mehdi Abedi, *Debating Muslims: Cultural Dialogue in Post-Modernity and Tradition* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990); and James Boon, *Other Tribes, Other Scribes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

34. See, for example, Michelle Rosaldo, *Knowledge and Passion: Ilongot Notions of Self and Social Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); and Catherine Lutz and Leila Abu-Lughod, eds., *Language and the Politics of Emotion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

35. For the most influential formulation of the problem of indeterminacy in translations that led ironist anthropologists to become suspicious of purist ethnography, see W. v. O Quine, "Ontological Relativity," *Journal of Philosophy*, 1968; and "On the Reason for Indeterminacy of Translation," *Journal of Philosophy*, 1970. See also Donald Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984); and Ernest Lepore, ed., *Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

36. I shall, for convenience, speak of *purists* and *ironists* as though they were committed to different anthropological methods and perspectives. Of course, most anthropologists attempt to combine these perspectives, sometimes self-consciously and sometimes apparently unaware of the shifts in their perspectives. See Clifford Geertz, *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988); Vincent Crapanzano, *Hermes' Dilemma and Hamlet's Desire: On the Epistemology of Interpretation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); Renato Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993); James Clifford and George Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986). See especially the essays by George Marcus, Michael Fischer, Paul Rabinow, and James Clifford in this anthology.

37. See , for example, Marcel Griaule, *Conversations with Ogotemmeli* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972); Leila Ahmed, *A Border Passage* (New York, 2000); Lila Abu-Lughod, *Writing Women's Worlds: Bedouin Stories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Elizabeth Warnock Fernea, *Guests of the Sheik: An Ethnography of an Iraqi Village* (New York: Doubleday-Anchor, 1965).

38. See Clifford Geertz, "From the Native's Point of View: On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding," in *Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self and Emotion*, ed. Richard Shweder and Robert A. Levine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

39. See, for example, Talal Asad, *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* (London, 1973); Ernest Gellner, *Anthropology and Politics: Revolutions in the Sacred Grove* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); John Hall and J. C. Jarvie, *Transition to Modernity: Essays on Power, Wealth and Belief* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Sherry Ortner, *Making Gender: The Politics and Eros of Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996).

40. See George Marcus and Michael Fischer, *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*

(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); George Marcus, *Ethnography Through Thick and Thin* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998).

41. For example, see Kay Warren and Jean Jackson, eds., *Indigenous Movements, Self-Representation and the State in Latin America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002).

42. See, for example, Amélie Rorty, "The Hidden Politics of Multi-Culturalism," *Political Theory,* 1994.

43. See, for example, Clifford Geertz, *After the Fact: Two Countries, Four Decades, One Anthropologist* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995); and *Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000). See also Paul Rabinow, *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

44. See ,for example, Jürgen Habermas, "The Hermeneutic Claim to Universality," in *Contemporary Hermeneutics*, ed. Josef Bleicher (Routledge, 1980).

45. See, for example, Dan Brock, *Life and Death: Philosophical Essays on Biomedical Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Kleinman, *Patients and Healers*; Allen Buchanan and Dan Brock, *Deciding for Others* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1989); E. D. Pellegrino and D. C. Thomasma, *The Virtues in Medical Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); T. L. Beauchamp and J. F. Childress, *Principles of Bio-Medical Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Miles Little, *Humane Medicine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); and Kleinman, Das, and Lock, *Social Suffering.* See especially the essays by Paul Farmer, Allan Young, and Talal Asad.

46. See, for example, Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good, Paul E. Brodwin, Byron J. Good, and Arthur Kleinman, eds., *Pain as Human Experience: An Anthropological Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

47. Alan Radley, ed., *Worlds of Illness: Biographical and Cultural Perspectives on Health and Disease* (London: Routledge, 1993); and his *Making Sense of Illness* (London: Sage, 1994).

48. Mark Zborowski, *People in Pain* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1969); Jay Katz, ed., *Experimentation with Human Beings: The Authority of the Investigator and Subject* (New York: Russell Sage, 1972); and his *Silent World of Doctor and Patient* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2002); S. K. Toombs, *The Meaning of Illness: A Phenomenological Account of the Different Perspectives of Physician and Patient* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1992).

49. See, for example, Jean Jackson, *Camp Pain: Talking with Chronic Pain Patients* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); João Biehl, *Vita: Life in a Zone of Social Abandonment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Thomas Csordas, *The Sacred Self: Cultural Phenomenology of Charismatic Healing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); and his *Body/Meaning/Healing* (New York: Palgrave Press, 2002).

50. See Kleinman, *Patients and Healers*.

51. Tom Beauchamp and Seymore Perlin, *Ethical Issues in Death and Dying* (Englewood, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1978); Brock, *Life and Death;* Buchanan and Brock, *Deciding for Others* .

2 The Experiential Basis of Subjectivity

How Individuals Change
in the Context of Societal Transformation

ARTHUR KLEINMAN AND ERIN FITZ-HENRY

For years, the study of subjectivity has been dominated by theories of the self that interrogate cultural representations and performance. These studies have a certain richness in helping us understand how societies change because they are able to deal with collective transformations through major cultural meanings and practices. But they usually leave the intimate subjectivity of individuals unanalyzed, like a black box, or bring to it a decidedly sectarian view, such as Freudian psychoanalysis, which has long been overworked and overreached as an explanatory framework. However, anthropology has downplayed, at least since W. H. R. Rivers, the importance of theories of experience for understanding subjectivity. The study of the collective and individual poles of experience—and the insights it can give us into affect, memory, and other deeply subjective self processes—curiously has not been a major source of recent anthropological theory or research.

A problem in the study of subjectivity that troubles all anthropologists is the ongoing emphasis in philosophy, psychology, and other social science disciplines on a kind of universal human nature that is held to be neurobiologically hardwired and historically unchanging. Denis Diderot, for example, writing in the eighteenth century, asserted that "Human nature is the same everywhere," a sentiment echoed by twentieth-century structuralist anthropologists and even some contemporary cultural psychologists. Scholars have frequently invoked this notion of a unified human nature as the rationale for universals of all kinds, and it continues to be used as a justification for Western ethical discourse, which assumes a static, generalized subject that does not vary with changing historical circumstances, cultural contexts, or sociopolitical institutions.

Such formulations are problematic for anthropologists who, while respecting the neurobiological underpinnings of human behavior and cogni-

tion, as well as the urgent necessity of ethics discourse, recognize that human beings' complex commitments and moral challenges are far too intricate to explain by biological reductionism. Although infant and twin studies may offer important insights into the genetic bases of behavior, they still largely fail to account for the enormous complexity of human social experience—war, genocide, structural violence, poverty, and displacement—and the highly nuanced subjective states that those experiences engender. In dealing with the genocide in Rwanda; the civil wars in Cambodia, Liberia, and Sri Lanka; the repressive regimes in El Salvador and Guatemala; the street violence in Los Angeles; the suicide bombings in the Middle East; or even the more "routine" violences of social neglect and institutionalized racism, neurobiology simply cannot show itself to be immediately consequential. Our subjectivities certainly have a biology, but they also, and perhaps more critically, have an equally influential history, cultural specificity, political location, and economic position. In short, we are as responsive to biological blueprints as we are to alterations in political economy and social positioning, both of which, in turn, refashion the very biology of those blueprints.

To understand human subjectivity, then, we cannot simply resort to a biologically grounded universal human nature or take refuge in abstract, ahistorical ethical discourse; we need to affirm the variability, heterogeneity, and contingency of our subjectivities as they unfold within the realm of experience. Following Michael Oakeshott (1933) and many others, we define experience as the felt flow of interpersonal communication and engagements, or as William James says, "reality, life, experience, concreteness, immediacy, use what word you will . . . by reality here I mean where things *happen*"(1977: 96). Experience is intersubjective in as much as it involves practices, negotiations, and contestations with others with whom we are connected. It is also the medium within which collective and subjective processes fuse, enter into dialectical relationship, and mutually condition one another. We are born into the flow of palpable experience, where our senses are first patterned by the symbols and social interactions of our local worlds. But our emergent subjectivities also return to those symbols and interactions, reconfiguring, repatterning, and sometimes even completely reinterpreting them. Experience, then, has as much to do with collective realities as it does with individual translations and transformations of those realities. It is always simultaneously social and subjective, collective and individual. Thus, we can talk of moral experience as the fusion of affect and moral meanings in the interpersonal realm, where, for example, "loss of face" is simultaneously a personal and a collective process.

Most importantly, though, experience always takes place within particular social spaces and is inextricable from the shifting exigencies of practical, everyday life within those spaces. In villages, neighborhoods, families, and workplaces, people are aware that certain practical things matter greatly—status, relationships, resources, ultimate meanings, death, or transcendence—and they struggle to preserve and protect those things. This charged engagement with the things of a local world lends experience its intrinsically moral character: experience is the medium through which people engage with the things that matter most to them, both individually and collectively, whether a national identity, a collective memory of suffering, a personal aspiration, a health condition, or the preservation of a native language. And as the anthropological record has already extensively documented, what is at stake often varies radically from culture to culture and even within a given culture, where differences of class, ethnicity, political affiliation, gender, and individuality may further differentiate interests. People who are thrust to the outskirts of institutional power, regularly exposed to police violence, or battered by bureaucratic racism, will have an entirely different set of concerns, cultural representations, and collective processes than will people who live at the center of political and economic power and who are certain that their interests are being attended to by the state, their welfare is deemed valuable, and they have allies in the institutional structures that surround them.

Furthermore, the stakes for various communities and individuals are never static, because large-scale political and economic processes constantly alter the landscapes in which local worlds are anchored. Under the pressures of globalization, for example, traditional practices and economies often undergo dramatic shifts, as in China, where the transition from a centrally planned to a market economy has led to growing disparities between rich and poor, breakdowns in social networks, and entirely different ways of experiencing affect, now disconnected from the traditional sources of moral sentiment. Again, the effects of such changes are by no means uniform: alterations in macroinstitutions differentially affect various communities within a local world. For communities that have the natural and institutional resources to buffer their members from the potentially negative consequences of such changes, the effects on individual lives may be minimal, whereas for those lacking such resources, the effects may be, and often are, greatly influential, even at times lethal. Thus, the politics, resources, and institutional frameworks of local communities mediate between macrolevel social and political changes and microlevel individual transformations. The vector of change can also be reversed: individuals can and do change their

contexts, and different persons exert different influences and are in turn influenced in different ways.

By focusing on the particularity of experience, we move further and further away from the idea of a universal human nature and toward an appreciation of the variety of human conditions within which often greatly different things are at stake. Recognizing the multiplicity of human conditions, we affirm that our subjectivities and the moral processes in which we engage are forever in flux—not static, abstract, biologically fixed, or divorced from political, social, and economic processes, but fluid, contingent, and open to transformation. As our worlds change, so do we. And as transnational trends, such as the latest phases of finance capitalism, remake the conditions of our lives and the parameters of our worlds, so, too, do they remake our most intimate inner processes: emotion, cognitive style, memory, our deepest sense of self.

Both historically and cross-culturally, the ethnographic record is rife with examples of such change, many of which testify to the inextricable interconnections between cultural representations, collective processes, and subjectivity. To narrow this huge and disorderly field, in this essay, we will focus primarily on these interconnections in settings of political violence. To be sure, extreme examples of political violence are so dramatically defining that one can see more clearly than usual how feeling and action are remade by social imagery and political strategies.

Psychosocial studies of participants in acts of genocide provide haunting reminders of how quickly and dramatically such changes restructure moral processes and redefine the stakes for local actors. Christopher Browning's 1992 *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, for example, is an attempt to understand how middle-aged reserve policemen from Hamburg came to participate in the deportation and slaughter of thousands of Polish Jews beginning in the summer of 1942. How were these "grassroots perpetrators," most of whom were working-class men between the ages of thirty-three and forty-eight, transformed, in the space of just a few months, into "professional killers"? On June 20, 1942, Browning tells us, Reserve Police Battalion 101 received orders for an unspecified "special action" in Poland, a euphemism for the massacre of more than 1,800 Jewish men, women, and children, the weakest of whom were simply shot on sight. Beginning at daybreak and continuing until early in the evening, the officers isolated the Jews in the central marketplace and then escorted them to a nearby forest, where the Jews were lined up, paired one-on-one with officers, and shot at close range, sometimes so violently that their skulls exploded. Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of Browning's

account, however, is the fact that all these men were given the opportunity to refuse the action, but only a handful did. Why?

He suggests a number of reasons, both collective and individual. First, the members of this newly formed battalion experienced intense pressure to conform, along with an equally intense sense of loyalty and camaraderie. This close identification between the men in uniform proved stronger and more influential than their perceptions of the humanity of their victims. In this local world, where in-group affiliation was most at stake, "stepping out" meant "losing face," because it signaled that one was "weak," "cowardly," and willing to break rank (72). In addition, the standard cultural representations of Jews as those "outside the circle of human obligation and responsibility" played a role (73). Although few men in the battalion had consciously adopted the eliminationist anti-Semitic doctrines of the Nazi regime, they had certainly internalized the images of Jews so frequently invoked by their commanders, who did not hesitate to remind them that Jews were the enemy and that "the enemy [is] killing German women and children by bombing Germany" (73).

Also, however, the men rationalized the killings in substantially different ways. Some believed that regardless of whether they participated or not, the Jews would not "escape their fate," whereas others went so far as to see themselves in religious terms—as the "redeemers" of children who had lost their mothers. As one thirty-five-year-old metalworker explained, "I made the effort, and it was possible for me, to shoot only children. . . . I reasoned with myself that after all without its mother the child could not live any longer. It was supposed to be, so to speak, soothing to my conscience to release children unable to live without their mothers" (73). Thus, even within this local world, which had an intensely demanding ethos of loyalty and an anti-Semitic cultural orientation, psychological differences existed between the men—and even conflicts and contradictions, depending on the circumstance. Major Trapp, for example, the head commander of the battalion and the one responsible for conveying the orders to the troops, reportedly cried "like a child" on more than one occasion, whispering, simply, "everything is very terrible." On another, he confided to his driver, "If this Jewish business is ever avenged on earth, then have mercy on us Germans." And on yet another, with his hand over his heart, he lamented aloud, "Oh God, why did I have to be given these orders?" (58). Hence, the setting was not that of cold, ruthless brutality demanded of SS mass killers in the death camps, but of an affectively open context in which the killers and their leaders saw themselves as the true sufferers, men who often killed reluctantly and with pain and sorrow yet did their job to the bitter end. We see different ways,

then, in which affect and personal identity come together with group norms, "orders," and mass murder. To understand the subjective transformations that culminated in the murder of more than six million Jews during World War II, we need to do more than simply trace changes in major cultural, political, and economic practices; we also need to describe the patterns by which cultural representations, collective processes, and distinct subjectivities came together in a particular local world—in this case, that of Police Battalion 101 in the Nazi state.

The 1994 genocide in Rwanda provides an equally unsettling portrait of the transformations of ordinary Rwandan peasants into citizens willing to murder between 800,000 and 1,000,000 of their neighbors and friends in the space of just one hundred days. To fully understand the Rwandan genocide, one must first delineate the historical trajectories along which the identities of Hutu and Tutsi were first constructed and later racialized by the Belgian colonial administration Gourevitch 1999; Mamdani 2001). The colonial authorities justified their political and legal privileging of the Tutsis by institutionalizing the so-called Hamitic myth. Whereas initially the terms *Hutu* and *Tutsi* indicated little more than class or caste distinctions (Hutus were cultivators, and Tutsi were herdsmen), the Hamitic myth propagated by John Hamming Speke and other "race scientists," suggested that "all culture and civilization in central Africa had been introduced by the taller, sharper-featured people, . . . considered to be a Caucasoid tribe of Ethiopian origin, descended from the biblical King David, and therefore a superior race to the native Negroids" (Gourevitch 1999: 51). This absurd hypothesis became the cornerstone of the Belgian administration and was firmly fixed in law between 1933 and 1934, when the administration, much like that of South Africa, began to issue "ethnic identity cards" that virtually prevented Hutus from becoming Tutsis. Slowly, the Nilotic Tutsis became identified as an "alien minority" within Rwanda like the Europeans themselves and were allotted all the political and administrative privileges such a status afforded. In contrast, the Bantu Hutus, the "indigenous majority," were forced into communal labor on plantations, in forests, and along highways. This racialized distinction was the fuel that fired the social revolution of 1959, the rise of the Hutu Power movement, and the genocide of 1994.

But, again, to understand the transformations in subjectivity and moral sentiment that made possible the genocide that was carried out, village by village, in the early 1990s, we need to appreciate not just the "poisoned legacy of colonialism" but the contemporary intersections between changing representations of the Hutu and the Tutsi, the processes by which the Hutu Power movement was able to mobilize a "culture of fear," and the

ways in which those processes and representations were appropriated by individuals with distinct motivations, in different socioeconomic positions, and in pursuit of disparate ends. As Mahmood Mamdani points out in his 2001 *When Victims Become Killers,* many Hutu farmers slaughtered their Tutsi neighbors and nonpolitical or dissident counterparts, not because of greed or hatred but because of a terrible fear propagated by Hutu extremists, who, beginning as early as 1957 with the publication of the *Hutu Manifesto,* convinced the farmers that the Tutsis were a *race* alien to Rwanda and that if they refused to kill, the RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front) would confiscate their land and strip them of their rights. By November 1992, nightly radio broadcasts called on Hutu civilians to "wipe out this scum" and to destroy "these cockroaches." Kiruhara, an illiterate twenty-seven-year-old Hutu peasant, remembers, "[They] were always telling people that if the RPF comes, it will return Rwanda to feudalism, that it would bring oppression" (Mamdani 2001: 191). And as Benedicte Ndagijimana recalls of his fellow countrymen, "They hear over and over that the Tutsis are out to kill them, and that is reality. So they act not out of hate so much as fear. They think they have only the choice to kill or be killed" (191). Because of these manipulations of collective representations by Hutu extremists via the national radio and during "consciousness-raising" sessions, Hutu peasants came to believe that they were under attack and that if they did not kill, they would be subjugated by the armies of the RPF from neighboring Uganda. This state-sponsored fear and incitement of hatred, with its origins in the Belgian occupation, defined the local worlds of thousands of Rwandans.

In the context of "ordinary lives," however, people certainly had more than one motivation for participating in the genocide—and those motivations were rooted as much in the political history and cultural traditions of Rwanda as in the terrors and scarcities that defined individual lives. Some historians fault the Rwandese political tradition, which, both before and after colonialism, was "one of systematic, centralized, and unconditional obedience to authority" (199). From this perspective, this "culture of obedience" laid the groundwork for the collective assent to the genocide. As one Hutu lawyer explained, "conformity is deep, very developed here. In Rwandan culture, everyone obeys authority" (200).

Others, however, contend that the war is best understood against the backdrop of changing economic circumstances that culminated in land scarcity, declining food production, and intense rivalries for resources. Following the economic collapse of the late 1980s, thousands of young men had no prospects of employment, and these men formed the core of the Hutu militia groups, or *interahamwe,* in which they were trained not for agri-

cultural or administrative work but in the use of machetes and the practices of disembowelment. Thus, the "culture of obedience," the "culture of fear," increasingly grim economic realities, and the collective representations of Tutsis as "horned devils" came together in a way that violently altered both collective and subjective processes. As one man said of his friend who had acquired Hutu identity papers, "He was a very nice person, . . . always trying to help people out, buying cigarettes, a place to sleep, blankets. . . . And then one night he changed completely. We couldn't talk anymore because I am Tutsi. This happened with so many people. They changed so quickly that you would say, 'Is this the same person?' " (Gourevitch, 92).

But how, specifically, were individuals changed? Working as a *New Yorker* journalist, Philip Gourevitch set out to understand this question in the spring of 1995, when he arrived in gutted, blood-strewn Rwanda to interview both perpetrators and victims. Among the former was Monsignor Augustin Misago, the bishop of Gikongoro. Like many of his colleagues in the church, Misago was divided about a "theological resolution" to the genocide, and although he denied that the apparition of the Virgin Mary on May 15 was a factor, this event, which the Rwandan media exalted as an iconic justification for the slaughter, may have proven decisive. Unlike others, however, Misago participated in the massacre of Tutsis in a particularly direct and gruesome way, abandoning more than ninety Tutsi schoolchildren to the police, who subsequently slaughtered eighty-two of them. When confronted about his role in the massacre, he responded, "What could I do? I don't have an army. What could I do by myself? . . . When men become like devils, and you don't have any army, what can you do?" (138–89). Again and again, he offered this line of defense: he had been powerless in the face of Hutu Power extremists. Furthermore, he said, not only did he lack sufficient resources to defend his parishioners, but he, too, was mired in the ignorance born of wartime propaganda, and he, too, just like the schoolchildren, had been abandoned. "We were badly informed," he continued. "The unfortunate thing was that among those policemen there were some accomplices of the *interahamwe.* I couldn't have known that." And later, in a more accusatory vein, "You—you Westerners—left and abandoned us all." Thus, Misago justified his desertion of the children at Kibeho by clutching at apparent alliances with them. By appropriating the images and affective motifs of powerlessness, ignorance, and abandonment, he sought, as Gourevitch says, "to be thought of as a victim of the same deception that had resulted in eighty-two children being slaughtered" (138). Misago made this sense of victimhood the centerpiece around which he defined his subjectivity.

But Misago's is not the only, nor, thankfully, the most representative story to come out of Rwanda. Faced with similar cultural, political, and economic circumstances, others, like Hutu dissident and hotel proprietor Paul Ruesabagina, acted quite differently—driven not by a sense of their own victimhood but by the imperative of procuring shelter and providing ongoing protection for the most vulnerable members of the community. Although Paul testified to feeling as "if he were already dead" and complained of a persistent lack of trust and diminished sense of freedom, he nonetheless managed to assume control of the Hotel des Milles Collines, besieged on all sides by *interahamwe,* and to oversee its functioning as a safe haven for Tutsi refugees. Unlike many of his counterparts, he did not opt only to "save his own skin" or to kill reluctantly; he chose to "save everybody he could, and if that meant negotiating with everybody who wanted to kill them—so be it" (127). Although Paul's ability to act in this manner was a product of his privileged economic position, simply being in an influential position, as the case of Misago demonstrates, no more consistently determines one's moral processes and responses than does any other social factor. Instead, as we have already argued, an ongoing exchange takes place between personal and collective processes, and the outcome of those processes at any given moment is determined by a unique and irreducible interpenetration of economic realities, political representations, collective dynamics, and temperamental proclivities.

During China's Cultural Revolution (1966–76), as Tony Saich and David Apter describe in their compelling analysis *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao's Republic,* a confluence of three historical changes fundamentally altered the relation between cultural meanings, collective experience, and personhood. First, political control extended to the level of the family—where it had never gone under China's imperial regimes. Second, Confucian norms were turned on their head: what formerly was highly valued now became objects of ridicule and hatred. Thus, intellectuals, the cynosures of the Confucian moral order, became "enemies of the people." Finally, intellectuals lost their legitimacy as an external source of moral criticism, a position that they had long held in Chinese society and that offered a check on imperial power and a model for ethical conduct that stood outside the ruling order. The result was starkly evident in student Red Guards' attacks on their teachers. The teacher-student relationship had been central to the Confucian moral code, but in the late 1960s, students beat, degraded, and even killed their teachers. Spouses turned on spouses; children, on parents. Afterward, erstwhile Red Guards often were at a loss to explain why they perpetrated their terrible acts. As one told the first author of this paper, "It was a tremen-

dously exciting time. We thought we were changing the world. Beginning all over again. Some of us were destroying what we believed were feudal remnants—family loyalty, for example. Others took out old hatreds on easy targets. Me, I was excited by the destructiveness. I was really happy beating people. Until I began to see the wheel turn on my friends and family. Then I began to think. Something was wrong here. I dropped out."

Anne Thurston, a China scholar, offers the story of a former Red Guard who, after the first few chaotic years of the Cultural Revolution, by chance met a teacher whom he had assaulted and who was badly injured and disabled. Humiliated, feeling a deep need to repent, and wanting to be of practical assistance, the former Red Guard devoted much of his time to assisting his wounded teacher. In the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution, feelings of shame, repentance, and also revenge were widespread. Yet whether one actually acted on those public sentiments and private passions was uncertain and had multiple determinants. Yan Zhongshu, a Chinese physician who lived through this period and felt deeply the traumatic consequences of political violence that led to his wife's death and his own exile, had an opportunity to take revenge on a fellow physician in his work unit who had acted as his nemesis and seriously beaten Dr. Yan. But Yan Zhongshu found himself unable to carry out an act of vengeance that would have had the support of virtually everyone else in the hospital. He attributed his reluctance to his personality and the fact that he was simply not psychologically equipped to seek retribution. Dr. Yan pointed out that most members of his work unit, even in the most frenzied moments of criticism meetings, were able to control their aggression and limit their participation in violence. Thus, he rejected the ideas of crowd frenzy or the compulsion of the moment as explanations of the most violent acts and actors. Those actions, he believed, were motivated by past experiences, the particularities of relationships, or the special personality traits of individuals.

In writing compelling portraits of sectarian violence in India, Veena Das, Roma Chatterjee, and Deepak Mehta show that one can literally draw a block-by-block map of violence and trace how the past history of friendship ties and cycles of animosity determined why one block was able to avoid violence while another was consumed by it. Many factors come together to cause acts of violence or protection from them, but the quality of personal ties and participants' individual qualities can work with or against large-scale pressures to produce patterns of violence that require local explanations.

A different, though no less disturbing, case study of the interaction of cultural meaning, political reality, and emotion is that of "mother love" in

the Brazilian *favelas,* as described by Nancy Scheper-Hughes in *Death without Weeping.* In Bom Jesus, in the Northeast of Brazil, where Scheper-Hughes conducted fieldwork, the local world is one of tremendous scarcity: little unpolluted water is available, hunger and thirst abound, health services are severely restricted, and employment prospects are grim. The community has been ravaged by colonial "greed, exploitation, and retaliation," and its fate has been determined by the development of a sugar monoculture controlled exclusively by wealthy landowners, whose modernization of farming techniques forced hundreds of peasant laborers into urban slums. The situation only worsened between 1964 and 1982, when the military dictatorship engaged in increasingly severe acts of political oppression, targeting poor communities like Bom Jesus as potential sites of social unrest.

How do such complete deprivation, violence, and state-sponsored oppression alter "maternal sentiments?" wonders Scheper-Hughes. "What . . . are the effects of chronic hunger, sickness, death, and loss on the ability to love, trust, [and] have faith . . . in the broadest sense of these terms?" (Scheper-Hughes 1992: 15) Bioevolutionary and developmental psychologists assert that a biological "naturalness" defines mother-child bonding practices and their accompanying affect. But, as her study illustrates, these practices and emotions are shaped by the political and economic contexts in which women must live and work and by the constellations of meaning, belief, and ritual that animate those contexts. In Bom Jesus, where people have a high expectancy of child death owing to thirst and malnutrition, mothers often delay attachment to infants who are considered "temporary visitors" in a household. They mortally neglect, "sacrifice," or treat with "holy indifference" those who seem to lack a "knack" for life, and they save others who exhibit a more pronounced vitality. In response to the death of their children, in this place mothers do not appear to feel the kind of maternal grief that psychoanalysts posit as universal, nor do they seem to repress their "natural maternal sentiments" in favor of a superficial stoicism that masks their numbness and shock. Instead, suggests Scheper-Hughes, they bury their children, often with indifference, because they exist in a "bad-faith economy" in which medical doctors, government officials, and even they themselves work together to misdiagnose their hunger and to systematically overlook the fact that it is state sponsored. The element that kills their children is not lack of medicine, as they believe, but a brutal, predatory environment in which hunger, thirst, scarcity, and the reality of unmet needs converge in a pattern of triage that forces male heads of households to desert their families, teenage girls to take refuge in cities as prostitutes,

and mothers to systematically abandon those who cannot survive in such an environment. Quite simply, where resources are scarce, the women of Bom Jesus are forced to allocate the little they have to the family members most capable of being sustained by it.

But, as Scheper-Hughes repeatedly underscores, these women are not maternally deficient, psychoanalytically repressed, or worthy of moral blame; they are simply mothers who cannot grieve for their children in a local world that is predicated upon, and is entirely indifferent to, their children's deaths. They cannot, and indeed must not, be judged by the standards of universal ethics, which do not take into account the complexity of this bad-faith economy. Their experiences of mother-child bonding are understandable only against the backdrop of everyday military violence, the ongoing scarcity of natural resources, the exploitation of the patron-client social arrangement, and the pervasive silence of government officials. Thus, we can approximate the moral norms that govern their lives and the affect that accompanies (and is indistinguishable from) those norms only by recognizing the ways in which the social and the subjective interpenetrate—that is, how the mothers' pity and indifference are patterned by the economy in which they must live. Whereas a universal ethicist or a Lacanian psychoanalyst might be at pains to understand the subtle logic of their moral sentiments, Scheper-Hughes provides a framework for beginning to conceptualize the radical ways in which emotional processes can be altered, ritualistically transfigured, and embodied anew, albeit in different forms, in response to violence, scarcity, and eviscerating hunger.

Allan Young's *The Harmony of Illusions* takes this insight further. For Young, our subjectivities do not merely shift from one historical epoch (or cultural setting) to another; for him, the templates that scientists, psychologists, anthropologists, and other "experts" use to think about the processes that define subjectivity—memory, repression, dissociation, and so on—are themselves socially produced historical constructs. Detailing the emergence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a clinical reality, he traces the condition to the nineteenth-century discovery of "pathological memory," the new psychological language of "repression" and "dissociation" to which this discovery gave rise, and the subsequent transformations of that language by a new class of medical and moral authorities who rose to prominence during World War I. Although PTSD is indisputably real in the lives of its primary sufferers, we need to view it, he suggests, as an evolving conglomeration of political, moral, and medical processes, not a timeless neurophysiological reality. It is a "techno-phenomenon" generated and sus-

tained by the official nosological practices of the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, by changing clinical and research technologies, and by the social interests, political claims, and moral arguments of invested parties, such as diagnosticians, therapists, Vietnam War, Gulf War, and Iraq War veterans, and administrators of veterans' hospitals. Thus, even the ways in which we think about (and experience) ourselves and our memories are historically derived and socially constituted, and these self-reflections act on psychological and moral processes in the experienced self and the lived world to create new psycho-moral realities. He sees no distinguishing line between self and world, physical body and social body, subjectivity and intersubjectivity. Our affect is always both internal and external to us—located as much within the contours of our bodies as within the shifting parameters of our sociopolitical worlds.

Thus, proposing newer and more intricate conceptions of an autonomous self, the kind to which psychologists and others have for years granted primacy, no longer makes conceptual sense. Instead, we need a heightened recognition of the openness of the self to social experience—not its inner essence but its relations. When we delineate more clearly the porousness of the self, we shift away from notions of universal essences toward more contextual framings of moral experience, affect, and our deepest subjective processes. To talk about subjectivity, then, we must build our conversation around the fact, already amply documented by anthropological research, that the subjective is always social and the social, subjective. This dialectic of intersubjectivity, not just the dialectics internal to the self, needs to be taken up in subsequent framings of experience. Only then will we move decisively away from simplistic and misleading ethical discourse and unavailing conceptualizations of human nature. Indeed, we believe that such interpersonal processes will increasingly alter our conceptions of the self and self processes.

In such a short space, we cannot feasibly develop the ethnographic database to fully support our argument about the importance of experience or to work out a full theory of experience. The best we can do in this essay is to suggest how the ethnography and social theory of experience reshape the way we interpret subjectivity. One missing piece is a casebook of narratives of the self in its social contexts. These narratives will exemplify in detail the large claims we make here about the intersections between collective and individual processes (Kleinman 2006). That the moral, affective, and political sides of these processes are inseparable is our conclusion and the element that we take to be the prolegomenon for the anthropology of subjectivity.

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3   How the Body Speaks

*Illness and the Lifeworld
among the Urban Poor*

VEENA DAS AND RANENDRA K. DAS

In this chapter, we reflect on the meaning and use of diagnostic categories to make illness knowable in the course of social transactions. The "illness narrative" has emerged as a classic genre in medical anthropology, and it offers a way of contrasting patient and physician perspectives on illness. The focus on the patient's construction of her experience is a powerful tool to contest and even reform the power that the expert exercises in clinical encounters. Thus, the emphasis on illness narratives and patients' "explanatory models" serves an important therapeutic purpose: Kleinman (1989) used it with stunning effect in his critique of psychiatric practice. The critical force of the concept lies in its potential to interrogate the dominant modes of biopower that Foucault (1991) identified as typical forms of governmentality under modernity.

Since its formulation, the concept of illness narratives has developed in different directions. For instance, Byron Good (1994) emphasizes the linguistic and narratological qualities of the narrative—not only pointing to genre and emplotment but also showing how the context of the telling may influence the way that the story is organized. Whereas this move opens the way for a subtle analysis of the complex relation between experience and representation in illness narratives, it also shifts the weight of analysis from the context of health seeking to that of storytelling, bracketing the important tension between the indexical and symbolic aspects of medical complaints.[1] Other scholars have analyzed illness narratives as part of the postmodern experience of illness, suggesting that modern and postmodern denote two different (even successive) styles of living with illness—"a modern style that accepts the authorized medico-scientific narrative and a postmodern style in which patients reclaim power as creators and narrators of their own distinctive stories" (Morris 1998: 25, see also Frank 1995) This ac-

count sees the subject as wresting the self from the representations of illness in the dominant expert discourses, yet it gives little importance to the materiality of the conditions within which people fall sick and seek therapeutic interventions. The emphasis on meaning completely eclipses the specificity of the conditions within which people experience health and illness; it is not even clear whether the voice of the patient is an embodied voice or whether it functions as a grammatical or literary voice.

Our paper has grown out of an engagement with illness experience among the urban poor: it looks at subjectivity as deeply enmeshed in the everyday life of the poor in a defined material and social space. Our concern is with the precariousness of everyday life in low-income neighborhoods in Delhi, India, the local ecology within which illness experiences takes shape, and the way that medical practice mutates in the processes of giving treatment to the poor. The illness experience is the lens through which we try to give specificity to the political and economic circumstances within which the lives of the urban poor take shape, thus contesting any generic notions of "the poor."

MAKING ILLNESS KNOWABLE

Although every culture has recognizable lexical terms that point to the presence of an illness, these terms do not constitute a closed system within which the experience of bodily discomfort or a sense of ill being can be irrevocably placed. Rather, as Christopher Davis (2000) points out, diagnostic categories are the starting points or building blocks for constructing therapies. Thus, though common understandings may exist of the terms that make up a diagnosis within a shared culture, significant variations can exist in ideas about which of these categories *fit* together as individuals struggle to match therapies with illnesses. Further, there are no hermetically sealed cultures within which illness is experienced, diagnosis is made, and therapies are sought. Although biomedical categories and therapies have reached different parts of the world in very different ways, the condition of medical diversity or medical pluralism is now universal. This fact raises significant questions about how concepts of health and illness travel. How are these concepts translated, and how do people deal with different expert cultures in making intimate bodily experiences available for therapeutic intervention?

We begin with notions of complaint, symptom, and diagnosis as they arose in responses to simple questions such as "Were you sick this week?"

"If yes, what was the complaint?" "What do you think you had?" "Who diagnosed this?" These questions were posed as part of a weekly morbidity survey conducted in seven neighborhoods in Delhi over a two-year period (2000–02) by the Institute for Socio-Economic Research in Development and Democracy (ISERDD). The survey was part of a longitudinal study on urban health. Approximately three hundred households participated in the survey; the refusal rate in the recruitment phase was less than 1 percent.[2] Six households moved out of the localities in the first two years, complicating efforts to survey them on a regular basis. Morbidity surveys were conducted in two yearly cycles—a weekly survey lasting seventeen to eighteen weeks, followed by monthly surveys during the rest of the year.

We used three methods to elicit accounts of illness experiences, each of which captured different aspects of illness. All the interviews took place in the homes of the respondents. Although the ISERDD team also collected data on the interactions between the practitioners and patients through observations in the clinics of 291 practitioners, spending one day in each practitioner's clinic, these data enter this discussion only as background for patient accounts.[3] The first method of soliciting illness accounts was to ask questions in the course of the weekly morbidity surveys. This method helped identify the categories people used to express deviation from a state of health. Although we constructed our questionnaire to elicit a *sequence* of events—a story—the sequence resulted from the order in which the questions were asked: the story moved from reporting an experience of illness that week, to naming the practitioners consulted, the medications received, and the expenditure incurred.[4] Instead of adopting the usual survey method of eliciting information in a single interview (or in some cases in a followup interview some months later), field-workers from ISERDD contacted households every week for the duration of the survey. Thus, they were able to record the course of illness as it occurred, as well as the therapeutic regimes that patients undertook. This frequent contact was very useful in tracking the intersection between household decision making and the course of the illness, but it cut up the telling of illness-related events into weekly episodes.

The second method we used followed directly from our initial observations that in the course of describing their illness experiences, people offered many other insights that called upon different realms of sociality and different ways of reckoning time.[5] For example, the story of the illness in many cases was also the story of kinship relations, of who helped and who betrayed; respondents often described how the episode of the moment re-

lated to earlier episodes of their own or others' illnesses, or they reflected on the social and economic conditions in which they lived. Not all illnesses invited such reflection, indicating that significant variations exist in illness experiences: some are passed over in a casual manner; others lead to more stories about engagement with different social and therapeutic contexts. Illness in the latter sense is profoundly social. To capture this aspect of illness experiences and to understand the relation of failures of the body to failures of one's social world (including the specific conditions that constitute poverty), our team of field-workers recorded such observations even when the accounts did not seem to have an apparent relation to illness and therapy, as defined in biomedicine. Field-workers who conducted weekly surveys kept diaries in which they recorded the conversations that occurred in the course of the interviews, even when these contributions did not seem strictly pertinent to the questions they had asked.[6] Over time, we found that stringing together these scattered observations gave us clues to unfinished stories, evolving tensions, and linguistic patterns, such as use of euphemisms or irony to express a range of affects through which illness was wedged between the self and others.

Finally, field-workers at ISERDD were trained to use the typical illness-narrative genre to conduct detailed interviews with at least one member of each household in the first year. Senior members of the ISERDD research team conducted these interviews. We made every attempt to see that different persons in each household had an opportunity to speak at some point during the year. Though the data are still being processed, we believe the survey results have acquired sufficient depth for us to be able to speak about these delicate issues. The weekly surveys permitted the survey population to speak about the ordinariness of many illnesses such as colds and coughs and mild, short-lived fevers. The ethnographic open-ended interviews, however, allowed respondents to address the dramatic nature of illness and to discuss what was at stake. Together, these interviews revealed the diversity of contexts in which survey participants experienced illness. At one end of the spectrum, illness was seen as a deviation from life that was easily absorbed into the normal; in these cases, it was part of the normal flow of life. At the other end of the spectrum, the story of the illness was haunted by the sense of a failure of the body and of social relations. How did people move between these registers of the normal and the pathological? In the eloquent formulation of Christopher Davis (2000), medical systems may be understood not only in terms of what they do as therapeutic interventions but also in terms of what they allow people to say.

THE LEXICAL TERMS

The lexical terms deployed to refer to illness or to abnormal bodily sensations are the linguistic means through which illness acquires a social existence. To respondents who answered in the affirmative to the question "Were you sick this week?" we first asked "What was the problem/discomfort?" *(kya taklif thi?).* The answers revealed important overlaps between the notion of the symptom, the medical complaint, and the idea of discomfort because the term *taklif* could cover all three. Many of the answers to this question deployed terms that Davis calls "primary terms," those offered without elaboration. These terms rendered illness unproblematic and absorbed it within the normal ups and downs of life. The second kind of response offered elaboration on antecedent events, the physiological location of the discomfort, the attribution of illness to the specific economic conditions in respondents' lives, or a sense that the body itself was failing. In the third category were responses that viewed illnesses either as failures of social relations, especially of kinship and neighborhood, as the result of magical manipulations, attempts at divination, or other ways of accessing the sacred. Though we found that explanations of illness could be characterized in this way, none of the respondents' stories fit neatly into one category. Rather, their experiences of illness were ones of movement—with explanations, narratives, and therapies touching down in all these categories at one time or another. Thus, though we agree that illness is often talked about in the language of otherness—as the work of the other on the body—we also agree with Davis (2000) that experiences of illness move between the registers of the ordinary and the extraordinary, centered in one's social and material worlds yet carrying the power to propel one outside these worlds.

In this chapter, we build our argument on the discussions that took place in the ordinary give-and-take of life as recorded in the weekly diaries of the field-workers and in the long interviews that two of us (Veena Das and Rajan) conducted with members of the households. Yet we think that the dimensions of the problem require some appreciation of the quantitative data we collected. In the following discussion, the distinction between "sick weeks" and "full episode" (both are constructs for purposes of analysis) is important. Because field-workers recorded the data they collected through the weekly morbidity questionnaire on a weekly basis, initial information is coded in terms of the story of sickness *that week.* Obviously, many illnesses lasted more than one week. To capture this distinction, the data have been coded both in terms of *sickness weeks* and *illness episodes.*

For example, table 1 shows the entries for Ajay in one eight-week seg-

TABLE 1. Example of a Data Segment

Week	Were you sick this week?	What was the problem (taklif)?	Is this the same sickness as last week?[a]
1	No	Blank	Blank
2	No	Blank	Blank
3	Yes	Fever	Blank
4	Yes	Fever	Yes
5	Yes	Fever	Yes
6	No	Blank	Blank
7	Yes	Boils	Blank
8	No	Blank	Blank

[a]Field-workers asked this question only if a respondent reported an illness both in the previous week and in the survey week. They recorded chronic conditions, such as diabetes, separately.

ment of the data. The field-worker coded Ajay's information in different ways. First, the table records two *episodes,* based on the fact that Ajay reported he was ill with fever in weeks 3, 4, and 5; because he said that the fever was a continuing one, it counts as one episode of illness.[7] After reporting no illness in week 6, Ajay reported boils on his body in week 7, which counts as the second episode. However, we also record that in the total of the eight weeks, he reported illness for four weeks and hence had four *sick weeks.* Clearly, two measures of temporality operate here, and though these measures get entangled in the narratives, the distinction is useful for interpreting data on practitioner visits and on the extent of self-medication (Das and Das 2006; Das and Sanchez 2002). Table 2 gives the distribution of acute episodes in the sample population in the first year for one round of weekly surveys, and table 3 gives the duration of the episodes. We surveyed four localities for eighteen weeks (August 15, 2000, to the last week of December 2000) and surveyed three localities for seventeen weeks (January 2001 to first week of first week of May 2001).[8]

These tables illustrate two important points that will be of use when considering the narratives. First, about 52 percent of the sample population experienced one to three episodes in a four-month period, and second, a large proportion of illness episodes (nearly 70 percent) lasted less than one week. Only 24 percent of the population reported no illness. Of course, the illness burden was not equally distributed across localities, but no straightforward

TABLE 2. Number of Persons with *X* Number of Episodes
(Period: 17–18 Weeks)

Number of Episodes	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	384	23.69	23.69
1	352	21.71	45.40
2	282	17.40	62.80
3	209	12.89	75.69
4	136	8.39	84.08
5	105	6.48	90.56
6	62	3.82	94.39
7	51	3.15	97.53
8	24	1.58	99.01
9	7	0.43	99.44
10	7	0.43	99.88
11	1	0.06	99.94
12	1	0.06	100
Total	1,621	100	100

NOTE: Recording the number of episodes as 0 and the frequency as 384 means that 384 individuals reported no episodes of illness in the data set, and this number constitutes 23.69 percent of the total number of individuals.

relation is evident between income and illness burden. For instance, though the *jhuggi* cluster in Noida and the households in Bhagwanpur Kheda were next to each other in their average reported income, Noida had the lowest reported morbidity and Bhagwanpur Kheda reported the highest.[9] Although a nuanced analysis of the differences by locality and income must await another occasion, we can safely state that the poor and the rich tended to have different types of diseases. For instance, TB was found in all low-income localities, but not a single case was reported among the upper-income groups. Finally, the burden of chronic disease (as defined in biomedicine) was significantly higher among the upper-income groups, partly because the number of older people in that population was higher and partly because their access to better-quality practitioners led to easier recognition of chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. This finding does not mean that *feelings of chronicity* were absent among the poor, simply that the symptoms they reported as chronic conditions were often a result of illnesses that were not diagnosed and hence kept recurring. With this back-

TABLE 3. Duration of Episodes

Week	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	2566	69.65	69.65
2	669	16.16	87.81
3	196	5.32	93.13
4	85	2.31	95.44
5	53	1.44	96.88
6	38	1.03	97.91
7	19	0.52	98.43
8	8	0.22	98.64
9	10	0.27	98.91
10	4	0.11	99.02
11	8	0.22	99.24
12	5	0.14	99.38
13	3	0.08	99.46
14	4	0.11	99.57
15	2	0.05	99.62
16	3	0.08	99.70
17	3	0.08	99.78
18	8	0.22	100
Total	3,684		100

NOTE: This table records the number of weeks that each episode lasted. Recording the episode duration as 1 and the frequency as 2,566 means that 2,566 episodes (69.65 percent) lasted one week.

ground on the overall disease burden, we can consider how respondents deployed notions of complaints, symptoms, and diagnosis in the narratives and see what light these notions throw on the construction of the subject.

PRIMARY TERMS: ILLNESS AND NORMAL DEVIATION

When our informants described their illnesses using various lexical terms with little or no elaboration, we found that they attributed such disorders to the routine ups and downs of life—changes of season or changes in the body due to normal transitions in the life cycle.[10] For example, they described various kinds of colds and coughs—*sardi, zukam, nazla, cheenk, khansi, gala kharab*—cold, flowing nose, sneezing, coughing, and sore

throat. They sometimes referred to fever as *bukhar in* Hindi or "viral" in English. Apart from attributing some ailments to seasonal variations, respondents could also absorb the changes in their life course within the idea of the normal. Examples included "diarrhea due to teething" in the case of a baby, menstrual cramps for young girls, and various pains and aches for old people—*budhape ka sharir,* "the body of aging." Certainly, contests still emerged over these definitions, but these contests centered on whether a condition was normal to the current season or phase of life or whether the evocation of normality was being used to mask a lack of care for the ill person.[11] We give two examples below.

M was washing clothes when Rajan went to interview her. She said that she had slight fever. "Viral fever," she said, "change of season, everyone is getting it." They then went on to talk about other things.

In contrast, B, an old (perhaps in late sixties) widowed woman in Bhagwanpur Kheda, who lived with her son, his wife, and unmarried children, constantly complained of stomach ache, feelings of weakness, and lack of appetite; she insisted that she had a "heart condition" or perhaps "TB"—*dil ki bimari, ya shayad TB.* B's husband had died a year before our survey began, and no one in the family was clear about the cause of his death. His son said he had been admitted to a referral hospital for TB, so the father could well have died of tuberculosis. However, the man's widow, B, said that her husband had had a heart condition and had been admitted for disease of the heart (*dil ki bimari).* Such confusion of categories was not uncommon.

B was reported as "head of the household" when we collected demographic information at the initiation of the project: we noticed tensions over her status in the family that had a bearing on her illness. In the eighteen weeks of the survey, B was reported as sick for eleven weeks. Precise information on her illness was missing for seven weeks—one week because the households could not be surveyed and for six weeks intermittently because she went twice to visit her married daughter in a village on the outskirts of Delhi to "get treatment." There, she went to a local practitioner trained in biomedicine with an MBBS (bachelor of medicine and bachelor of surgery) degree. She showed us a couple prescriptions that the practitioner had given her: the diagnosis was "old Koch." Throughout the survey period, her son bought medicines from the local chemist by showing him the old prescription. These medicines included Refka, a capsule for acute or chronic viral hepatitis—three capsules for three days; Liv 52 for improved liver function, intermittently during the period; and Pyrazinamide, a first-line anti-TB drug, for two weeks intermittently. Underlying the history of intermittent drug treatment, ranging from powerful anti-TB drugs to drugs for improv-

ing liver function, was her demand that she receive more attention from her son and daughter-in-law. However, whenever the daughter-in-law was interviewed, she would say *"Budhape ka shrir hai aisa to hota hi hai par, amman mein sahan shakti kam hai* ("This is the body of old age; such things happen, but *amma* has no capacity to tolerate." B's visit to her daughter's village was to show her displeasure with her son, and she stayed there for four weeks, pronouncing herself to be much better after she returned. Her daughter sent her some medicines from the practitioner in the village intermittently via a Delhi Transport Corporation bus driver who lived in that village and happened to be related. The entry in the last week against B's name records that she cited "mild TB" as diagnosed by the village practitioner. In this period, this family had spent 350 rupees, more than 1 percent of its annual income.

B's case shows another way in which the "normal" was positioned in the lives of the poor. Her representation of the illness is made up of complaints that she has picked up from the previous encounters with the medical system, especially during her husband's illness. Thus, while she represents her illness as "heart trouble" or *"thodi bahut TB"*—mild TB—her daughter-in-law represents her complaints as normal to the aging process and thus not signs of illness at all. Did the availability of categories such as "heart trouble" and "mild TB" allow B to reconfigure somatic changes that might have been considered "normal" for an aging person into categories of disease? In an influential paper on the cultural inflation of morbidity during decline in mortality, Johansson (1991) seems to suggest that such a process might indeed occur: "In general social scientists cannot or should not attempt to relate morbidity and mortality during the health transition because morbidity is made up of phenomena of several different kinds, each of which relates differently to sickness and death." He says further that "the more diseases there are, the more likely are individuals to think of themselves as sick or to be diagnosed by a professional as sick. In this way the incidence rate is a function of the culturally recognized stock of diseases, along with the *propensity of ordinary people* to classify biologically sub optimal states as sickness according to *culturally standardized breakpoint* on the health continuum" (44, emphasis added).

We agree with Johansson that the availability of categories may expand the possibilities of how to think of bodily discomfort, but we question the categories of "ordinary people" and of "culturally standardized breakpoint" on the health-sickness continuum. Instead, we suggest that the concrete experience of illness in the family and local community, along with the actual nature of the clinical encounter, makes up the stock of knowledge through

which people represent illness categories and seek therapies. A tremendous struggle takes place as people try to determine how to authorize the "real": are these symptoms to indicative of "mild TB" or of old age? The notions of normality or pathology take shape in this struggle within a set of family dynamics, as B's case shows.

ANOTHER IDEA OF THE NORMAL

A second way in which the notion of the normal emerged in the interviews was in the experience of the illness within the materiality of the lives of the poor: what was normal, they asked, for someone who was living in *those conditions* and doing *that kind of work?* The following entries by Shoyab Ahmad, a field assistant who conducted the survey in Noida, illustrate this point.[12]

> *September 3, 2001—household no. 9086.* When I reached R's house, I found her sitting outside washing vessels. On seeing me she put out a *charpai* [string cot] for me to sit on and asked me to be seated. I asked her about her husband's work, and she said that he goes out in search of work every day but until now, he has not been able to get anything. I asked, how are you managing? She said that they are managing by borrowing money from neighbors. The baby had loose motions, but there was no money to take him to the doctor; but he was probably teething—so he would get better—but if they had the money she would have taken the child to Khan (the practitioner visited most often in this locality, who has a degree in integrated medicine).[13] She said, "We are poor; our children have to get by with what we can give them."
>
> *September 4, 2001—household 9092.* As I was going to S's house, I met his son, who was sitting outside. I asked him how everyone was in the house. He said everyone was okay but that his papa was not well. As I was talking to him, S came back from taking a bath at the public pump and said his *nazla* [cold] was worse, and he had pain below his stomach. He said that he was getting it treated privately—"I don't mind spending four hundred or five hundred rupees—but when things become expensive—one has to consider the government hospital. I know that things won't go well in hospital (*durgati hoti hai*), but it is our helplessness. Now I have to go to hospital to get admitted." On the next visit, S had not gone to a hospital—he had obtained medicine from the local practitioner: "As long as my hands and feet are moving, I have to work. The pain has subsided."

The second example is from an encounter I (Veena) had with Z, a young man who was sitting outside his house and greeted me. I was not sure

whether he was inebriated, but I asked him why he had not gone to work. He said, "My mind is not okay today—I get such disturbing thoughts, I am feeling so angry, I have pain in my head—I have to go and get some medicine." At this point, he held his head between the two palms of his hands and bent his head as if in despair. I joked, "Maybe you had too much to drink."[14] "No madam ji, people do not understand. Everyday, I have to lift such heavy weights. I feel my body collapsing. If I do not take some drink, I will collapse. Now I get these tensions, these terrible headaches. I have to do something. This doctor will give some medicine that will make it a bit better, and then again it will happen—but what can I do? I have to find some way of getting relief. Just as I have to drink some to make my body fit for work."

In such cases, the question of what is normal is mediated by the questions, what is illness? and what is treatment under conditions of poverty? I heard the expression "as long as my hands and feet are moving" as the trope through which Z represented the laboring body. Among the poor families in the ISERDD sample only 20 percent had jobs in the public or private sector; 30 percent worked informally as hawkers, rickshaw pullers, housemaids, or unskilled labor in factories and shops; and 44 percent were outside the labor force but sometimes engaged in domestic production, doing piecemeal jobs for minor industries in the area. Most people had only intermittent employment and thus had a constant sense that they were on a threshold, in danger of not finding work, or one step away from a serious illness that would throw them into debt. They also lived in fear that the nexus of relations through which they maintained their jobs, obtained loans, or found a doctor in a public hospital would somehow collapse. Households had some cash flow, but it was irregular. Though even the poorest households managed to have some disposable income, any large expenditure propelled them into debt.

The practitioner market as well as the therapeutic practices that practitioners offered in these localities show how attuned they are to the material conditions of the households in the neighborhood. Low- and middle-income neighborhoods are full of practitioners from alternative streams of healing (ayurvedic and unani) who have received some training in biomedicine as part of their curricula (Langford 2002). But regardless of the type of training and degree they have, their typical therapeutic strategy is to dispense medications for two or three days at a cost of twenty to thirty rupees and to ask patients to come back if they do not feel better. If a practitioner feels that a patient requires more expensive medication, he may write a prescription for purchase at the local pharmacy. Households often save such prescriptions and take them to the local pharmacist for refilling if they feel

that the symptoms have recurred. In more than thirteen thousand interviews in the ISERDD survey, respondents reported visiting more than three hundred different doctors in twelve hundred practitioner visits. Less than 30 percent of all practitioner visits were to public hospitals or government-run dispensaries. The use of government facilities was much higher among the poor than among the rich, except in one area of upper-income households where many residents were employed in government service. Table 4 shows the distribution of various types of actions that respondents in Bhagwanpur Kheda and Noida took in response to reported acute illnesses during a typical week in the first year of the survey period.[15] Respondents in Bhagwanpur Kheda took no action in only 21.75 percent of cases. The figure is considerably higher for Noida, where respondents took no action in nearly 43 percent of cases. However, people typically consulted a practitioner rather than the chemist for treatment. Further, even in cases coded here as self-medication, patients often used earlier prescriptions or obtained refills.[16]

Table 4 shows the actions taken in response to Bhagwanpur Kheda's illness.

If we fill in this picture, we see that 70 percent of illness episodes lasted less than a week (see table 3) and people made high use of practitioners, even though households often reported such deviations from health as "normal." The typical mode of spending on illness was to get medication to meet the sufferer's immediate needs—to get relief, not a cure. Whether an illness could be treated even at this level depended upon the cash in hand. In most cases, the patient's need for relief combined with the practitioner's understanding of the pharmacopoeia carved out the therapeutic strategy.[17] We have an interesting assemblage here of biomedicine as embodied in the local strategies of care and the household as located in the materiality of the informal economy, which is characterized by precarious employment and small flows of cash. Through this assemblage, both biomedicine and households mutate to create a unique neighborhood ecology of care.[18] What i kind of illness narrative do patients produce in this exchange and translation of illness categories in their lives? We offer low-blood-pressure (low-BP) syndrome as an example of this process.

In one of the first interviews I (Veena) conducted, P, a young woman with two daughters, told me that she suffered from low BP. She complained that she suffered from persistent body ache, blinding headaches, weakness, and sadness. "I have no life in my hands and feet. The world appears to bite me. I feel like leaving everything and running away." When I asked her if she

TABLE 4. Actions Taken on Reported Illness in Bhagwanpur Kheda

Action	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No action	319	21.75	21.75
Only practitioner	508	4.63	56.37
Only chemist as doctor	48	3.27	59.65
Only self-medication	389	26.52	86.16
Two or more actions	203	13.84	100.00
Total	1,467	100.00	

TABLE 5. Actions Taken on Reported Illness in Noida

Action	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
No action	319	42.25	42.25
Only practitioner	248	32.85	75.10
Only chemist as doctor	8	1.06	76.16
Only self-medication	123	16.29	92.45
Two or more actions	57	7.55	100.00
Total	755	100.00	

knew what she suffered from, she said without hesitation that she had low BP. She went to a local practitioner, using the term "family doctor" in English. The doctor did not measure her blood pressure, but whenever she felt that her symptoms were becoming difficult to bear, she went to the pharmacy and got a mixture of capsules and pills that she consumed for a couple of days. I found that others referred to their complaints as low BP also and that little difference existed in the way that practitioners and patients used the term. Weakness, giddiness, headaches, and sadness were often attributed to low BP, which was in turn often attributed to the "tensions" inherent in the conditions in which people lived. However, this category does not appear to belong to either the "folk" or the "expert" category; rather it carries the trace of the clinical encounters typical of low-income neighborhoods and their particular ecology of care. Practitioners in low-income categories do not seem to distinguish between diagnostic categories and symptoms. Thus,

households in these neighborhoods tend to use what would be diagnostic categories as descriptive of symptoms. Members of higher-income households use the same terms in very different ways. Thus, when such households report that someone has a "BP problem," their meaning is much closer to the biomedical meaning, at least to the extent that they understand that BP reflects a particular measure, although this fact does not mean that they would fit the profile of compliant patients. We cannot endorse Johansson's very general claims about "the culturally recognized stock of diseases" or the "propensity of ordinary people to classify biologically sub optimal states as sickness according to culturally standardized breakpoint on the health continuum." None of these categories are transparent; instead, we must treat them as emergent categories that take analytical shape through the labor of ethnography.

Instead of thinking of symptoms and diagnostic categories as arising from culturally standardized practices of classification, we hope to shift the weight of explanation to the regimes of labor through which both body and temporality are produced and consumed in these local settings. As is widely recognized, analyses of the working day in the factory (Marx 1887) or work in the disciplined regime of the prison (Foucault 1977) objectified the experience of time into homogenous and equivalent units. The worker's or the prisoner's body is put to labor, and the question for the capitalist in the first case and the state in the second is how to ensure the reproduction of the laborer's/prisoner's body. Questions of a living wage or the minimum nutrition necessary for the prisoner arise out of this consideration. In contrast, temporality in our study is intimately tied to the experience of the precariousness of work and the irregular flows of cash in the household. The intersecting temporalities of work, cash flows, and the therapeutic practices of local practitioners have created certain ways of dealing with illness that emphasize immediacy and the short run rather than investment in cure. This situation in turn stems from the failure of the state to regulate practitioners and pharmacies so that categories such as "a little bit of TB" or "low BP" and the related modes of treatment—with intermittent and (from the biomedical perspective) inappropriate drug use—have come to dominate the health-seeking practices and health delivery in these localities.[19] The state does not act here to regulate irregular, peripatetic, and "unproductive" occupations. As a result, practitioners who cluster on the fringes of the city and give the local moral worlds their particular character become conduits for the distribution of pharmaceutical products that defines their major therapeutic strategies.[20]

OUT OF THE LOCAL: OTHER SPACES

Though 70 percent of the illness episodes reported in our study lasted less than one week, more than 6 percent of episodes lasted three or more weeks. In such cases, families in low-income neighborhoods, despairing of the therapy available locally, begin to seek alternatives outside the regime of the local. One cannot describe this journey via a straightforward model of vertical or horizontal resort. The households were not consistent in their decisions about which illnesses were best treated through specific therapeutic systems (for example, they did not consistently seek allopathic solutions to acute diseases or homeopathic ones to chronic diseases); instead, they thought about which networks of information and influence they could activate.[21] The practitioners in these localities generally reported that when they could not manage a disease using the resources they had, they provided a service to patients by referring them to private, but more expensive medical facilities. We were intrigued by the fact that the billboards outside the office of some (but not all) practitioners displayed rates for various kinds of diagnostic tests yet we could find no sign of such facilities in the offices of these practitioners. "How do you do these tests?" I (Veena) asked one practitioner. The practitioner, an active member of the National Association of Practitioners of Integrated Medicine, told me that he knew a good diagnostic laboratory in the area, and he received a small commission for referring patients there. Others did not display billboards but nonetheless acted as brokers between patients and providers of more sophisticated facilities or specialists If the disease was seen to worsen and the practitioner began to fear that death might result, he advised households to take the patient there. Some households were able to borrow enough money to deal with emergencies; others accessed such facilities for a few days, decided they could not sustain the expense, and tried to find someone who could get the patient treated in a government hospital. The other route for patients was to access a public hospital: 30 percent of all visits to practitioners were to public hospitals. In such cases, the capital required to sustain treatment was often a "contact"—often a relative working in a hospital as an orderly or a janitor who could push the file ahead so that the patient could access the doctor without long delays. We found several variations in patients' reports about their treatment in the public hospitals. In the lower-middle-class area of Jahangirpuri, many households had effectively learned how to access the Jagjivan Ram Hospital in the area, but except in cases of TB, they could rarely sustain long-term treatment because of the demands on time. In other areas, such as Noida, the distance from a public hospital made access

very difficult, whereas in Bhagwanpur Kheda, many patients claimed that they were told that the private medicines would work better even for TB, for which they received some but not all medications. Nevertheless, use of public health facilities was higher in Bhagwanpur Kheda than in Noida. To illustrate how patients come to use diverse pathways of care, we offer a detailed case study of a TB patient from Noida in the next section.[22]

Meena: Therapeutic Failure

Meena lived with her husband, their two sons, and her husband's father in one of the mud huts in the shanty settlement of Noida. Her husband held a job as a janitor in the U.P. Waterways Department. The family had a regular but small income. At the initiation of our survey (August 2000), Meena reported that she suffered from tuberculosis. She said that her first episode of TB had occurred three to four years ago and that she took medications for a long time—perhaps seven months, perhaps one year.

However, in a later interview she told one of the field-workers that she had had TB for the past eight years and had "never been cured." She described a complicated story about having a breast abscess after her child's birth, followed by a minor surgery as well as fever, cough, and weakness. This illness was when she lived in the village with her conjugal relatives while her husband searched for work in the city. Following is an extract from an interview done by our co-researcher Rajan.

RAJAN: *So, in your conjugal family did you know that you had TB?*

MEENA: In the beginning, I did not, and the doctor also did not say that.

RAJAN: *Then you were having cough and fever and weakness.*

MEENA: Yes, they gave me lots to eat, but still the weakness did not go. Then I became okay when they took me to Vrindavan.

RAJAN: *Government hospital or private?*

MEENA: Government hospital—but there the checkup and everything is free, but you had to buy medicines from outside.

RAJAN: *How long ago was this?*

MEENA: Eight years ago. I took medicines for three months. Then I became healthy.

RAJAN: *So did the doctor ask you to stop the medicine?*

MEENA: No, but there was no money. For three months, my husband's father bought medicines, but then the money got over and no one helped. (original text in Hindi, translated by Bhrigupati Singh)

From the village, Meena moved to Noida to join her husband. She said that she was healthy for a little while after moving to the city, but then her

symptoms recurred after her one-year-old daughter died When we began our survey, she reported that she had completed a course of TB medication recently but was still feeling very sick and weak. In the initial weekly survey period of four months in 2000, Meena reported that she was ill with various symptoms ranging from cough to fever during eight of the sixteen weeks. Because she had already completed a six-month course of TB medications recently from a government dispensary and had been reported cured after a sputum test, she did not return to this dispensary for treatment of her symptoms in these eight weeks. Instead, she intermittently sought treatment by a private practitioner in the area who had a bachelor's degree in ayurvedic medicine and surgery, for relief of symptoms. He gave her a range of medicines, from analgesics to antibiotics. Her mode of accessing medical care was typical of many people in the area—that is, a mode in which practitioners treat symptoms by dispensing medications for a day or two for a consolidated fee of twenty to thirty rupees.[23] This period was difficult for her in another way because she suspected that her husband was having an affair with a married woman in the neighborhood. During conversations, Meena said she feared that her husband would send her to the village where his mother lived, on the pretext that he could not care for her adequately, and she worried that he might even marry the other woman. Meena wanted desperately to recover her strength so that she could attend to household chores effectively and keep her place within the family.

One of the field-workers made the following diary entries in the fourth week of the survey:

> Meena cried today. She had a small gash on the head. On probing, she said it is because her husband hit her. She is very weak and sad and told me with tears in her eyes that her husband was having an affair. The lady, Meena told me, lives opposite the house. . . . Mukesh (her son) has seen them walking hand in hand in Harola market. She was hit yesterday because she asked her husband "where are you going so early in the morning?" and he said, "I give you and your children food and shelter and it is none of your business to talk more." (original entries in English)

Toward the end of the first year of our survey in 2000, Meena's condition seemed to have worsened to the point of an emergency. She was beginning to cough blood-stained mucus and was constantly coughing. The neighbors reported to us that her husband had tried first to get her admitted to a private hospital in the neighborhood but did not have the money to make the advance payment demanded by the hospital. Eventually, a relative who was employed as a ward boy in a government hospital in South Delhi

managed to get Meena admitted under another name on the pretext that she was his dependant relative.[24] Meena stayed in the hospital for six months. Her son Mukesh described the event to Veena in the following way:

> *V: Mukesh, why are you not going to school these days? You have lots of work at home?*
>
> M: No, it is not the work. But I feel very scared. I think Mummy is no more, and Papa is not telling us.
>
> *V.: But why should you think that?*
>
> M.: Because that night when she had blood in the vomit, everyone had given up hope. The neighbors came, and they were preparing to lay her on the ground [in anticipation of imminent death]. So then someone said, take her to Kailash hospital, but Papa said that he did not have money for Kailash Hospital. So *where* did they take her?[25]

Frightened by this conversation, we found out the name of the TB hospital, and one of the members of the ISERDD research team visited Meena there. The entire story about the altered name and the help from the relative came out because her husband told us that she was admitted under a different name after a field researcher could not find her name among registered patients during an initial visit.

By the time Meena was discharged from the hospital, after a six-month stay, and returned home, the Pradhan (headman) of this cluster of *jhuggis* had acted decisively against the woman with whom her husband was having as affair as a result of complaints from the neighborhood. Consequently, the woman's husband was persuaded to send her to back to the village to live with the husband's extended conjugal family. Meena had now taken another course of TB medication, and the hospital discharged her with instructions to complete the course of medications. She was required to go the hospital outpatient department to receive medication, but her husband managed to get her name transferred to a DOTS (Directly Observed Therapy, Short Term) center nearer their home. Meena completed the remaining course of medications from the DOTS center. For the next three months, she was free of symptoms and put on some weight. One can detect the altered affect even in the small entries in the diary of Purshottam, who was then covering her household for the survey.

> Today looking at Meena ji's [*ji* is an honorific in Hindi used for all elders] face, one felt that she was a little better. I asked Meena ji, "how are you?" She smiled and said, "Now I am better. I went to get medicine for Rahul [her younger son]." She showed me the medicine—ampicillin with cloxacillin.. On the label was printed "MCD—Not for Sale."[26] I

said, "But this medicine is not for sale." She said, "Brother, I don't know—this is the medicine Titu [name of practitioner] gave me, and with this, Rahul is absolutely fine."[27]

A few days later, Purshottam recorded in the diary that while he was visiting the household, Meena's husband came from the market with a bag of pomegranates and handed them to Meena to eat. (Pomegranates and grapes are among the most expensive fruits and often denote the showering of extra care on a sick person.)

In the third year of the ISERDD survey, Meena's symptoms reappeared. The diary entries record that she lay in bed coughing. At one point, she said to the field researcher, Purshottam, "Brother, I feel broken from inside." On her husband's request, two members of ISERDD (the research organization) took her for a consultation to a referral hospital in Kingsway Camp, where the attending physician was prepared to admit her as an inpatient, though no one was willing to explore why her symptoms kept recurring. Off the record, one physician told one of us (Veena) that conducting diagnostic tests for multidrug-resistant TB would be futile because the hospital did not have the resources to provide treatment. Meena's husband did not want her admitted to a hospital so far from home, so they went to another DOTS center and provided a false address. Here again, she received the anti-TB regimen under the DOTS protocol, but reported serious side effects such as continuous nausea. Her condition continued to worsen, so she stopped taking medications. She died in a private nursing home in December 2003 after being rushed there two days earlier. At the end of her life, the family was several thousand rupees in debt.

Given the weight of the literature on TB and stigma, one might have expected that stigma would play a major role in this illness trajectory.[28] However, the theme that seems to emerge from Meena's story is consistent institutional neglect and incoherence. This neglect existed in conjunction with the care and neglect built into Meena's domestic relations. In each episode of the disease, she completed the course of medications given by the DOTS center, and was declared to be sputum negative and thus "cured." In addition to taking the prescribed first-order drugs in the TB regime, she consulted a private practitioner between treatments and received medicines to address specific symptoms such as fever, pain, and cough. She did not conceal her illness from anyone. The private practitioner she consulted in the locality was well aware that she had consulted various practitioners about her disease and that had been on medication for TB. Though she had the treatment cards that she had collected from the DOTS centers as well as

those from the hospital, she did not carry her medical records from one government institution to another. Nor did any practitioner try to get a detailed medical history from her. This disinterest in patients' medical histories is consistent with the common practice in the area among practitioners trained in all streams (biomedicine, ayurveda, homeopathy, *unani*) to assert that "residual" effects of TB include weakened respiratory functions and to treat coughs and fevers with analgesics and inappropriate antibiotics, even after the patient has been declared cured by the DOTS center.

Meena's death cannot be attributed to a simple notion of stigma that prevented her from going to a DOTS center for treatment. Her family made no effort to conceal her disease.[29] Paradoxically, the notion of stigma operates more in patients' alliances with the medical system: Meena's family members had to move her from one DOTS center to another because they feared that she would be held responsible for her failure to be cured. As a result of these treatment strategies by patients and their families, we have no way of knowing whether Meena was repeatedly reinfected because of compromised immunity, environmental factors, or concomitant HIV infection or whether she was infected by an acquired or transmitted drug-resistant strain. Meanwhile, the records of each DOTS center classify her as a cured case. We might note that if HIV were to become endemic in such areas, classifying cases of repeat infections would be even more difficult.[30]

Meena was completely bewildered about the fact that her symptoms kept recurring when she was pronounced cured at the end of each treatment cycle. Throughout her treatment, she ricocheted between despair and hope. If her symptoms improved, she became active in making little improvements in the house, such as paving a little space in front of her *jhuggi* with cement so that she could wash it and keep the entrance clean. When the symptoms recurred, she lay inside the *jhuggi* and said, "Now I must prepare for going to Jamna ji (the river near the cremation ground). Yet she hoped to survive, and even in the last month of her life, her husband tried to take her back to the DOTS center from which she had received the last course of treatment. The nurse in attendance there was not willing to register her case again; she told her that they had done all they could and that their records showed that she had been cured of her TB. In the last week of Meena's life, when she was coughing incessantly, her husband took her again to a private nursing home, which admitted her, albeit at enormous cost, and she finally died there.

In telling this story, we do not seek to pit heroic patients against heartless doctors; we are struggling to understand how the "letting die" happens even as international agencies and the government participate in the global

Stop TB program. In Foucault's rendering, this "letting die" is an aspect of biopower in which a cut is made that separates those whose lives are to be enhanced from those whose lives are not worth preserving. In his famous formulation, "Sovereignty took life and let live. And we have the emergence of a power of regularization, and it, in contrast, consists in making live and letting die" (Foucault 2003: 247). We hope to show that the way in which the family lets a relation die has a different texture of feeling than the way in which the state does so. Thus, terms such as *abandonment* or *triage* cannot be deployed in a seamless manner as we traverse the milieu of the family and the state, even as we track the manner in which the state's signature can be read in the lives of families and local communities.

The micropolitics of families and communities have qualitative differences and variations that are internal to the family. Thus, we do not seek to paint a stark contrast between the "care" provided by families and the "neglect" of the state. In Meena's life, she faced periods of neglect, when her husband probably just wanted to get rid of her. She also had periods of care, when he would make the long journey to the hospital whenever he could get leave from his work or come home in the afternoon during his lunch break and cook food for her and the children.

The family tried to devise strategies of treatment within the institutions of their local ecology. The inability to acknowledge treatment failures seems to be an unintended consequence of the planning to equip DOTS centers to treat easily identifiable and easily treatable patients in the first phase of the Stop TB program (see Blower and Daly 2002). This strategy has led to practices built on the assumption that patients who do not recover are noncompliant whereas treatments are always efficacious. Though many conditions might arise that prevent patients from complying, treatment failures, repeated reinfections, and the unresponsiveness of multidrug-resistant TB also make "therapeutic fidelity" impossible to maintain.

In the literature on the economic consequences of diseases such as TB and AIDS, one sometimes finds calculations of the impact of deaths on particular populations (the young versus the old, heads of households versus dependents, and so on). The consequences of the death of a young mother for the life of the family, however, cannot be computed in strictly economic terms. During her illness, Meena ceased being an earning member of the family, and paying for her treatments deepened her husband's debt. In this sense, she was an economic liability while she was alive; thus, deaths of unproductive members of the family might be seen as less grievous for the family from a strictly economic point of view. Yet, however much Meena's illness drained the family's resources, her husband and children mourned

for her. Less tangible effects of her death on the family exist that will become manifest only over time. Her elder son, for instance, who had passed sixth grade with excellent marks because, as he told one of us, he wanted to please his mother, is now studying in middle school. Will he lose his motivation for studying hard? Will his father continue to give him money for school books and school uniforms, or will the absence of the mother affect relations between them? Finding the answers to such questions requires long-term observation. Meena's younger son already refuses to go to school regularly, and because the father is away at work during the day, no one is at home to see that he goes to school in a timely manner. At that time, the child refused to acknowledge that his mother is dead, insisting that she had gone to the village and would return later. Meena's two sisters live in the neighborhood, but relations between the families are full of conflicts; thus, responsibility falls on the neighbors and the elder son to provide some supervision to the younger son. The impact of the mother's death on the children, and thus the social and emotional costs of institutional incoherence in the treatment of TB, cannot be computed in strict economic terms. But more importantly, we should ask what the loss of a mother might mean to the children: how do they learn to read their social environment or to trust institutions that seem to have failed them so dismally?

DEADLY INTIMACY

While walking through the streets of the neighborhoods that were part of this, one sometimes comes across hoardings that assure a cure of *uppari chakkar,* along with advertisements for various diagnostic tests and treatments for varied conditions. *Uppari chakkar* has complex semantic range: Muslims use it to refer to a *jinn* (a being of smokeless fire) passing above who sometimes becomes enamored of a beautiful child or a woman and thus might come to possess him or her. Among the Hindus, this term simply refers to mechanisms through which the ill will of a neighbor or a jealous relative subjects a family to repeated illnesses and misfortunes. The following story of K illustrates this notion.

   K traced the beginning of his misfortunes to his daughter's paralysis, which occurred after she received a vaccine from a practitioner in the area who was also a good friend of the family. The girl developed paralysis of the limb probably because the injection was wrongly administered. After some years, K had an accident, and though he was not badly hurt, his vehicle was damaged and he lost his job as a taxi driver. A series of other illnesses followed. Business ventures failed. Though the family has regularly accessed

both private practitioners in the area and the public hospital, they attribute the series of misfortunes to the magic done by a jealous neighbor. At the time of the first survey, they told Komila (a field-worker) that the Hindu diviner *(jhad phook wala baba)* they consulted had not been very successful in warding of their misfortunes, because he had not been able to do any real harm to the neighbor. They had therefore shifted to a Muslim diviner *(maulavi)* who could use the verses of the Qu'ran in a clandestine way, trapping anger in its verses and directing the verses toward harming their neighbor. In a discussion with them, I asked why a Muslim diviner would be better. Because a Hindu, I was told, cannot bring enough anger against another Hindu. A Muslim has a reservoir of hate against Hindus, so they hoped he could make that hate into a powerful spell against the neighbor. The social practices of blaming here do not take the usual fault lines of sectarian conflict, in that the neighbor whom K's family blames for its misfortune is not Muslim. Yet K has created a collective subject and seeks to harness the diffused hate and anger that Muslims supposedly harbor against Hindus and use it against his Hindu neighbor. This situation give us insight into how particular Hindus and Muslims are able to inhabit the same local world in ordinary circumstances but can call on anger and hate residing in imagined collectivities.[31] A crisis can draw upon these common reservoirs of hate, which are a potentiality waiting on the door of reality.

In other instances, people in the neighborhoods placated goddesses with offerings of liquor or performed pig sacrifices to channel the energies of angry gods and goddesses against someone they wanted to punish. There is a widespread notion that illness persists because the social world is fraught with danger: "someone has done something." Thus, the experience of the neighborhood and of kinship is a profoundly ambivalent one. Support can be found in the local moral world, but it can overwhelm people and force them to act in confused ways. This phenomenon explains why people sometimes make successful therapeutic choices in *defiance* of the voices in their local world. At other times, as they come to believe that their illnesses are beyond the capacities of the practitioners and the medicines, they may resort to the clandestine sacred world of gods who require bloody sacrifices and goddesses who ask for offerings of liquor and meat. Depending upon the experience of the social world, one person may dismiss a symptom as a harmless part of the change of seasons, and another may read the same symptom as evidence of the power of those who seek to inflict harm. Though the narrative flow in any telling might render these events in linear terms—with the teller offering increasingly complicated explanations as symptoms and complaints become more recalcitrant—in the course of a

person's life, these explanations are present as possibilities, located in simultaneity and interpreted within the dense web of socialites in urban life.

TOWARD SOME CONCLUSIONS

We have used illness experience as a lens for understanding the lives of the urban poor in Delhi. Unfortunately, a split has occurred in the field of medical anthropology, with some framing issues of health and disease in terms of political economy and others being more inclined to interpret the experience of illness in terms of meaning. This conflict is presented as one between political economy and culture. Although we need to critique the use of the concept of culture in medical discourse to assign blame for failures of treatment to patients and their beliefs rather than to the failures of the health-delivery system (Farmer 2003), we must also acknowledge the complexity of the social and cultural environment in which the poor live. We should not have to make patients into heroic fighters with a purity of consciousness akin to that of the proletariat in the Marxist imagination of history to make critical claims on their behalf. Illness narratives, when one reads them along with the data on morbidity burden and household patterns of treatment and health expenditure, provide insights into the way that people try to authorize the real within the precariousness of their everyday life, engaging explanations from both political economy and culture.

In describing illness experiences, people in our study used a wide range of possibilities. Just as therapies could be picked and discarded, so too could narratives of illness. The blind complexity of the present, in Byron Good's (1994) terms, left narratives unfinished. People did not move through illness experiences with ready-made "beliefs" about the causes of their illnesses. The mutations of biomedicine in the economy of low-income neighborhoods shaped the languages they deployed as much as the languages of magic and sorcery. The case of the family who moved from a Hindu diviner to a Muslim one to harness the potential of hate, shows that notions of community and religion were themselves shaped in the course of illnesses and misfortunes; they were not ready-made pegs on which people could hang their illness experiences.

On the theme of the interconnectedness of political economy and culture, we offer two further observations. First, one can read the story of mistrust and anger that circulates among kin and neighbors as a way to displace the "real" causes of illness (such as. the failure of the health-delivery system) to relationships in a world that is closer and hence easier to compre-

hend. This phenomenon is not the "bad faith" on which Bourdieu (1990) believed the politics of kinship to be based but rather a way of domesticating forces of work, money, and medical treatment that seem to be simultaneously within reach and outside it. If one can misread hate, however, one can also misread love. In Nancy Scheper-Hughes's (1992) powerful ethnography of child survival in Brazil, one of her informants says that she feels alive only when she can feel herself moving under a man. Yet another says about the death of her newborn baby that "he [the father] can make me pregnant but he cannot make me mourn for his child." In both cases, the women moved from one relationship to another, even jeopardizing more stable and caring relationships. Though Scheper-Hughes is inclined to interpret this movement as the women's exercise of freedom, one might say instead that defining self-worth only within a sexual relationship indicates the women's misrecognition of the nature of sociality into which they are tied. Thus, we cannot easily place judgment on the aporia we encountered in the narratives of women whose children had died in the course of their illnesses. The women could render the experience of their social relationships on so many different registers, whether in the positive affect because social relationships remained intact despite serious illness or sorrow and anger in young women's narratives of their powerlessness within the family,, which put their lives and those of their children in peril.

Second, we have tried to contest any generic notion of "the poor," and in this objective, our attempt is similar to Appadurai's. Appadurai offers notions of spectrality as a way of moving beyond the empirics of inequality into the experience of shortage, speculations, crowding, and public improvisation in coping with housing shortage in Bombay (2000: 628): "the absent, the ghostly, the speculative, the fantastic, all have their part to play in the simultaneous excesses and lacks of Bombay's housing scene. It is these experienced absurdities that warrant my use of the term spectral in a setting where housing and its lack are grossly real." Though we can empathize with the sense of dissonance in his vision of transforming slum dwellers into well-dressed nurses, bank tellers, or teachers in their commute to their respective places of work, what is at stake in considering this scene one of spectral housing? Does it reveal the subjects' insufficient hold over the real or the observer's sense of dissonance? By using the generic categories of "dwellers of shanty towns" and "vast army of the middle and working class," Appadurai comes to render the lives of the poor from the resolute perspective of an observer of social traffic rather than from the perspective of someone trying to document how the people themselves render these experiences. The absence of proper nouns in Appadurai's description seems

like a well-thought-out ethnographic device to confront the global and avoid drowning the argument in a plethora of detail. One worries, though, that while creating a place for the specificity of Bombay's housing scene, thus contesting a global description of the poor, one might end up rendering experience in terms of Mauss's (1979) "average person."

We offer a final comment on the narrative thrust of this paper. If we look at Davis's rich accounts of the personal transformations and weaving of illness in local histories, we find that the overall story moves toward the act of divination. This movement occurs not because of the definitive authority of divination, as Davis is at pains to point out; the diviner plays with various possibilities. Explanations stick only if they make aesthetic and moral sense to the people seeking divination. People in the Congo village she studied were also inclined to visit the local dispensary, buy drugs at exorbitant prizes from traveling traders, and try to visit the mission hospital in the course of an illness. Davis's narrative strategy, however, does not allow her to think that these events need the dense description of sociality that she accords to the other possibilities—leading to divination and diagnosis of the wrongs in the social relations. Our narrative strategy has been to think of the encounters within and outside the local as standing in need of ethnographic description. The traces of sociality when a woman in a low-income neighborhood says that she has low BP embody the history of global and national policies that seek to get rid of the diseases of the poor at a low cost. These explanations of their illnesses are as important as those that direct us toward people's resort to divination when intimacy fails. We recognize the great pull of the linear in making such contradictions intelligible, but we hope we have shown the complicated ways in which notions of the normal and the pathological play out in the context of health and illness in the lives of the urban poor. Technologies of the self intersect with objective points of power and constraint as the poor deal with illness: they engage their illnesses neither as heroic fighters nor as pure actors of cultural scripts. Such is the texture of the ordinary.

NOTES

1. Because forms of storytelling play a significant role in the therapeutic context of psychoanalysis, we do not suggesti that storytelling and therapy are completely unrelated. The problem has other aspects relating to political economy, therapeutic failures, and (from the biomedical perspective) inappropriate use of drugs. These factors contribute to tension between symptoms, signs, and diagnosis to a greater degree than this literature acknowledges.

2. The number of households fluctuated during the survey period, because some households moved out or were temporarily unavailable due to visits to the village. However, at no time did the number fall below 285.

3. For a detailed anlaysis of the medical environment, see Das and Hammer 2004.

4. We developed the survey instruments were during a one-year pilot phase. Forty households participated in the survey, helping us modify and translate the questions. The morbidity questionnaires were jointly developed by Renu Addlakha, Jishnu Das, Saumya Das, Veena Das, Charu Kumar and Carolina Sanchez. See Addlakha et al. (R).

5. By this time, the households had completely assimilated the idea of research. Respondents often introduced us as:"Those with the form have come," or "they have come to fill forms." The sociality generated by the research procedures was fascinating. Younger field-workers were assimilated into various kinship positions, and joking relationships developed to bridge the class differences between the field-workers and the respondents, given that the field-workers' forms of language placed them in a different class position.

6. Each field-worker was trained to fill out questionnaires and to conduct ethnographic interviews, and each was responsible for twenty-five households. A field-worker five households on every working day. Field-workers maintained constancy of contact with households in most cases.

7. The distinction between a sick week and an episode is not useful for chronic diseases. The prevalence of chronic disease, biomedically defined, was much lower among low-income households, but many acute diseases were experienced as following the temporality of chronic diseases.

8. The impact of seasonality on the morbidity burden has been analyzed elsewhere. Here, we note only that the method we used was not only labor intensive but was also prone to interruptions caused by political or other disturbances. For example, we had to increase the number of survey weeks to eighteen in the first round because of protests against the closure of polluting industries (because the closure had a negative impact on the livelihood of the poor) in one of the localities, which impeded our access to households for one week in November.

9. *Jhuggi* and *jhompari* are impermanent houses, typically on the peripheries of the city, that are usually occupied by groups of migrants. Known in official parlance as JJ (*jhuggi-jhopdi)* colonies, these places lack civic amenities such as running water and sewage-disposal system. Though settled on public land and thus strictly unauthorized, the inhabitants form vote banks and hence command some political leverage. Their position is often suspended between the legal and the illegal. In discussing the *jhuggi* cluster of our study, we are aware of the notorious difficulties of relying on reported income. We have collected data on household consumption and assets to arrive at a more informed way of classifying households as low income, middle income, and upper income.

10. Our use of the notion of primary term is different from Arthur Kleinman's (1980) use. In Kleinman's formulations, "although it would be analytically desirable

to distinguish between symptoms of disease and those of illness (e.g. calling them 'primary' or 'secondary' symptomatic manifestations respectively) this distinction is not easily sustained" (75).

11. David Locker's (1981) analysis of symptoms and illness distinguishes between definitions of disorder and definitions of illness. In his formulation, "The former definition is applied when the problematic experience involved does not result in a concerted change in activity" (101). Thus, in his examples, disorder is not converted into the category of illness if it does not impede normal activates. This perspective assumes that the concerted change in activity results from purely cognitive organization of disorder. In our examples, the sick role was not defined by a change in activity because many individuals who defined themselves as sick could not be absent from work or from the responsibilities of domestic work.

12. The original entries are in Hindi and have been translated by Veena Das.

13. Integrated medicine refers to the curricula for alternative medicine in state-certified institutions, in which students learn the principles of ayurveda or *unani* as well as some elements of biomedicine.

14. Most men in Noida drink every day. Though we were originally hesitant to approach this issue, over the years, the fact that drinking is ubiquitous, and sometimes leads to wife beating, became common shared knowledge. Thus, I felt authorized to ask this question.

15. We note that the magnitude and pattern of visits stand in sharp contrast to the findings in the literature that suggest that the number of doctor visits increases with the household income (Peabody 1999).

16. In terms of sick weeks, of the 389 cases of self-medication in Bhagwanpur Kheda, 187 cases involved use of a previous prescription and 77 cases involved medicine that the patient claimed he or she had taken earlier and gotten better. In other cases, either a family member or other person suggested the medicine. These figures need to be coded as illness episodes, not sick weeks, because in many illnesses of longer duration, especially TB, patients used a prescription to buy medicines in small quantities rather than a full course at one time. We are currently analyzing these components in terms of illness episodes.

17. The general picture of the relation between social class and access to health care appears to need considerable modification for the urban setting. Writing on family-based popular health care in 1980, Kleinman reported that in the two districts in Taipei that he studied, "families who belonged to lower class treated all sickness episodes at home without resorting to professional or folk healers" (1981: 183). The magnitude and pattern of visits to practitioners by the low-income households in our sample stand in sharp contrast to this and similar findings, which suggest that the number of doctor visits increases with household income (Peabody 1999). Most likely, significant changes in the urban landscape over the past decade have altered the health-seeking practices of the poor in significant ways. Moreover, our weekly morbidity survey, as distinct from the single-interview technique used in most surveys, probably resulted in higher reporting of both nonsevere morbidities and visits to the local practitioners. For an analysis of the implications of these methodological differences, see Das and Sanchez 2002.

18. On the failure of regulation of pharmacies and medical practice, see Das 1999, Dua et al. 1994, Jesani et al. 1997, and Kamat and Nichter 1998.

19. Consider the following statement from the Alta Mata declaration: "It is now becoming clear that the ultimate solution to the health problems of developing na-

tions is a fully integrated type of training embracing the essential principles of in-fectious systems of medicine and modern medical science so that practitioners can serve rural populations understandingly and at relatively low cost." Our findings suggest that such low-cost solutions have themselves become a major risk to the health of the poor.

20. We found households in upper-income groups engaging in such discussions, but the poor did not think of therapeutic choices in this way.

21. Based on an interview conducted by Rajan Singh. The translation is by Veena Das.

22. For a detailed discussion of the medical environment in this area, see Das and Hammer 2004 (200) and Das and Das 2006. Other researchers have reported that practitioners in private clinics tend to use a range of treatments for patients report-ing with symptoms of TB. Thus, Uplekar et al. (1998) reported that 79 different TB-treatment regimes were prescribed by 105 reporting private practitioners in a study in Maharashtra.

23. This interview was conducted in Hindi and has been translated by Bhrigu-pati Singh.

24. The relative advised them to admit Meena under the name of his wife; oth-erwise, she would have had to wait for a bed. As an employee of the hospital, the ward boy could get preference over others. At least, this was the reason her husband gave. We discovered this ploy quite accidentally when one of us went to visit Meena and could not find her name among the registered patients.

25. This conversation was originally in Hindi and has been translated by Veena Das.

26. MCD refers to Municipal Corporation of Delhi. Allegations abound that medicines in government dispensaries are illegally sold off by the attendant physi-cians or pharmacists. This practice is one instance of this kind of corruption in the area.

27. These entries were originally in Hindi and have been translated by Veena Das.

28. For instance, Rajeswari and colleagues (1999) reported that 15 percent of women in their sample were rejected by their families. One of the difficulties of in-terpreting these results is that a woman who is sent to her natal family is often re-ported by researchers as "abandoned" or "rejected" by the family. However, in our field sites, we found that women interpret the move to the natal family for treatment as part of their entitlement in the natal home and see their reception in the natal family as an opportunity to be free of domestic responsibilities in their conjugal families. Cases in which a woman is not allowed to come back to the conjugal home or a husband takes on another wife might indeed be cases of abandonment, but the fact of being sent to the natal home cannot, in itself, be interpreted as rejection. On the impact of tuberculosis on women, see also Connoly and Nunn 1996. Some of the literature completely confuses material and efficient causes in analyzing the factors that people cite as causes of TB.

29. We do not suggest that the notion of stigma is never evoked. However, in the kinds of shanty clusters under consideration here, people live their lives more in the street than in their houses. The material conditions for concealment are simply not available. Moreover, in an arms-length, one-shot survey in which researchers have one point of contact with subjects, respondents are more likely to try to conceal cer-tain illnesses. We have cases in localities with built houses in which families conceal

illnesses, especially of unmarried daughters, for fear that public knowledge would affect the daughters' marriage prospects.

30. Some studies have estimated that 21percent to 40 percent cases among smear-positive patients in Maharashtra and Gujarat are retreatment cases.(Lambregts-van Weezenbeek 2004).

31. For an analysis of how such diffused notions come to the surface in ethnic or sectarian riots see especially Das 2000; Mehta 2000; Mehta and Chatterji 2001).

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4 Anthropological Observation and Self-Formation

PAUL RABINOW

The recent past has seen a number of relatively new forms of anthropological practice emerging; others most certainly will be invented in the near future. Among the current approaches is one that I have been experimenting with, an approach that privileges extensive interviewing with a distinctive group of actors, within a restricted field setting. The challenge of this undertaking is to determine what form to give the material that results. As a form of inquiry that is site restricted and dependent on directed interviews and problematized narratives, the approach can be contrasted to the more traditional ethnographic practice of broad-ranging observation that embraces multiple contexts and actors, aiming for a comprehensive understanding of a group's social relations, cultural symbols, psychological patterns, and the like. In this standard form, the ethnographer is physically present but despite all the prescriptions to participate, would be just as happy not to do so. Should it ever prove possible to be the proverbial "fly on the wall," then the job of observing, documenting, and interpreting multiple situations, ongoing interactions, and actor networks without disturbing them could satisfy the panoptic desire embedded in that mode of work. This desire, of course, differs from Foucault's Panopticism, which sought to develop and perfect observational technology as a means of producing disciplined and productive bodies. In contrast, the standard participant observing ethnographer wants, above all, not to change anything the natives are busy doing, thinking, and feeling. A third position is that of writing a genealogy of the Panopticon (or other arts and techniques) with the goal neither to discipline nor to oversee but to render things visible and vulnerable. Rendering things visible and vulnerable, we often forget, is not the same as denunciation. My current experimentation with form and mode requires me to bypass all three of the above alternatives.

From its inception, the traditional ethnographic approach has run into a

core set of limitations, all connected to its initial privileging of the distinction between objectivity and subjectivity. One reaction to this dilemma has been to privilege a norm of objectivity—social facts are things—and to introduce a therapeutics of the observer as a means of overcoming subjective bias. The use of a range of technologies to purify the subject has been prominent in American anthropology at least since Margaret Mead and her generation, which had a pervasive interest in psychoanalysis as a method to reveal the deepest secrets of a culture as well as the projections of the anthropologist's own culture onto the object of study. In that form of analysis, subjectifying techniques became hygienics for identifying symptomatic patterns and objectifying them to make them available, eventually, for better scientific observation. This goal was shared by those who counseled psychotherapy for fledgling anthropologists so that they could ablate themselves from their own cultural prejudices and by adherents of more sophisticated psychoanalytic approaches that brought transference and countertransference into account to overcome the analytic noise in the observational system. Later, in the last several decades of the twentieth century, strategies for coping with the subject/object distinction shifted; subjectifying practices moved from being sites of preliminary purification to sui generis objects of inquiry. Confessional discourses and deployed voices gained prominence within certain sectors of American anthropology (although they were never dominant). Although providing a salutary counterweight to some of the epistemologically exhausted forms of objectivism (which had become increasingly obsessed with method), this subjectifying countermove has itself proved to be more reactive to than creative of new modes of inquiry or forms of writing. Now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the charm of this method is on the wane.

HOW TO OBSERVE OBSERVERS OBSERVING WITHIN A MODERN ECOLOGY OF IGNORANCE

In a perspicacious collection of Niklas Luhmann's essays entitled *Observations on Modernity,* we find reflections on a number of themes; of these themes, none is more acutely presented than that of the place of the future in modernity (and its various presents).[1] For Luhmann, the key question is how the future appears. (What is its modality?) And how should a social analyst observe this process? The basic answers are: (1) the future appears as a contingent set of possibilities that demand decisions, because the future appears as an eventuality about which we must do something (remembering that nonaction is an action, and not choosing is a choice); (2) social analysis consists in observing observers observing.

In his essay "Describing the Future," Luhmann explores the form that people are giving the future today as well as the nature of predictions about it, in this society that understands itself to be ever accelerating. Luhmann consistently speaks of "society" as a dynamic cybernetic system with no outside. Although our times abound in futurologists, prophets, and prognosticators, Luhmann observes, with some sarcasm, that we have difficulty taking these seers seriously because we actually have very little sense of what the future will look like in any detail. Two of my favorite confirmatory examples are: the world-historical failure of the experts to predict how the Soviet Empire would end (although a multitude of volumes now show how it was inevitable); and, more pertinently, the fact that for a couple of years, Bill Gates missed the import of the Internet. Luhmann argues that posing the question of the future in terms of form rather than content will produce sociologically more powerful insights.[2] He suggests that the only genre of answer to this question that we should take seriously is one that considers the future to be contingent, thereby compelling incessant decisions.

Of course, descriptions of the future are hardly an invention of modern times. Luhmann presents a standard perspective on the history of ideas, maintaining that until far into the eighteenth century, social life was experienced within a cosmos of essences that guaranteed the constancy of forms of being as well as their constituent elements. The *harmonia mundi* was beyond question. Within such a frame, what was at issue was not the appearance of any startling new things but concern about what would happen. Variation took place on the level of events. Fortune telling as well as expert prognostication turned on specification and hope (and, obviously, fear). Following various eighteenth-century trends, and taking form around the time of the French Revolution, a newly conceived trust in the future appeared: "Perfection was followed by perfectibility."[3] Improvement was possible. New things could come into being, and new types of things could happen. Such perfectibility and its associated optimism took shape in the diverse notions of progress and utility that proliferated throughout the late Enlightenment and permeated the rationality of modernity.[4] Luhmann's "Humankind" (an element we might more accurately analyze as a certain assemblage of discursive and nondiscursive technologies, a series of Deleuzian machines) moved beyond a self-understanding that assumed a pregiven form of perfection into uncharted spaces that allowed individuals a great deal more latitude (to make the world and themselves) and similarly envisioned a population that could improve itself by selection on an individual level. Although Luhmann does not mention Foucault, this political ration-

ality that links individuals to populations in a field of living beings is equivalent to Foucault's biopower. "All in all," Luhmann observes, "we have the impression that around 1800 the impossibility of describing the new structures of modern society would be compensated for with projections of the future."[5] Both in the technological and in the humanistic spheres, society described itself in the projection of its future. This moment is, of course, also the moment in which a new understanding of the past, as history, was being articulated throughout the European elite, as Reinhart Koselleck has documented.[6] The answer to the challenge of how to incorporate finitude was to engage in the infinite task of seeking norms and forms adequate to it. The methodical way of life came of age—with its multiple modes of subjectivation and temporality.

In our time, as never before, the continuity between past and future is broken. However, the one thing we know is that much of what will be true in future presents will depend on current decisions. Decide now! To complicate the picture, we don't have anyone who can decide. We live in a time in which the social authority of experts has been undermined by their oft-proven inability either to forecast the future or to make it happen as envisioned. Dryly and without pathos or nostalgia, Luhmann calls that which has taken the place of authority "the politics of understanding." Understandings are negotiated provisos that can be relied upon for a given time. Such understandings do not imply consensus, nor do they represent reasonable or even correct solutions to problems. Instead, they attempt to fix reference points, those things that are removed from the argument to seed further controversies in which coalitions and oppositions can form anew. Understandings have one big advantage over the claims of authority: they cannot be discredited but can only be constantly renegotiated. Finally, their value does not increase but only decreases with age. Luhmann's point helps explain why we continue to turn to experts whose predictions of twenty years ago now look ridiculous; they may have been wrong, but at least they helped frame a discussion. For example, following the media whirlwind about cloning, everyone agreed that cloning is vitally important: President Clinton wants a position soon. Hurry, let's have a weighty discussion about its future impact, round up the usual spokespeople, and be sure to include a broad spectrum of views. Express concern! Issue a report![7]

A key diacritic of contemporary modernity is the form taken by the temporality of the future. For us, the present refers to a future that exists only as probable or improbable events. In other words, the form of the future is the form of probability that defines a two-sided observation, designating events as more or less probable or more or less improbable, and distributes

these modalities across everything that is possible. The present calculates a future that can always turn out otherwise. Thus, the present can always assure itself that it calculated correctly, even if future events do not bear out predictions. This view does not rule out prognoses. In fact, it incessantly demands them; however, their only worth lies in the quickness with which they can be corrected or, more commonly, simply forgotten. Therefore, only a "provisional" foresight is possible whose function resides in the form it provides for a quick adjustment to an unexpected reality.

In such a situation, one finds the modern type of expert, someone who, when asked questions he cannot answer, responds in a mode that provides respectable uncertainty. With a little distance, experts and counterexperts appear to be equally convincing and equally plausible—that is, their assertions about the future are equally unconvincing and equally implausible. We want experts to have transparent interests and values. Their opinions count because we know what they represent. Negotiations then become attempts to increase uncertainty to the point that the only remaining reasonable option is to communicate with one another. However, because we do not have the unlimited time necessary to reach nondistorted agreement, we find ourselves in a quandary.

RESPONSIBILITY TO IGNORANCE

In an essay strikingly entitled "The Ecology of Ignorance," Luhmann further describes the place in which we reflexive moderns find ourselves and that we must take account of if we are to understand the contemporary world. We live amid systemic ignorance. Some of this ignorance is intentional, but some is not. Precisely because of the form we have given the future, we find ourselves within an ecology of ignorance. This fact does not mean that we need a better map of the unknown so that we can go about acquiring the requisite knowledge in an ever-more-comprehensive manner. That task would still fall somewhere between the encyclopedic projects of the Enlightenment (and their nineteenth-century humanistic descendants such as the *Encyclopedia Britannica*) and modernist projects with their Habermasian "universal norms."[8] Rather, it means that the world has inherently volatile, temporally unfolding spaces of ignorance that do not require filling in (because they were not always there and they will continue to multiply). These spaces are differentially distributed and are, of course, saturated by partially volatile and partially frozen sets of power relations.

The appropriate response is to reflexively acknowledge that an ecology of (partial and permanent) ignorance is the social and political ecology in

which we live, labor, and discourse. Such an acknowledgment would have dramatic consequences. First, it would further deflate the authority of people making futuristic pronouncements.(Less than a decade ago, debate about mapping the genome turned on two alternatives: the genome as Holy Grail, leading to everlasting health; and genomic mapping as an ominous back door to eugenics. The people making such assertions had no possible knowledge on which to base their claims. Such claims fluctuate between tautologies—the rich will profit from this (whatever the "this" is)—to hype—a new age of medicine will dawn "within a decade." But why do people debate so passionately about things they cannot know—now? To pose the question is to answer it. The platitudes and clichés of these arguments are attempts to fix reference points for debate and communication. They are part of a sociologically essential form of hype that prognosticative observers of science and society cannot do without. Luhmann puts this insight bluntly: "[T]he intensity of ecological communication is based on ignorance. That the future is unknowable is expressed in the present as communication. Society is irritated but has only one way to react to its irritation, in its own manner of operation: communication." Let's hold a conference, set up a commission, have a lively debate, write editorials, take a stance, position ourselves. We often describe these activities as political, or, at times, ethical.

We have a responsibility to our ignorance.[9] Given the expansive normative nature of communication and given the imperative to make decisions in the face of a contingent but onrushing future, we should not be surprised that the term *ethics* appears promiscuously in the most surprising couplings—business ethics, baseball ethics, bioethics. Although at first blush these pairings seem to be oxymoronic, Luhmann's conceptual apparatus provides insights into the form these ethical discourses take.

We all know that our bureaucratically driven welfare states are permeated with and regulated by procedures. Luhmann observes, "If we do not know what good reasons are, then we at least want to be able to say how we can test whether good reasons are good reasons, namely in communication itself."[10] That communication is about values. Luhmann adds a significant insight: "A normative understanding of values serves to allow an ethics to formulate moral demands for the behavior of others, demands that can be maintained despite constant disappointments." Thus, stable reference points are impervious to the fact that people do not live up to them. No one can instantiate the value of autonomy. We have ethical experts whose work is to constantly reassert the importance of autonomy or dignity. Empirical failure in no way deflects or deflates their position. However, such value experts

can explain themselves only in value terms. The power relations upon which and through which they construct, maintain, and expand their positions fall outside this discourse. When one group of ethicists ousts another, the only language available to explain the victory is one of better ethics.

Luhmann points to the philosophy of Hans Jonas as the most sustained attempt to develop an ethics (of procedure and value) in a technological age. Jonas argued that the heart of ethics lies in taking responsibility for the (future) consequences of our actions. This position has two major limitations. First, because we live in a modernity in which the future appears as contingent, the ethical actor cannot know the future chain of consequences of his actions. This situation leads to a dilemma: Either we do not act (but then who takes responsibility for the consequences of inaction?), or we act responsibly, knowing that we cannot know the stochastic results of our actions. Today, we are conscious of accepting risk, and ethics, at least until now, has not been able to provide any criteria for this situation. It has provided only procedures and values. Hence, the cost of a responsibility-based ethics may be its impossibility. If we are to be responsible to our ignorance, we have to think differently. If we do so, we face enormous problems in translating such structural ignorance—and a principled responsibility to it—into the kind of technical rationality and obligation to communicate that our bureaucracies and philosophers demand of us.

OBSERVING OBSERVERS OBSERVING

Luhmann's description of modernity is paradoxical. It is both a description of an epoch—modernity as a period of contingency, functional differentiation, and self-reflective individualism—and one of the most systematic critiques of epochal thinking as realism in the history of the social sciences. Luhmann's position is both close to and far from the position of Hans Blumenberg, who argues that in the early nineteenth century, the meaning of the term *epoch* shifted from its older meaning of a "point of view" (originally from astronomy) to that of a totalizing view of the world as historically organized into periods. Reinhardt Koselleck shares this view, arguing that our contemporary sense of historicity emerged precisely at the moment Blumenberg indicates.[11] Blumenberg advocates a return to understanding the epoch as a place from which one looks out at things rather than continued pursuit of realist claims to identify periods that, he argues, can never be empirically justified and produce an infinite regress of detail and thus futile polemic over boundaries and definitions. Boldly, Luhmann wants to keep both uses of the term *epoch;* he fully accepts that his position is par-

adoxical. In fact, he has interesting things to say about paradox, to which we will return after elaborating on Luhmann's thoughts on observation.

In his essay "Modernity as Contemporary Society," Luhmann indicates that the best diacritic for distinguishing modernity, as an epoch, is one that marks a temporal break with the past.[12] The distinctive epochal marker is a historical one. Making a distinction identifies a rupture: it shows us where to look to see the crucial dimension of the world, which, as long as one accepts this distinction, has changed forever. Among the crucial distinctions in this view are the birth of historical consciousness, the actualization of freedom, the emergence of a self-reflective subject, the self-understanding of society as risk, the disenchantment of the world, and the triumph of alienation. Each of these claimants marks modernity differently, although, as Luhmann points out, each turns on a form of experience associated with a specific understanding of temporality.

Luhmann, as we have just seen, has his own candidate for characterizing this form: modernity as contingency. Again, however, Luhmann's entire work is at pains to show that the founding distinction of a system is by definition arbitrary—in the mathematical sense of the term. This fact does not mean that the distinction is false, only that once a distinction is drawn, it carries with it exclusions and blind spots. One of the most common blind spots is the inability to see the necessity of drawing distinctions and the fact that any clearly drawn distinctions exclude others. Once one sees and accepts this analytic arbitrariness as the condition of analytic rigor, then systems theory can move in good faith from that arbitrariness to a kind of realism. Luhmann gives us an epochal description of modernity as contingency, knowing full well that it is arbitrary. Such a description could be done otherwise, and Luhmann himself has marked other defining distinctions of modernity (functional differentiation, double reentry, and so on). Yet Luhmann's claim has one more level of paradox. The demand to live in a reflexive and contingent state can itself become a realist diacritic of the epoch; Anthony Giddens and Scott Lash coherently argue for this interpretation of modernity in their book *Reflexive Modernity*. Indeed, Luhmann claims, "[A]n individual in the modern sense is someone who can observe his or her own observing."[13] The difference between Luhmann and Giddens is that Luhmann must insist that this stance is only one way to cut up the pie. He must be able to make such a claim while saying with equal confidence that the claim is both incisive and arbitrary. Thus, Luhmann, unlike Giddens or Habermas or Beck or Koselleck, is crystal clear that he wants his construct both ways. He wants to have his cake and eat it too. To which we can only say, "bon appétit!"

OBSERVATION

What is observation? "Observation," Luhmann writes, "is any kind of operation that makes a distinction so as to designate one (but not the other) side. Such a definition is itself contingent, since what is defined would have another meaning given another distinction."[14] Luhmann's definition of *observation* is idiosyncratic; he simply sees it as the starting distinction that organizes and begins an inquiry. The starting distinction situates the observer and identifies that which is to be observed. Only then can inquiry proceed. First-order observations thus are ordinary realist attempts to grasp a referent. Most social scientists and most actors in the social world are content to do this type of observation. It establishes an environment, a point of observation, and a referent.

First-order observations work within limits that a fuller human scientific inquiry, or an inquiry about science qua inquiry, might well strive to take into account. Luhmann thus draws a distinction between first-order observations and second-order observations. "Observations of the first order (reference) use distinction as a schema but do not yet create a contingency for the observer himself."[15] Second-order observations are observations of first-order observations; they take the system (observer-environment) established by the first-order observations as their referent. By so doing, they are able to take up the blind spots created by the perfectly legitimate arbitrariness established by the first-order observations. Of course, a second-order observation has no absolute privilege, because it too calls for making a distinction. However, unlike first-order observations, second-order observations are, by definition, self-referential.

"Second order observations offer a choice . . . whether certain designations are to be attributed to the observed observer, thereby characterizing him, or seen as characteristics of what he observes. Both attributions, observer attribution and object attribution, are possible; the results can be considered contingent. They can be combined, for example, when an observation is believed to be factually correct but the question remains why the observed observer happens to be interested in this instead of something else."[16]

Thus, by definition and with complete legitimacy, first-order observations center on one context, situation, or environment. Second-order observations, also by definition and with complete legitimacy, focus on more than one context, situation, or environment; they include the observation of observers observing a context and the fact that they are observing them.

"Observations of the second order are observations of observations. This

can include observations of other observers or observations of the same or different observers at different points in time. Depending on these variants, social and temporal dimensions can be distinguished in the production of meaning. This makes it possible to state that contingency is a form that takes on the factual dimension of the medium of meaning, whereas the social dimension and the temporal dimension pull observation apart. Or to put it another way: everything becomes contingent whenever what is observed depends on who is being observed."[17] Thus, one could well observe modernity as an epoch as long as one is aware that a second-order observer observes that starting point as a first-order observation.

CONTEMPORARY ANTHROPOLOGICAL OBSERVATION

In light of our preceding discussion, we can say that contemporary anthropologists whose object of study is modern (that is, self-reflexive and contingent) first-order observers must engage in second-order observation. Thus, they must set up a frame of inquiry that allows for this double reflexivity and contingency (of the first-order modern observer and the second-order observer). This demand, though complex, is self-evident once one accepts Luhmann's distinctions. Further, Luhmann has much to say about how one should conduct such an inquiry. A less self-evident but equally logical requirement is that anthropologists engaged in second-order observations of self-reflective first-order observers must find a way to take into account their own observation practice, however self-reflective it may be. As we have seen, the traditional approach to this task waste introduce a range of analytic practices that aimed to identify and neutralize factors that distorted the observational powers of the observer.

Luhmann's analytic helps us see another way to proceed: "One thing the observer must avoid is wanting to see himself and the world. Only the unity of the distinguished can be observed."[18] In accord with this maxim, anthropologists of the contemporary will find it helpful, perhaps even essential, to include a second (second-order) observer in the practice of anthropological inquiry. Such an observer would observe the (second-order) observer observing the (first-order) modern observers. This observer would be better than technical devices such as video cameras to record interview sessions and the like precisely because the second, second-order observer would know that she should not attempt to see herself and the world.

Although an infinite regress of higher levels of observers is logically possible, initial experience with the technique indicates that two observers with clearly defined functions offer a sufficiently powerful apparatus for the pur-

poses at hand. This apparatus safeguards against blatant use of unintentional epideictic rhetoric or a belief in the transparency of immediate history. It also takes a major step beyond modernist irony, but that topic requires another paper.

INTERVIEWS

Ethnographers have used the technique of extended interviews for generations, with the aim of gathering data to improve their understanding of a culture or of a "life history" that itself cast light on a culture. The term *Bildung* in its nineteenth-century German sense of cultural self-formation is at least a partially appropriate descriptor of this process. It is only partially appropriate because the German use of the term privileged works of elite culture, and American anthropology has popularized the term *culture* and its terrain of application. Like observation, the interview process invites a dream of transparency at work; if an informant could speak into a tape recorder (or point the camera lens) without the anthropologist saying anything, then full transparency would be achieved. As graduate students have been gravely reminded for generations, the point of our profession is not "you"; it is the "other." If only one could disappear entirely and let the other speak, our science would be mature. In a different way, even Spivak's plaintive query about whether the subaltern could ever speak reflected a normative goal of transparency: if only power relations were different, then ...

Thus, the interview starts with the distinctions that culture has a unity; the encultured or socialized individual has a self that is infused with the culture; and the anthropologist herself is a bearer of a self and a culture that only adequate scientific treatment can induce to recede asymptotically. Then, and only then, would the immediacy of the other—appropriated and appreciated—be available. The moral imperative driving these distinctions was a perfectly admirable attempt to valorize cultural difference. These distinctions and their associated operations have yielded much of value.

Once one recognizes that ethnographic practice can proceed from other distinctions, however, the previous form loses, at a minimum, if not its entire authority, at least its sense of self-evidence. Exploration of other possibilities has been ardently resisted mainly because people have heavily invested the previous form with moral assumptions and affects that they believed cohered in an essential manner with scientific principles. Sundering these connections, or making them available for questioning and inquiry, has proved a painful prospect for many, but in reality it in no way

forecloses the practice of anthropology. On the contrary, problematizing assemblages reveals that other modes and forms are logically possible and at least imaginatively feasible. Actualizing them, however, requires not so much thinking as a sustained corrosion of the power relations embedded in the habitus of a generation. For better or worse, the human sciences change very slowly.

What if we did not begin with the distinction of subject and object and its secondary assumption that it is the culture that is enunciated through speaking subjects? What if we did not begin with the distinction between a whole to be captured and an inquiring subject to be rendered transparent? What if we did not assume that our task is to write culture? And what if the search for another form of anthropological inquiry proceeded from a different set of distinctions precisely because its object of inquiry appeared to be composed of forces driving and articulating assemblages defined by accelerated creation, efficiency, and associated stress of and for subjects, objects and the elements that mediate them? What, then, would observation consist in? And what operations would assist that new form of observation?

IMMEDIATE HISTORY

Georg Wilhelm Friederich Hegel (1780–1831), at the beginning of his posthumously published lectures *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*, distinguishes three types of historical writing: original history, reflective history, and philosophic history. Although Hegel is known for the third kind of historical writing, unexpectedly, his presentation of the first type— "original history" *(ursprungliche Geschichte)*—is today the most vivid and relevant type for scholars seeking to carry out and to write about the practice we might call the anthropology of the actual.[19] Hegel is respectful of this genre, devoting several pages to it, but thinks it is not an adequate genre to portray modern times: "Our culture is essentially intellectual, and it immediately converts events into reports for intellectual representation."[20] Modern times are fundamentally mediated by concepts, and the immediacy of war and politics has given way to a more removed and divided situation. This claim, is dubious, and we will return to it below.

Hegel says the following about original history:

> Herodotus, Thucydides, and other such historians primarily describe the actions, events, and situations they themselves have witnessed, and whose spirit they shared in. They translate what is externally present into the realm of mental representation. . . . Of course, such original

historians rely on reports and accounts of others, since it is not possible for one person to have seen everything. But they use these sources as ingredients only. . . . Legends, folksongs, traditions—these are to be excluded from original history, because they are obscure modes of memory, proper to the mentality of pre-literate peoples. On the contrary, in original history, we are concerned with peoples who knew what they were and what they wanted. . . . These original historians, then, transform the events, actions and situations present to them into works of representation. . . . Their essential material is what is present and alive in their surround world. . . . Short spans of time, the individual patterns of men and events—these are the singular, unreflected features out of which he composes his portrait of the time, in order to bring that picture to posterity with as much clarity as it had in his own direct observation or in the accounts of other direct witnesses. He is not concerned with offering reflections on these events, for he lives within the spirit of the times and cannot as yet transcend them.

We say that such a historian is not reflective but that persons and nations are directly present in history. Yet against this assumption are the speeches, which we can read, for example, in Thucydides; these orations were surely not spoken as they appear but were worked up by the writer of the history. Speeches, however, are actions among men, and indeed they are effective action in their essence. "If, in the Middle Ages, it was the bishops who were at the center of political activity, it was the monks who wrote history (in the form of naïve chronicles), and who were as isolated from events as the men of antiquity were involved in them."[21]

The point of presenting Hegel's claims is not to provide an opening to resurrect other parts of his philosophy. That being said, Hegel's claims resonate strongly with the project of problematizing and transforming the practice of ethnography announced, among other places, in the watershed 1986 collection *Writing Culture: The Politics and Poetics of Ethnography.* Of the many topics presented for further inquiry in this heteroclite collection of essays were whether the temporality of the ethnographic present can legitimately be deployed, whether distinct cultures (or *ethne*) can legitimately remain the object of anthropological inquiry, and whether narrative forms developed to present culture in an ethnographic present ("Balinese culture") can legitimately be deployed? Each of these questions could be answered definitively in the affirmative or negative or, in a more critical manner, could be posed to provoke thought about the issue of limits. Although *Writing Culture* presented varied positions on how to pose and answer these questions, all writers agreed, at least tacitly, that if anthropology was

to move beyond its founding contextualization in twentieth-century social science as well as beyond colonialisms, then each of these topics—what temporality? what object? what form?—required imaginative invention and discovery.

If, as the majority of the authors in the volume held, the traditional form of ethnographic authority was in crisis, then practitioners in the field needed to revisit the question of what form of inquiry is appropriate for studying practices in their immediacy rather than cultures in their atemporality (or even their historicity). Once again, Hegel's claims have an uncanny ring of actuality. "What the original historian lets speak is not a borrowed consciousness but the speaker's own self-formation *[Bildung]*." The last term, which I translate as "self-formation," is translated in the text as "culture." To write this immediate history well, authors should not speak for those they aim to present but should seek a mode through which interviewees could speak for themselves.

We find a partial correspondence with the touchstone of symbolic anthropology—from the native's point of view. The correspondence is partial in that symbolic anthropologists tended to analyze cultures as they existed in the ethnographic present. As we have seen, both of these terms—*culture* and *present*—were under critical scrutiny. Hence, we opt to translate "*Bildung*" not as "culture" but as "self-formation." This choice is not mere pedantry, because not only does it help the reader avoid totalizing and self-standing objects such as "culture," but it provides an alternative that embodies the idea of process. It also implies, however, the attempt to achieve a unified self. Whether these associations are still desirable is a topic to which we return below. Finally, when Hegel identifies the subject as the "speaker," he enters the realm of discourse and *logos.* Savvy dialectician that he was, Hegel made distinctions that were equally applicable to subjects, objects, and the elements that mediate them through time.

Hegel's distinctions help us obtain some conceptual distance from the present; for precisely this reason, I need to indicate a few of the ways in which my position differs from Hegel's. First, his entire philosophy of the unfolding of Spirit in History is a dead letter. Hegel's assurance that Thucydides lived in a unified epoch, in which all free citizens moved in the culture of Greece like the proverbial fish in water, and that we can therefore take Thucydides as a spokesman for this epoch and this culture, is highly dubious. By doubting this claim, we in no way diminish the interest of Thucydides' work; quite the contrary, this stance enables us to find fascination in other aspects of his writing.

WRITING THINGS: DEICTIC, NOT EPIDEICTIC

Previous generations would not have been surprised by Hegel's attention to Thucydides, whose *On The Peloponnesian War* has for centuries occupied an important place in the canon of Greek thought. Today, Thucydides is unfortunately unknown to most American students, and my discussion of his work in part—but only in part—seeks to pique the interest of those who might be curious about such matters. Surprisingly little is known about this Athenian admiral, who was a member of a noble family. He was probably born around 460 B.C. and probably died in the mid-390s B.C., although both dates are uncertain. However, we do know from the famous opening sentences of the *On The War* that

> Thucydides, an Athenian, wrote the war between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians, beginning at the moment that it broke out, and believing that it would be a great war, and more worthy of relation than any that had preceded it. This belief was not without its grounds. (1.1)[22]

The war broke out at the end of the summer in 431 and Thucydides' chronicle finishes at the end of the summer 411 in the war's twenty-first year. I turn to Thucydides to indicate the existence of a genealogy of writing and thinking about events and their narration, so careful attention to the terms he used to discuss these issues is appropriate; this discussion is possible because of the invaluable aid of Professor James Faubion. Thus, for example, although the standard translation of the first line of Thucydides' text includes the term *history,* the word is not present in the Greek. Thucydides says literally that he "wrote the war."[23] We should not forget that the contrastive cases of "writing things" for Thucydides would have been Homer and Herodotus; in response to their "romance" or "fabulation," Thucydides proposed a sober accuracy.

The other significant fact that we know about Thucydides is that in 424, the rulers of Athens sent him to the northern city of Amphipolis to defend it against Spartan attack. He failed.

> It was also my fate to be an exile from my country for twenty years after my command at Amphipolis; and being present with both parties, and more especially with the Peloponnesians by reason of my exile, I had leisure to observe affairs more closely. (1.5.26.5)

Thucydides' simple declarative statement is moving in its assertion of enduring loyalty—"my country"—and unselfconscious in its linkage of the terms *leisure, observe, affairs,* and *closely.* Again, the translation of these

terms is comprehensible but misleading: "leisure" is not the Greek "*skholè,*" which Pierre Bourdieu has analyzed in detail, but rather "calm;" "to observe" is a poor translation of the Greek *aesthesis,* for which a better translation is "to be acquainted with (through the senses);" "affairs" is simply "things," and "more closely" is "better." Hence, Thucydides says, "I had the calm to acquaint myself better with things." Although these changes do not change the fact that Thucydides' "immediate history" is closely tied to the author's own situation, they do introduce nuance and tone that indicate topics about which debate has flourished for millennia. Thus, to take only Bourdieu's attention to *scolè*—noting that Thucydides was of a class that depended on the labor of others and was in a position that allowed him the comfort to reflect, even in disgrace—is essential, but that he chose to do so in a state of calm is of equal interest.

Thucydides wrote throughout the two-decade-long war; his account has occasioned scholarly interest, factual correction, and debate for centuries. For example, Thomas Hobbes wrote a provocative, even polemic, translation that is still read today because Hobbes was able to give this rather dry chronicle of battles, tactics, and public speeches a keen sense of pertinence; that Hobbes's translation, which he wrote to move the audiences of the seventeenth century, still affects twenty-first-century readers is remarkable and indicative of the text's depth and/or its capacity to sustain multiple, and often incompatible, readings. Among the reasons for the long-lived readability and seeming accessibility of *On the War* are the famous speeches (some twenty-seven in all) that Thucydides groups at crucial junctures in his narrative. Although scholars have spilled much over the speeches' authenticity and veracity, less incisive reflection has focused on why Thucydides might have included them in his account in the first place. Hegel assumes that the speeches of Thucydides are present simply as part of "the spirit of his time." Thus, Hegel can take them not as examples of reflective or critical history but merely as instances of "representation." Today, Hegel's interpretation appears quaint; one can easily glide over the claim as merely another example of the early nineteenth-century Romantic German obsession with Athens that has been so well documented and dissected. Whatever the truth may be, an appeal to epochs would be incongruent with the spirit of my own text; hence, I will simply register my disagreement with this aspect of Hegel's interpretation of Thucydides while acknowledging and retaining his other valuable insights about the text. The status of the speeches' purpose remains open.

Here is Thucydides' explanation of why he included the speeches and where they fit in his manner of writing things:

Now, what was said in speeches by either side, as it was about to go to war or when it was already in it, has been difficult for me to remember exactly in terms of what precisely was spoken (both of what I heard myself or of what was reported to me by others). But as every individual would seem to have said pretty much what he had to concerning the circumstances at hand, so have I written it, staying as close as possible to the entire sense of what was actually spoken. And as far as the facts of what was done in the war are concerned, I do not think it fit to write what I learned from anyone who merely happened to be on the spot, nor merely what I thought seemed right. But both about those events I was witness to and to those I learned of from others, as much as possible I scrutinized everyone [and his account] with a view to accuracy. Even so it was a difficult task to discover [a true account] because participants in events do not agree with each other in their statements, but differed because of their memories [being faulty] or because of their interests in events. (1.22.1–3)[24]

We find a perspicacious account of the speeches in *On The War* in Marc Cogan's *The Human Thing: The Speeches and Principles of Thucydides' History*.[25] Cogan's thesis is that Thucydides included the many speeches, grouping them at turning points in the long war, because he sought to identify and make visible the elements and functioning of deliberation, showing the use of rhetoric to make prudential decisions, in this case political decisions, during a time of war between city-states, when confederations were shifting and the fate of a form of life was at stake. Cogan argues cogently that most interpretations of the speeches' function in Thucydides are misguided.

Cogan points out that most criticisms of Thucydides—as well as many of the interpretations of those who praise him—are misleading when they offer *On The War* as an example of epideictic rhetoric: a rhetoric of display and embellishment. They have taken the speeches to be mere devices through which Thucydides can present his own views, making the marionette characters speak. Commentators have chosen to see the speeches as examples of epideictic rhetoric because the speeches could not possibly be verbatim accounts, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, Thucydides explicitly does not present them as fictions. Cogan vigorously contests this view, arguing that interpreting the speeches as examples of epideictic rhetoric leads to a number of hermeneutic wrong turns. Rather, he urges us to take Thucydides literally when he argues that he has done his utmost to establish the speeches' accuracy. That accuracy turns not on the representation of a type of speech, but—in Cogan's thesis—precisely on the particularity of the given speech; albeit with a tacit understanding that all such

speeches followed the established styles of rhetoric and logic. Cogan insists on particularity because it makes clear the real challenge: how to seize the situations in their particularity and thereby make available their generality. This approach is the exact inversion of an epideictic rhetoric that would use particulars as an element in the demonstration or elaboration of an established general thesis. One could call this reversal of emphasis a methodological caution, or even principle, if these modern terms were not so dissonant with the powerful immediacy of the speeches within Thucydides' text.

Moreover, Thucydides obviously could have made up or chosen to present literally thousands of the speeches made during the decades of the war. Thus, his selectivity reveals the significance of the drive for particularity. "Nowhere," Cogan writes, "is Thucydides' selectivity more accessible to us than in the speeches he records, and for this reason they provide the direct route to the understanding of his interpretation of the war."[26] Cogan's thesis is that these speeches vividly make available the processes and forces—including, above all else, the process of deliberation itself—that shaped political deliberation at the crucial turning points of the war; either when events could have gone in a different direction or when significant strategic decisions were taken through public deliberation, either by statesmen addressing the assembled citizenry (as in the famous speeches of Pericles in Athens during the plague) or in dialogues between city representatives (as in the famous Melian dialogue). Through the particularity of those discursive moments, significance is made performative, made public, debated, demonstrated, shown, enacted. Discourse in such settings was political action; it was an instantiation of itself, not a representation of something else. Thus, the vital point is that Thucydides adopted a reflective and reflexive stance toward discursive action and recognized its dependent but decisive function in the unfolding of events.

This claim leads us to another distinctive trait of Thucydides' practice: "his presentation of the speeches not as excerpts but as whole (if abridged) speeches. The practice is, of course, foreign to contemporary historical practice, but we must recognize, novel in Thucydides' time as well. In understanding his purposes in attempting to replicate the complex experience of political oratory on particular occasions, we can discover Thucydides' conceptions of the nature of action that required this form of presentation of the moments of deliberation."[27] Not only is this practice foreign to contemporary historical practice, but it is foreign to contemporary journalism and to contemporary science studies. Each of these forms of inquiry (and of narration) retains a type of authorial control that does not make the ex-

tended process of deliberation available for others to ponder and evaluate for themselves. In that sense, these other genres are all epideictic; they use quotation and empirical material only to illustrate, reinforce, or embellish a point or to bolster an interpretation or instantiate a theoretical claim. In journalism, the genre constraints are such that extended quotation is simply not allowed; journalists are paid to tell the audience what things mean, and editors are paid to police them, to improve their prose so that it fulfills this function. In science studies, the primacy of "theory" over "cases" means that the examples are almost exclusively deployed to strengthen and to (appear to) demonstrate a theoretical point. Even in the natural sciences, where papers must include a methods section, deliberative process is absent.

Of course, myriad excellent reasons exist to proceed in an epideictic fashion. Hence, I am certainly not arguing for the abandonment of other genres. I am, however, suggesting that we give due consideration to these genres' strengths and weakness and recognize that such an evaluation of genre and rhetoric will help us conduct more powerful and richer inquiries; and hence to know things in a more refined and appropriate manner. In other words, one of the diacritics that distinguishes an anthropology of the actual from its sisters in writing the present is its attempt to find conceptually mediated deictic forms—forms that would once again make immediate history a tool for bringing particularity and generality into more fruitful, mutually informing relationships, obliging the reader to take up an active and prudential stance toward the issues under deliberation. Thus, one version or another of such a form would allow us to introduce an ethical attitude into anthropological inquiry.

Finally, Thucydides sought to understand what happened in the long war (that he justly considered of prime significance for the fate of the Greek people), in part to establish what general lessons one could learn from thinking about it. While writing his history, Thucydides was no longer an actor in these events; he was in exile but immediately adjacent to things. Thus, we can fairly conclude that he was not writing solely in an "immediate" mode, as Hegel suggests, but rather in a mediated mode, one that was unquestionably reflective while remaining contemporary to the events themselves. No longer a citizen of Athens but still attached to it by myriad ties and affects (of kinship, style of thought, or attachment to place), Thucydides' presentation of the materials on the war sought to serve deliberation not just then—after all, the war has already taken place—but, in his famous phrase, "for all time." He took as his object public deliberation and made it available as an object to ponder, consider, debate; his chronicle is itself an object of deliberation. He argued that because other events would certainly

occur in a form resembling the one he described, deliberators in the future would be well advised to take into account the things he had written about. The opening passage I cited earlier continues:

> The absence of romance in my ["writing of these things"] will, I fear, detract somewhat from its interest; but if it be judged useful by those inquirers who desire an exact knowledge of the past as an aid to the understanding of the future, which in the course of human things must resemble it if it does not reflect it, I shall be content. In fine, I have written, not to win the applause of the moment, but as a possession for all time. (1.22–3)[28]

Thucydides' meaning in this passage has been the subject of scholarly dispute. We can abstain from entering that fray. For our purposes, Thucydides' claim that bringing long-term material conditions of geography, culture, political alliance, style, and forms of life into a relationship with men's thoughts and deeds within those constraints and looking at how their deliberations effected change in those constraining forces are plausible starting points for understanding, especially if one is interested in the singularity of events. Whether this undertaking tells us anything "for all time" is for others to worry about.[29] Yet we are wise to ponder how a text written twenty-five hundred years ago remains such a keen deictic tool.

NOTES

1. We can compare Luhmann's work with Reinhard Koselleck's *Futures Past, On the Semantics of Historical Time* (trans. Keith Tribe; Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985 [orig. 1979]), which analyzes how the past appears in modernity, and Michel Foucault's "What Is Enlightenment?" which queries the way the present appears in different historicities. Foucault shows how these questions lead to a problematization of modes of subjectivation, an issue that centrally concerns Luhmann, although he does not pose the question in these terms.

2. Niklas Luhmann, *Observations on Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998 [orig. 1992]), 63.

3. Ibid. 65.

4. One can relate Luhmann's ideas to Beck's two stages of modernity. See Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, translated by Mark Ritter (London: Sage, 1992).

5. Luhmann, *Observations on Modernity*, 66.

6. Koselleck, *Futures Past*.

7. Gregory Pence, *Who's Afraid of Human Cloning?* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998).

8. See Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition* (South Bend, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1990).

9. My thanks go to James Faubion for this phrase.

10. Niklas Luhmann, *Ecological Communication,* trans. John Bednarz Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. 93.

11. See Paul Rabinow, *Anthropos Today, Reflections on Modern Equipment* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).

12. Niklas Luhmann, "Modernity as Contemporary Society," in *Observations on Modernity,* 3.

13. Ibid, 7.

14. Niklas Luhmann, "Contingency as Modern Society's Defining Attribute," in *Observations on Modernity,* 47.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid, 48.

17. Ibid., 47–48.

18. Niklas Luhmann, "The Ecology of Ignorance," in *Observations on Modernity,* 111.

19. Rabinow, *Anthropos Today*.

20. G. W. F. Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History,* trans. Leo Rauch (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1988), 5.

21. Hegel, *Introduction,* 3–5.

22. Robert B. Strassler, ed., *The Landmark Thucydides, A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War* (New York: The Free Press, 1996). This edition of *The Pelopennesian War* is a revision of the Richard Crawley translation.

23. James Faubion has been generous in providing help with the Greek text as well as its meaning.

24. Cogan's translation.

25. Marc Cogan, *The Human Thing: The Speeches and Principles of Thucydides' History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

26. Cogan, "Introduction," *The Human Thing,* xv.

27. Ibid., xvii.

28. Crawley's translation, altered.

29. Richard McKeon, *Freedom and History: The Semantics of Philosophical Controversies and Ideological Conflict.* (New York: Noonday Press, 1952), 52. "Logistic history is not universal. It begins with particular data—the forces relevant to a great event, the occurrences of a particular period, the accomplishments and sufferings of a particular group, people, or nation—and with the lines of causal relations or with the probabilities of consequences—the evolution of political forms and political power, the development of military instruments and tactics, the influence of geographic environment, the elaboration and extension of tools and industry, the alteration of economic conditions, moral influences, and social forms and customs."

Political Subjects

In "Hamlet in Purgatory," literary scholar Stephen Greenblatt challenges Freud's privileging of Oedipus as the modern representative of psychological interiority. Greenblatt maintains that Shakespeare's Hamlet is the one who does this work (chapter 5 in this volume). "Remember me," is the haunting demand of the dead father to Prince Hamlet. Following Goethe's lead in seeing the prince as more of a neurotic than a hero, Greenblatt tests Jacques Lacan's idea that the subject is the doing of the phantasm (1979) by actually traversing Hamlet's ghost in history, so to speak. "Something have you heard of Hamlet's transformation: so I call it, since not the exterior, nor the inward man resembles that it was" (Shakespeare, *Hamlet* 2.2.5).

As Greenblatt unveils the materiality, politics, and aesthetics of this figure who haunts and transforms subjectivity, he inventively finds that Hamlet's way of measuring himself in pathos ("this corrosive inwardness") is not necessarily the outcome of a repression which has been miscarried (as Freud would have it) but the recycling of an elaborate social experiment around the cult of the dead. In Greenblatt's work, moderns are also the subjects of cultural cataclysm.

Greenblatt shows that while rewriting the original story of Hamlet as it appeared in a Danish chronicle, Shakespeare replaced the motif of revenge with that of remembrance, and the issue of remembrance was at the center of the sixteenth-century political debate in England about purgatory and the ontological status of the dead: how much of a claim can the dead make on the living? Greenblatt tracks the ways in which arguments about the existence of purgatory and institutional interventions have brought together and recast concepts of family, guilt, social responsibility, the location and source of power, and representation. He begins with an anticlerical book, *A Supplication for the Beggers,* written in the early sixteenth century by a

London lawyer, Simon Fish. The book denounces purgatory not only as a
false doctrine but as a cunningly designed imaginary space. Fish speaks in
the name of the poor as he indicts Catholic representatives' practice of com-
modifying fiction and using purgatory for social domination and economic
gain, and thus neglecting the kingdom's commonwealth. Fish was protected
by King Henry VIII, who, for his own well-known reasons, supported a re-
formed religion.

Sir Thomas More, however, on the verge of becoming the king's lord
chancellor, further complicated the political use of purgatory because he was
an apologist for the ongoing Catholic order. In a public reply to Fish's here-
sies, More wrote that the miseries of the poor were vastly exceeded by the
cries of dead ones who feared they had been forgotten. More counterposed
the dead not to the beggars, as Fish did, but to the living. By not addressing
the dead's claim to be remembered, the living doomed themselves to go
straight to hell. Moving beyond the murky and vulnerable doctrine of the
middle state and place of the souls, More's *The Supplication of Souls* en-
listed public discussions about ghosts and made the case that no absolute
line exists between the living and the dead because of the feelings one has
toward the memories of loved kin. In the end, More urged people to give
more money to the church—as a sign of remembrance. In fact, by 1563, pur-
gatory had been shut down. The Church of England had rejected the doc-
trine of purgatory, and the whole intercessory system—the institutions and
methods of dealing with the dead—had officially ended. The enforced
Protestant cultural change, however, could not destroy the longings and
fears that the Catholic Church had exploited.

Shakespeare understood that the representational contradictions lurking
in debunked theological principles and in both damaged and new institu-
tional structures could intensify his play's uncanny power. The ideological
struggle that turned negotiations with the dead from an institutional pro-
cess governed by the church into a subjective process governed by guilt,
projection, and imagination finally found a place in theater. The force or en-
ergy that keeps Hamlet a seminal modern form of art in which people can
see themselves and their inner conflicts and struggle of consciousness is di-
rectly tied, argues Greenblatt, to Shakespeare's ability to capitalize on the
cult of the dead as it had evolved in the generations before he wrote.

In *Hamlet*, certain materials moved from a so-called real place to a place
that now appeared to be imaginary or theatrical. Through Hamlet's rela-
tionship to his father's ghost, Shakespeare brought purgatory into the
realm of personal conscience and consciousness, and in so doing, he replaced
its institutional bases with guilt, responsibility, conviction, and doubt.

Doomed to walk the night, people now paid to see the ghost staged. New laws of perception and action were established, along with a distinct sense of self: a lack, a yearning, this very modern thing emerging in the subject as he was acted out.

In Greenblatt's archaeology, the malaise of modern man and woman emerges not just in relation to a new reality but also in relation to an engineered loss; that is, people can no longer deal symbolically with the dead in a familiar way. Moving from political subjection to imaginary servitude, the modern self enters the stage of history.

> We can become images and images become us. How is this transformation, by which a piece of fantasy or imaginary-perceptual construct acquires a part of me, taking place? Where does the imaginary gain its power so that it could mold the self? Where does the self attain its plasticity by which it can assume forms of the imaginary?

These questions, raised by Gabor Katona, a young historian of science who took his life in January 2003, convey the potentialities of images—the overwhelming sense of being overtaken by cultural representations—to remake the self into something unique yet shared.

Ethnographic studies of subjectivity must find ways to address the artifices and constructs that transform body and voice. In the workings of politically and monetarily infused assemblages, we can witness both the loss of human experience and novel becomings (Delenze 1997). These movements from public spaces and meanings into intimate sensibility—movements at once constraining and enabling, repetitive and inventive—make history happen. They place us in time. They are the means to think through the materials of the times and the mediations through which lives are made real and death faced.

Ludwik Fleck, in his prescient book *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact* (1979), emphasizes the specific historical development of thinking, looking at how the making of scientific facts relates to reigning "thought-styles" and how social relations and experience are shaped by new conventions. He shows, for example, that in order for syphilis to appear as an empirical-therapeutic disease entity—that is, as an undoubtedly real fact—medical practitioners had to disregard other important facts, such as the ethical-mystical notion of syphilis as a "carnal scourge" and the sense that "the new conventions were not felt to be of equal value as the discharged ones." While exposing the workings of medical science in general, Fleck argues that it defines the morbid as an entity by rejecting some of the observed data and by guessing about nonobserved relations. In this way, the

irrational becomes rational in its details, he says, but this approach also allows other things to be unaccounted for and remain unexplained (Fleck 1986: 39–40). The suggestion is that the sense of subjectivity becomes caught up in struggles over truth and efforts to learn how to forget or how much to remember (Prager 1998, 2002).

How are political formations and the public sphere tied to the dead and the work of memory today? How does the collective regulation of death influence individual attitudes and a sense of social anticipation?

In "Violence and the Politics of Remorse" (chapter 7), Nancy Scheper-Hughes explores the working ethics created around the dead bodies of apartheid in the new South Africa. Here, hope comes not out of principles generated in the privileged contexts of Western countries but from "cultures of terror" (Taussig 1986). The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is meant to become the fabric of a new social contract and the foundation for building a new citizen.

Both victim and perpetrator suffer from a symbiotic and unworkable identity. The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in Scheper-Hughes's reading, is fraught with the difficulties of producing truth as a means of recovery, such as attempting to shift from a fact-finding, logical, or experiential truth to a negotiated, dramaturgical, "good enough" truth. In this process, temporality and emotions figure centrally: Whose pain is privileged? Whose suffering is ignored? What should be remembered? What forgotten? The possibilities and impossibilities for moving forward and the use of grief in judgment and truth are sites of powerful contestation. The embodied and the imaginary interact through the symbolic power of wounds, disputes about repatriation, and the shift from licensed forgetfulness to authorized knowledge and finally to the justice of acknowledgment.

Scheper-Hughes significantly integrates affect at a deep level of analysis: in interpretations of truth, in contestations about recovery, and in her own engagements. The political economy of emotions is a key site of governance and ethnographic writing. Exploring complex struggles to bring meaning to the arbitrariness of suffering, Scheper-Hughes locates a truth intentionally produced at the intersection of moral, effective, symbolic, and therapeutic practices; this truth emerges through individual and collective attempts at recovery and hope. The anthropologist participates in a deeply affecting example of such an attempt, arranging a face-to-face encounter between Peter Biehl and "Easy" Nofemela and Ntbeko Peni, two of the killers of his daughter, Amy, well after the case had been addressed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The meeting—initially painful and

tense—ends with an extraordinary sense of weight lifted. The burden of re-morse carried by Amy's killers and the angry grief borne by her father are lightened by the exchange, and by the end of the meeting, Peter has invited the two teenagers to work for the foundation established in memory of his daughter. "World repair," as Scheper-Hughes suggests, "cannot be accom-plished through the application of reason and the rule of law alone."

The public acknowledgment of state terror and the ordinariness of evil locates what has been revealed in a meaningful, moral universe, a new pub-lic imaginary through which one can see personal possibilities, though these possibilities remain all too fragile if promises are not kept and conditions of change do not materialize. As history unfolds as grace, the model of a new nation and citizenry's identity is created for political value. Yet, what power does this model of collective identity have to facilitate and realize the social mobility that people need so desperately?

Trauma and the biology of fear are at the core of the quintessential men-tal illness of today, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which dimin-ishes, or even destroys, the power of "dead voices" to take hold of and mold a person's condition. New taxonomies of mental disorders and the scientific and clinical apparatuses in which they are imbricated are attempting to delete the term *neurosis* altogether from research and practice, "dropping it in the waste-bin of psychiatric history," according to Allan Young (2000). Experts are "passionately interested in discovering biological features par-ticular to the disorder and its defining process," such as hypocortisolism (5, 14)—and this experimental "remnant" or "epistemic thing" (Rheinberger 1997) is to become a measure against which these subjects can define their "true" pathological status. Classificatory institutions, politics of disability and imaginary redemptions, biological measures, and pharmaceutical prac-tices come together in PTSD, absorbing all symptoms of neurosis and mak-ing up new populations of mass symptoms and moral claims. Traumatology, adds Ian Hacking, "has become the science of the troubled soul, with victi-mology one of its bitter fruits" (2002: 18).[1]

In his essay for this collection, Allan Young works through Ian Hacking's concept of "transient mental illness" and traces the specific constellation of political, psychiatric, and social processes that are leading to a new category of mental illness: the self-traumatized perpetrator. Like Greenblatt, Young explores how the recycling of knowledge, institutions, and claims produces new social phenomena and affect, creating new possibilities for human choice and action. Young elaborates on the person who is traumatized by the effects of his own violence—by the pain, loss, and death caused to his vic-tims. The self-traumatized perpetrator is, so to speak, his own victim. But,

as Young points out, he is not only a victim and a perpetrator. He is also the patient of a specific medical-science and technological establishment *and* a regional phenomenon, an American psychological character.

This new medical-moral identity of the self-traumatized perpetrator came into being at the intersection of post–Vietnam War politics, diagnostic shifts brought up by the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (III),* and an emergent concept of countertransference neurosis that recasts Freud's idea of the relationship between therapist and patient. This perpetrator-victim-patient subject position is contingent on the tailor-made space of post-traumatic stress disorder and on the cultural possibility of making another person's traumatic story a part of one's own memories, thus becoming this other person (Prager 1998, 2002). PTSD, argues Young, threatens to take away from the person his or her reliance on memory.

In Young's analysis, symptom, diagnosis, and treatment interpenetrate and influence each other. This mutual absorption challenges our traditional notions of mental pathology and its moral valence. Rather than existing as an isolated medical fact or a "mere" social construction, mental illness actually unites the social and biological streams of experience into a new subjectivity: the thoroughly modern traumatized self; the embodied icon of a century of genocide; ongoing medical and legal disputes about human nature and agency; and more war.

NOTES

1. Foucault's vision of an experimental mode of subjectivity at the end of "What Is an Author?" seems to be well on its way to realization: "I think that, as our society changes, the author function will disappear, and in such a manner that fiction and its polysemous texts will once again function according to another mode, but still with a system of constraint—one that will no longer be the author but will have to be determined or, perhaps, experimented with" (1998: 222, our emphasis).

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5 Hamlet in Purgatory

STEPHEN GREENBLATT

Early in 1529 a London lawyer, Simon Fish anonymously published a tract addressed to Henry VIII called *A Supplicacyon for the Beggers.* The tract was modest in length but explosive in content: Fish wrote on behalf of the homeless, desperate English men and women, "nedy, impotent, blinde, lame and sike," who pleaded for spare change on the streets of every city and town in the realm. These wretches, "on whome scarcely for horror any yie dare loke," have become so numerous that private charity can no longer sustain them, and they are dying of hunger.[1] Their plight, in Fish's account, is directly linked to the pestiferous proliferation throughout the realm of beggars of a different kind: bishops, abbots, priors, deacons, archdeacons, suffragans, priests, monks, canons, friars, pardoners, and summoners.

Simon Fish had already given a foretaste of his anticlerical sentiments and his satirical gifts. In his first year as a law student at Gray's Inn, according to John Foxe, one of Fish's mates, a certain Mr. Roo, had written a play holding Cardinal Wolsey up to ridicule. No one dared to take on the part of Wolsey until Simon Fish came forward and offered to do so. The performance so enraged the powerful cardinal that Fish was forced "the same night that this Tragedie was playd" to flee to the Low Countries to escape arrest.[2] There, he evidently met the exile William Tyndale, whose new English translation of the bible he subsequently helped to circulate.

At the time he wrote *A Supplicacyon for the Beggers,* Fish had probably returned to London but was in hiding. He was thus a man associated with Protestant beliefs, determined to risk his life to save the soul of his country and endowed, as were many religious revolutionaries in the 1520s and 1530s, with a kind of theatrical gift.[3] In *A Supplicacyon for the Beggers,* he not only speaks on behalf of the poor but also speaks in their voice, crying out to the king against those who have greedily taken for themselves the

wealth that should otherwise have made England prosperous to the benefit of all its people. If his gracious majesty would only look around, he would see "a thing farre out of ioynt" (413). The ravenous monkish idlers "haue begged so importunatly that they haue gotten ynto theyre hondes more then the therd part of all youre Realme." No great people, not the Greeks nor the Romans nor the Turks, and no ruler, not King Arthur himself, could flourish with such parasites sucking at their lifeblood. Not only do monks and priests destroy the economy, interfere with royal prerogative and undermine the laws of the commonwealth, but, because they seduce "euery mannes wife, euery mannes doughter and euery mannes mayde," they subvert the nation's moral order as well. Boasting among themselves about the number of women they have slept with, the clerical drones carry contagion—syphilis and leprosy—through the whole realm. "Who is she that wil set her hondes to worke to get .iij. d. a day," the beggers ask, "and may haue at lest .xx.d. a day to slepe an houre with a frere, a monke, or a prest?" (417). With a politician's flair for shocking (and unverifiable) statistics, Fish estimates that one hundred thousand Englishwomen have been corrupted by monks. No man can be sure, he writes, that the child poised to inherit his estate is his own and not a priest's bastarde.

Why have these diseased "bloudsuppers" succeeded in amassing so much wealth and power? Why would otherwise sensible, decent people, alert to threats to their property, their health, and their liberties, allow themselves to be ruthlessly exploited by a pack of "sturdy idell holy theues" (415)? The question would be relatively easy to answer were these acts cunningly concealed crimes or assaults on the powerless, but in Fish's account, virtually the entire society, from the king and the nobility to the poor housewife who has to give the priests every tenth egg her hen lays, has been openly victimized. How can one explain the dismaying spectacle that Montaigne's friend, Etienne de la Boétie, called "voluntary servitude?"[4] For la Boétie, the answer lies in networks of dependency that lock people into submission to their social superiors. Fish's answer centers not on social structure but on belief. The vast system of pillaging and sexual corruption relies, in his account, on the exploitation of a single core conviction: purgatory.

Not everyone is taken in by the clerical extortion racket. "Many men of great litterature and iudgement" dare to point out that purgatory does not exist and that "there is not one word spoken of hit in al holy scripture." Others observe that if a purgatory exists and if the pardons that the pope sells for money can in fact deliver souls from its pains, as the Catholic Church claims, then giving those same pardons freely, without charge would surely be equally effective. Moreover, if the pope can deliver one soul

from torment, he can presumably deliver a thousand, and if he can deliver a thousand, he can presumably deliver everyone, "and so destroy purgatory." If he possesses such power and does not use it, if he leaves souls to languish in prison unless he is given money, then the pope is nothing but "a cruell tyrant without all charite." Indeed, if all priests and friars—"the hole sort of the spiritueltie"—will allow souls to be punished for want of prayers and will "pray for no man but for theim that gyue theim money" (419), then they are all tyrants.

Anyone who publicly says such things takes a serious risk, Fish acknowledges, for the priests are quick to accuse their critics of heresy. In fact, even those who have a clear cause of action against a cleric—for murder, "rauisshement of his wyfe, of his doughter, robbery, trespas, maiheme, dette, or eny other offence" (417)—are afraid to seek legal remedy for fear of excommunication.[5] Moreover, those who are wronged have no recourse to Parliament. If the king himself thought to make laws against the priests, Fish writes, "I am yn doubt whether ye be able: Are they not stronger in your owne parliament house then your silfe?" (417). But, if he acts on his own authority, the king has enough power to save his realm and succor his poor starving beadsmen. He can do so at a stroke by seizing the wealth that the wolfish priests have stolen from the people and using that wealth to relieve the needy. As for the thousands of lazy monks and friars, Fish urges the king to put an end to their racket once and for all: "Tye these holy idell theues to the cartes to be whipped naked about euery market towne til they will fall to laboure that they by theyre importunate begging take not awey the almesse that the good christen people wolde giue vnto vs sore impotent miserable people" (34).

A Supplicacyon for the Beggers is careful not to state flatly and on its own account that purgatory does not exist, though it rehearses sympathetically the opinion of "many men" that the fuel driving the whole monstrous juggernaut of the Catholic Church is a fantasy of purchased salvation from a fantasy of temporary postmortem punishment in a fantasy of a prison house for souls.[6] The faithful have been led to believe, without any scriptural authority, in the existence of a realm between heaven and hell and then, still more fantastically, led to believe that the pope has the power to mitigate the torments of souls imprisoned in this realm and will do so for a price. All one has to do is purchase the right prayers. "How ran we from post to pillar, from stock to stone, from idol to idol, from place to place," wrote the Protestant polemicist Thomas Becon, recalling the days of Catholic superstition; "What confidence we had to be delivered out of the pope's pinfold after our departure, though we lived never so ungodly, through the

popish prattling of monstrous monks and the mumbling masses of those lazy soul-carriers."[7]

"The pope's pinfold": purgatory is not only a false doctrine, it is an imaginary space. Early sixteenth-century Reformers did not necessarily rule out the existence of some state in the afterlife between death and judgment, but they rejected the Catholic conception of a special, demarcated space. "Though it seem not impossible haply, that there might be a place where the souls might be kept for a space, to be taught and instructed," Tyndale writes in *The Exposition of Tracy's Testament,* "yet that there should be such a jail as they jangle, and such fashions as they feign, is plainly impossible, and repugnant to the scripture." But if no such jail exists, what does exist after death? Speaking of himself in the third person, Tyndale professes himself willing to wait and "to take it as he findeth it": "He intendeth to purge here, unto the uttermost of his power; and hopeth that death will end and finish his purgation. And if there be any other purging, he will commit it to God, and take it as he findeth it, when he cometh at it; and in the meantime take no thought therefore, but for this that is present, wherewith all saints were purged, and were taught so to be. And Tyndale marvelleth what secret pills they take to purge themselves, which not only will not purge here with the cross of Christ, but also buy out their purgatory there of the pope, for a groat or sixpence."[8]

The pope's purgatory, in this account, is a fantastic kingdom cunningly designed to extract wealth. The Catholics have "reigned [in] . . . this horrible bog of purgatory," writes Miles Coverdale, "to the intent that we, despairing in the assured and infinite mercy of God which cometh through Jesus Christ, might run to their churches, yea, to their chests, to be free from our sins with unreasonable money."[9] In their insatiable craving for riches, the clerical drones also resort to physical intimidation and coercion—the reformers dwell on the figure of Richard Hunn, arrested for heresy and then found hanging in his cell—but the priests' principal power derives from their hold upon the imagination of their flock, their ability to commodify a fiction. "This purgatory and the Popes pardons," Fish writes to the king, "is all the cause of the translacion of your kingdome so fast into their hondes" (419–20). For the wealth that is extracted by the pope's imaginary kingdom, Fish emphasizes, is wealth that should by rights go to the king's realm. Or, as Latimer puts it wittily, giving money for chantries, trentals, and pardons is rendering to God that which is Caesar's.[10]

According to Foxe, *A Supplicacyon for the Beggers* was sent to Anne Boleyn, who brought a copy to the king.[11] After Henry "kept the booke in his bosome" three or four days, the story goes, he contacted Fish's wife and,

promising safe conduct, told her he wished to see her husband. Trusting one of Henry's promises was probably the rashest thing Fish ever did, but his book's suggestion that the crown seize monastic wealth had obviously delighted the king, who "embraced him with louing countenaunce," talked with him for three or four hours, and even took him hunting. For once, the king was as good as his word, giving Fish his signet ring as a token of his protection and instructing his lord chancellor, Sir Thomas More, not to touch the fugitive. The king, however, had neglected to say anything about Fish's wife, whom More promptly moved to interrogate.[12]

More had known about Fish and his dangerous book for some time. Only a few months after *A Supplicacyon for the Beggers* appeared, though More was busy with high affairs of state and on the brink of his elevation to the lord chancellorship, he wrote a substantial reply, divided into two long books, *The Supplication of Souls.* The length is characteristic of More's polemical writings, most of them disastrously misconceived as rhetorical performances, but it may also reflect a personal stake: in *Utopia* (1516), More had slyly satirized the idleness of friars, and he had imagined radical measures to solve the problems of poverty, homelessness, and hunger in England. In *Utopia,* More's imaginary traveler pointedly observes, everyone works, none more so than the members of the religious orders, who "allow themselves no leisure" but devote their full time to good works *(boniis officiis).*

Lest the reader think that these good works are sacramental, More spells out in detail the tasks undertaken by the Utopian equivalent of monks and friars: "Some tend the sick. Others repair roads, clean out ditches, rebuild bridges, dig turf and sand and stone, fell and cut up trees, and transport wood, grain, and other things into the cities in carts."[13] The consequence of this universal work ethic is in startling contrast to the miseries so widespread at home: "In Utopia there is no poor man and no beggar" (239). Years after writing these words, when he encountered Fish's vision of an England in which "idell people be set to worke" and even the poorest wretches "haue ynough and more then shall suffice vs" (422), More must have glimpsed a crudely distorted reflection of his own earlier self.

If *A Supplicacyon for the Beggers* speaks in the voice of the poor, *The Supplication of Souls* speaks in the voice of the dead.[14] The reader encounters a desperate appeal for help, comfort, and pity from "your late acquayntaunce/kindred/spouses/companions/play felowes/& frendes" (111). These former intimates are crying out not because they are dead, not even because they are abiding the "greuouse paynys & hote clensynge fyre" of purgatory, but because they have become "humble & vnacquayted & halfe

forgoten supplyauntys." They had once been able to count on relief and comfort from the private prayers of virtuous people and, still more, from "the dayly Masses & other gostely suffrages of prestys/relygyouse/and folke of holy churche." More's own father, notably, had in his last will and testament arranged, at considerable expense, for these suffrages, not only for himself but also for his three wives, the former husbands of his second and third wife, his parents, and other named dead people, including King Edward IV, as well as "all cristen soules."[15] Now those who had made comparably careful arrangements for the alleviation of their agonies fear that this consolation and help will vanish, for "certayne sedytyouse persones" have spread pestilent doubts about the very existence of purgatory and the efficacy of the Holy Church's good works on behalf of the dead.

The Supplication of Souls begins with the dead crying out in fear that they are being forgotten. The suffering souls know that their loud lamentings will be disturbing to the living, who desire understandably to take their ease and who have buried the dead precisely so that the dead will remain buried. But the dead now have no choice: though they have been good souls who have "longe layen and cryed so farre frome you that we seldome brake your slepe," they must now make their existence and their agonies known. They do so in order to counteract the pernicious influence of *A Supplicacyon for the Beggers*, which threatens not only the souls of the dead but the souls of the living. Indeed, after initially speaking for their own plight, the dead in More's book affirm that they, after all, are not the real victims of the anonymous author's venom, for when their purgatorial punishment has ceased, they will be "translated" to heavenly bliss. The living run the real risk, for they will find, "for lakke of belefe of purgatory / the very strayght way to hell" (113). To lure unsuspecting readers down this path is indeed the whole purpose of the wicked anonymous author whose identity, More's dead souls declare, is not unknown to them, both because certain of his associates before their deaths repented their heresies, returned to the true faith, and are now companions in purgatory and because "owre and your gostely enemy the deuyll" has visited purgatory in person to brag about his agent on earth. With his "enmyouse & enuyouse laughter gnasshyng the teeth and grynnynge" (114), the devil delights in the venomous power of the book that will deceive many simple readers.

In order to combat this satanic adversary, book 2 of *The Supplication of Souls* launches into an extended defense of the doctrine of purgatory, an odd enterprise perhaps for souls who profess to be suffering from its tormenting fires but one presumably justified both by their concern for misguided mortals and by their fear of being forgotten. Though reason alone, they

claim, would lead inevitably to the idea of a process of purgation after death, much of this defense consists of rather strained interpretation of key biblical citations, such as 2 Maccabees 12:39–42 and 1 Corinthians 3:12–15.[16]

The problem, as More understood quite well, is that none of the scriptural passages comes very close to the Catholic Church's doctrine of purgatory, a doctrine not fully elaborated until the late twelfth century.[17] To be sure, 2 Maccabees speaks reasonably plainly about prayers for the dead (though not about a place called purgatory), but none of the Maccabean books were a part of the Hebrew canon, and many Christians, including the Reformers, relegated them to the Apocrypha. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians was certainly canonical, but it said nothing about prayers for the dead, and its words of warning—about a fire that would test the worth of each man's work, whether built of gold, silver, and fine stone or of wood, hay, and stubble—do not in any obvious way refer to purgatory or assert the existence of a real fire, as distinct from a metaphorical one.

From time to time, when the strain of attempting to prove the existence of purgatory by natural reason or scriptural interpretation becomes too great, More's souls appeal to the witness of "the olde holy doctours" (194) and to the dogmatic authority of the Holy Church. Heretics claim that the book of Maccabees is apocryphal, but "syth the church of Cryste accounteth yt for holy scrypture: there can no man doubt thereof," for everyone who affirms himself to be a Christian, from "the noble doctour and gloryouse confessour" St. Augustine to the archheretic Luther, must necessarily believe that "the church cannot fayle surely and certeynly to discerne betwene the wordys of god and the wordys of men" (182). Without such an absolute assurance, "then stode all crystendome in dout and vnsurety / whether saynt Iohans gospell were holy scripture or not / and so forth of all the new testament" (183). Of course, as More concedes, including the book of Maccabees in the canon will not settle the issue once and for all, because even that book does not mention purgatory, but there are other ancient tenets of the Christian faith, such as the Virgin Birth, that are not "playne proued" by the holy scriptures and yet cannot and must not be doubted. One fact alone should be enough "to stoppe the mowthys of all the prowde hygh harted malycyouse heretykes": "The catholyque churche of cryste hath allwaye byleued purgatory" (195).

The heretics challenged precisely this flat claim, as More himself knew, just as they challenged his scriptural readings. On a few occasions in the long treatise, More's souls reach beyond textual arguments and dogmatic pronouncements to appeal to the experience of the living. Nothing can enable you to "conceyue a very ryght imagynacyon of these thyngys whych

ye neuer felte," they concede, but you may be able to grasp the nature of purgatorial suffering if you consider a ship wallowing about in high seas. A small number of passengers are so well "attempred of thym selfe" that they feel "as lusty and as iocunde" as if they were on land. Others are anything but jocund:

> But then shall ye sometyme se there some other whose body ys so / in-
> curably corrupted / that they shall walter & tolter / and wryng theyre
> handys / and gnash the teeth / and theyr eyen water / theyr hed ake /
> theyre body frete / theyr stomake wamble / and all theyre body shyuer
> for payne / and yet shall neuer vomete at all: or yf they vomete / yet
> shall they vomyte styll and neuer fynde ease thereof. (189)

If the former group comprises the saved in heaven and the latter one represents the damned in hell, how shall we imagine the souls in purgatory? They are the passengers who feel horrible at first and yet who are, after a vomit or two, "so clene rydde of theyre gryefe / that they neuer fele dyspleasure of yt after." Such is the middle state, the betwixt-and-between condition of More's speakers.

But the problem remains of convincing readers who have been poisoned by *A Supplicacyon for the Beggers* that purgatory actually exists, for dogmatic appeals to the authority of the church, strained textual interpretation, and metaphors masquerading as realities are precisely the strategies that Fish's book attacked as mainstays of Roman Catholic hypocrisy. As a last resort, the souls in More's text can point to the testimony of ghosts. "For there hath in euery contrey and euery age apparycyons bene had," they say, "and well knowen and testyfyed / by whyche men haue had suffycyent reuelacyon and profe of purgatory / excepte suche as lyste not to byleue theym: & they be such as wolde be neuer the better yf they saw theym" (196). To be sure, one would be impious to demand to see such apparitions for oneself; they are rare precisely so that people can believe by faith. People who are stubborn enough to reject the well-authenticated stories of such apparitions and to demand further proof deserve the punishment they will undoubtedly receive after death, when they will "to theyr payne se such a grysly syght as shall so greue theyr hartys to loke theron" (197).

But how could apparitions leave the prison house of purgatory at all to appear on earth, if they are meant to be burning in fires? The souls explain that "we cary our payne wyth vs" (221); indeed their pain is intensified by witnessing the ongoing life of the living. The guardian devils whom God commands to accompany the souls back to the earth compel their miserable prisoners to look at the gold they have left behind and contemplate "our late

wyuys so sone waxen wanton / & forgetyng vs theyre old husbandys that haue loued theym so tendrely and lefte theym so ryche / sytte and lawgh & make mery and more to sumtyme / wyth theyr new woars / whyle our kepers in dyspyte kepe vs there in payne to stande styll / & loke on" (222). More characteristically does not imagine dead wives looking on at their husbands' carousals, only dead husbands forced to witness the pleasures, including sexual pleasures, of their wives. The scene, more than any other he invokes in his long work, seems to conjure up a passionate spectral outburst:

> Many tymes wold we then speke yf we coulde be suffred / & sore we long to say to her: Ah wyfe wyfe ywysse this was not couenaunt wyfe / when ye wepte and tolde me that yf I lefte you to lyue by / ye wold neuer wedde agayne. We se there our chyldren to / whom we loued so well / pype syng and dawnce / & no more thynke on theyre fathers soulys then on theyre olde shone: sauyng that sometyme cummeth owt god haue mercy on all crysten sowlys. But yt cummeth owt so coldely and wyth so dull affeccyon / that yt lyeth but in the lyppys and neuer cam nere the harte. (222)[18]

Vows are broken, mourning is forgotten, life resumes its round of heedless pleasures, and even piety takes the form of cold lip service. The dead—in their individuality, their intense suffering, their urgent claims on personal remembrance—are consigned to oblivion or become at best an anonymous, generalized category, the "all Christian souls" casually invoked in a ritual phrase by thoughtless children.

Against this terrible indifference, the suffering souls in More's text cry out, passionately claiming the rites of memory. They claim something more tangible as well: the alms that will relieve some of their pains. Here, More imagines dead wives speaking out, not to lament their surviving husbands' pleasures but to regret their own past delight in gorgeous clothing, jewels, and cosmetics. This "gay gere" is now burning hot upon their tormented bodies, so that, looking back on their lives, they wish that their husbands "never had folowed our fantasyes / nor neuer had so kokered vs nor made vs so wanton / nor had geuen vs other ouchys [brooches] than ynions or gret garlyk heddys" (224). For them, of course, such thoughts come too late, but they have a generous desire to save others as well as to help themselves. "We besech you," they cry out from beyond the grave to their living husbands, "syth ye gaue them vs let vs haue them still let them hurt none other woman but help to do vs good: sell them for our sakys to set in sayntys copys / and send the money hether by masse pennys & by pore men that may pray for our soulys" (224).

How can you show that you remember the dead, that you care for your

departed wives and husbands and children, that you are not cruelly indifferent to their sufferings? Give money to the church. Because masses for the dead were closely linked to alms giving, in principle, More could have rejected Fish's premise entirely and claimed that the doctrine of purgatory was in fact a strong incentive to charity; instead, he chose to set the dead against the living.[19] More's poor souls understand themselves to be in direct competition with Fish's beggars:

> If ye pyte the pore / there ys none so pore as we / yt haue not a bratte [rag] to put on our bakkys. If ye pyte the blynde / there ys none so blynd as we whych ar here in the dark sauyng for syghtis vnplesaunt and lothesum tyll sum comfort cum. If ye pyte the lame / there is none so lame as we / that nether can crepe one fote out of the fyre / nor haue one hand at lyberte to defend our face fro the flame. Fynally yf ye pyte any man in payn / neuer knew ye payn comparable to ours: whose fyre as farre passeth in hete all the firys that euer burned vppon erth / as the hotest of all those passeth a feynyd fyre payntyd on a wall. (225)

The miseries of the poor are vastly exceeded by the unspeakable miseries of souls in purgatory, and the good that alms can do for the living is vastly exceeded by the good that the same alms can do for the dead. Give more money to the church. Moreover, the money that is donated for the relief of souls is proof that the giver is not a heretic who dismisses the flames of purgatory as mere "feynyd fire" and "taketh in hys harte that story told by god for a very fantastyke fable" (227). Consequently, the souls declare, as if their supplication were an investment prospectus, whatever you give "shall also rebownd vppon your self an inestymable profyte" (227). Just give money to the church.

But, though the text reiterates the appeal for money, we should not conclude that More's principal aim was to augment the church's revenues. His concern was to counteract a serious and potentially damaging attack upon the church, against a doctrine that the scholarly humanist More knew perfectly well was one of its most vulnerable. Fish spoke in the name of the poor and dispossessed, but in his writing, he does not seem a tender-hearted philanthropist, and his concern most likely did not lay with their plight.[20] His book takes the form of a petition to the king, to whom it offers in effect a convenient, morally upright political cover for a cynical course of action Henry had probably already been contemplating, just as Henry was loudly professing that his moral scruples were the only reason he sought a divorce from Catharine of Aragon. Fish's own motives were almost certainly not mercenary; rather he sought to offer the king and the nation a kind of bait to embark on a path that would lead to a reformed religion.

More understood the bait and struggled to avert the danger by recalling his readers to their deep and ancient religious loyalty. Money is important, to be sure, as Fish and More agree, but for More, it is a sign of remembrance. "Let neuer eny slouthfull oblyvyon race vs out of your remembraunce," the souls cry; "remember what kyn ye and we be to gether"; "remember how nature & crystendom byndeth you to remember vs"; "remember our thurst whyle ye syt & drink: our honger whyle ye be festing: our restlesse wach whyle ye be slepyng: our sore and greuouse payn whyle ye be playing: our hote burnyng fyre whyle ye be in plesure & sportyng: so mote god make your ofsprynge after remember you" (227–28).

"Adieu, adieu, Hamlet. Remember me" (*Hamlet*, 1.5.91). If Thomas Lodge's recollection in *Wit's Misery and the World's Madness* (1596) is to be credited, an earlier Elizabethan play about Hamlet—the so-called *UrHamlet*—featured a pale ghost that cried "like an oyster-wife, 'Hamlet, revenge.'" Shakespeare's Ghost too cries out for vengeance: "If thou didst ever thy dear father love," he tells his groaning son, "Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder" (1.5.23–25). But the injunction upon which young Hamlet dwells obsessively is that he *remember:*

> Remember thee?
> Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
> In this distracted globe. Remember thee?
> Yea, from the table of my memory
> I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
> All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
> That youth and observation copied there,
> And thy commandment all alone shall live
> Within the book and volume of my brain
> Unmixed with baser matter. (1.5.95–104)

Does the emphasis in the spectral command fall on "remember" or on "me"? Hamlet's response to the "poor ghost" teases out both terms, with his first repetition emphasizing the memory that holds a seat in his brain and the second insisting that all the contents of that memory, save one, will be wiped away. Contemplating Hamlet's wild and whirling words in the wake of the Ghost's departure, Coleridge remarked that "the terrible, by a law of the human mind, always touches on the verge of the ludicrous." Perhaps the law extends to this anxious insistence on remembrance, because the idea that Hamlet would or could ever forget the Ghost seems faintly ludicrous. Or rather, Hamlet's reiterated question precisely picks up on the seeming absurdity of the Ghost's injunction: "Remember thee?"

What is at stake in the shift of spectral obligation from vengeance to remembrance? In terms of plot, very little. When Hamlet first adjures the Ghost to speak—"Speak, I am bound to hear"—the Ghost's response, implicitly strengthening the force of the word *bound*, is a call for action: "So art thou to revenge when thou shalt hear" (1.5.6–7).[21] Hamlet hears this call and urgently demands the information that will enable him immediately to heed it:

> Haste, haste me to know it, that with wings as swift
> As meditation or the thoughts of love
> May sweep to my revenge. (1.5.29–31)

Meditation and love figure the spectacular rapidity of thought—not only the virtually instantaneous leap of the mind from here, say, to China but that leap *intensified* by the soul's passionate longing for God or for the beloved. Yet the metaphors Hamlet uses here have the strange effect of inadvertently introducing some resistance into the desired immediacy, because meditation and love are experiences that are inward, extended, and prolonged, and they lie at a far remove from the sudden, decisive, murderous action that he wishes to invoke. Later in the play, Hamlet famously complains that conscience—here consciousness itself—"doth make cowards of us all," that the "native hue of resolution / Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," and that "enterprises of great pith and moment . . . lose the name of action" (3.1.85–90). This corrosive inwardness—the hallmark of the entire play and the principal cause of its astonishing, worldwide renown—is glimpsed even in his first frantic response to the Ghost, and it is reinforced by the Ghost's command, "Remember me." What is at stake in the shift of emphasis from vengeance to remembrance is nothing less than the whole play.

Hamlet has made the Ghost's command his watchword:

> Now to my word:
> It is "Adieu, adieu, remember me."
> I have sworn it. (1.5.12–14)

The commandment, he proclaims, will live all alone in his brain; everything else will be erased. He has made it an oath upon which he can swear and a watchword that he will daily reiterate. But his actual experience is one of fading remembrance, a softening into what the play (like More's *Supplication*) repeatedly characterizes as dullness. When Hamlet speaks of sweeping to his revenge, the Ghost commends him in terms that bespeak his own fear of oblivion:

I find thee apt,
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf
Wouldst thou not stir in this. (1.5.31–34)

With this forgetfulness, Hamlet comes to charge himself "a dull and muddy-mettled rascal" (3.1.569). "Do not forget," the Ghost reminds him in the scene in Gertrude's closet, "This visitation / Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose" (3.4.100–101). "How all occasions do inform against me," Hamlet berates himself in a soliloquy dropped from the folio text, "And spur my dull revenge!" (Q2:4.4). Remembering the dead proves vastly more difficult than he had first thought it would be.

"When the ghost has vanished," says Goethe's Wilhelm Meister, in probably the most influential of all readings of *Hamlet,* "what do we see standing before us? A young hero thirsting for revenge? A prince by birth, happy to be charged with unseating the usurper of his throne? Not at all!" The tragedy is more inward: "A fine, pure, noble and highly moral person, but devoid of that emotional strength that characterizes a hero, goes to pieces beneath a burden that it can neither support nor cast off."[22] Generations of critics have agreed with Goethe, responding in effect to the Shakespearean shift from vengeance to remembrance. But we need to recognize that the psychological here is conditioned by the theological, specifically by the issue of remembrance that, as we have seen, lay at the heart of the crucial early sixteenth-century debate about purgatory. More's souls are in a panic that they will be forgotten, erased by "slothful oblivion." They are heartsick that they will fade from the minds of the living, that their wives will remarry, that their children will mention them only, if at all, "so coldly and with so dull affection that it lies but in the lips, and comes not near the heart" (149). They are harrowed above all by the fear that the living will cease to credit their sufferings, dismiss their prison house as a "fantastic fable," and doubt their very existence, in its horrible, prolonged pain. This fear seems to shape Shakespeare's depiction of the Ghost and of Hamlet's response.

The Ghost makes clear to Hamlet that he is in a state that Thomas White's early seventeenth-century text called "the middle state of souls," not damned for eternity but forced to suffer torments in a "prison-house" designed to purge him of the crimes he had committed in his life:

I am thy father's spirit,
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away. (1.5.9–13).

The bland "for a certain term"— which appears merely to fill out the syllables of a line of blank verse, is in fact significant, because it helps set up the theological claim of the word *purged*.[23] "In purgatory my soule hath bene / a Thousand yeare in woe and teene," the Imperator Salvatus says in the Chester mystery play *The Last Judgment* (c. 1475).[24]

The excruciating pains of purgatory and of hell were, in church teachings, identical; the only difference was that the former were only "for a certain term." That one difference, of course, was crucial, but the Catholic Church—especially, it seems, the English Catholic Church—laid a heavy emphasis on the horrors of purgatorial torments, so that the faithful would be as anxious as possible to reduce the term they would have to endure. The intensity of the anguish is brilliantly represented in the greatest of English morality plays, *Everyman* (ca. 1495), in which God sends his agent Death to demand of the hero "a sure rekeninge / Without delay or ony taryenge" (70–71). Everyman frantically begs for time, for his "boke of rekeninge" is not ready, but Death grants him only the briefest of respites. Still, the interval is enough for the penitent to begin to scourge himself: "Take this, body, for the sinne of the flesshe!" (613). The grotesque spectacle of a dying man scourging himself makes sense only as a desperate, last-minute attempt to alter the "reckoning" by substituting penitential pain in this life for the far more terrible pain that lies ahead. "Now of penaunce I will wade the water clere," declares Everyman, intensifying his blows, "To save me from purgatory, that sharpe fire" (618–19).

Everyman thus narrowly escapes one of the worst medieval nightmares, a sudden and painless death. This nightmare, of course, is the fate that befalls Hamlet's father: the horror is not only the fact of his murder, at the hands of his treacherous brother, but also the precise circumstances of that murder—in his sleep, comfortable and secure. Old Hamlet's ghostly state is a grievous one—the term of his sufferings or their intensity vastly increased—because of the way he was dispatched, unprepared for death:

> Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
> Unhouseled, dis-appointed, unaneled,
> No reck'ning made, but sent to my account
> With all my imperfections on my head.
> O horrible, O horrible, most horrible! (1.5.76–80)

That the father can speak of "imperfections" presumably means that his sins were not mortal; after all, he will eventually burn and purge away his crimes. But his inability to make a proper reckoning weighs heavily against him.

When he first encounters the apparition, Hamlet envisages only two possibilities for the ghost's origin:

> Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damned,
> Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
> Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
> Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
> That I will speak to thee. (1.4.19–23)

Nothing Hamlet says in the wake of his fateful exchange with his father's spirit explicitly acknowledges a third possibility, a middle state between heaven and hell. But, as scholars have observed, something is strange about the terms of Hamlet's response to Horatio's remark, "There's no offense, my lord":

> Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
> And much offence too. Touching this vision here—
> It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you. (1.5.140–43)

The assertion that the ghost is "honest" seems to mark Hamlet's acceptance of its claim that it has come from a place of purgation, and that acceptance may in turn be marked by the invocation—unique in Shakespeare's works—of Saint Patrick, the patron saint of purgatory.[25]

To this possible allusion we can add another, a few lines further on, that has not, to my knowledge, been noted. When Hamlet adjures his friends to take an oath that they will not reveal what they have seen, the ghost, from under the stage, cries "Swear." When they shift ground to a new position, the ghost once again cries out beneath them, and Hamlet asks, "*Hic et ubique?*" (1.5.162). The Latin tag here has never been adequately explained. The words obviously refer to restless movement, a certain placelessness, which is comparable to Roderigo's description of Othello as "an extravagant and wheeling stranger / Of here and everywhere" (1.1.137–38). The use of Latin—besides suggesting that Hamlet is, like his friend Horatio, something of a scholar—may also convey a theological resonance, one evidently in Shakespeare's mind at the time that he wrote *Hamlet*. In *Twelfth Night*, a play of the same year, Sebastian, baffled by the appearance of his double, declares that there cannot be "that deity in my nature / Of here and everywhere" (5.1.220–21). The words refer in jest to the divine power to violate the laws of physics, a power that became an issue in the Reformation in a dispute about the Lutheran doctrine of Christ's ubiquity. If this resonance is present in *Hamlet*, as it well may be, the prince's jest is deepened by a disquieting association of his father's ghost with the omnipresence of God.

But I believe that these words have further theological resonance that is specifically relevant to purgatory. Traditional Catholic ritual in England included a prayer to be recited for the dead who were laid to rest in the churchyard:

Pro quiescentibus in cimiterio.

Oratio Deus, in cijus miseratione animae fidelium requiescunt; animabus famulorum famularumque tuarum omnium, hic et ubique in Christo quiescentium, da propitius veniam peccatorum, ut a cunctis reatibus absoluti, tecum sine fine laetentur. Per Dominum.[26]

The point is not only that such prayers for the dead include the key phrase *hic et ubique* but also that they are specifically connected to a belief in purgatory. In *The Catholic Doctrine of the Church of England* (1607), the Protestant Thomas Rogers, ridiculing this connection, quotes the papal indulgence from the Sarum *Horae Beatissimae Virginis Mariae*: "Pope John the Twelfth hath granted to all persons, which, going through the churchyard, do say the prayer following, so many years of pardons as there have been bodies buried since it was a churchyard." The prayer begins "*Avete, omnes animae fideles, quarum corpora hic et ubique requiescunt in pulvere*" ("Hail all faithful souls, whose bodies here and everywhere do rest in the dust"). In the context of the Ghost's claim that he is being purged, and in the context of Hamlet's invocation of Saint Patrick, the words *hic et ubique,* addressed to the spirit who seems to be moving beneath the earth, seem to acknowledge the place where his father's spirit is imprisoned.

The famous problem, of course, is that by 1563, the Church of England had explicitly rejected the doctrine of purgatory. The twenty-second article in the *The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England* declares that "The Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory, Pardons, Worshipping, and Adoration, as well of Images as of Reliques, and also invocation of Saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the word of God."[27] Thus, at least an implicit censorship is built into the theatrical representation of the afterlife. One could ridicule purgatory, as Marlowe does in *Doctor Faustus:* when the invisible Faustus snatches food and drink away from the pope, the baffled cardinal of Lorraine speculates that "it may be some ghost newly crept out of Purgatory to begge a pardon of your holinesse."[28] As this and many similar moments in Tudor and Stuart drama bear witness, belief in purgatory could be represented as a fantasy or a lie. But it could not be represented as a frightening reality. *Hamlet* comes closer to doing so than any other play of this period, but

Shakespeare still uses only a network of allusions: "for a certain term," "burned and purged away," "Yes, by St. Patrick," "*hic et ubique.*" Moreover, even were these allusions less cautious and equivocal, a second famous problem would remain: souls in purgatory received salvation. "The fact that old Hamlet died suddenly, without time for last rites—"unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled"—left him with a heavy burden of earthly sins that had painfully to be burned away after death, but he could not possibly commit new sins. The trouble is that purgatory, along with theological language of communion ("houseling"), death-bed confession ("appointment"), and anointing ("aneling"), while compatible with a Christian call for remembrance, is utterly incompatible with a Senecan call for vengeance.

I will not now rehearse the long series of debates by Eleanor Prosser, Christopher Devlin, Miriam Joseph, Peter Milward, Roy Battenhouse, and others, whose intricate arguments, for me at least, are not evacuated by the fact that they are doomed to inconclusiveness. Here, I am more concerned with the particular uses that Shakespeare made of the struggle between Simon Fish and Thomas More and its aftermath. Those uses are not necessarily direct. Two chantry acts—1545 (Henry VIII's last Parliament) and 1547 (Edward VI's first Parliament)—resolved that struggle by abolishing the elaborate Catholic intercessory system—with its chantries, lights, obits, anniversaries, confraternities, and stipendiary priests—with which English men and women had done suffrages for the sake of the dead in purgatory and in anticipation of their own future condition as dead people.[29] The brief reign of the Catholic Mary Tudor evidently did little to revive this system, and gauging the extent of residual belief in purgatory among the great mass of English men and women at the century's end is extremely difficult.[30]

The funeral service in the first Edwardian prayer book (1549) still addressed the dead person directly: the priest is instructed to cast earth upon the corpse and say, "I commende thy soule to God the father almyghty, and thy bodye to the grounde, earth to earth, asshes to asshes, dust to dust." In the 1552 revision, which was later confirmed by Queen Elizabeth and used throughout Shakespeare's lifetime, the words changed decisively. The dead person could no longer be addressed. Instead, the priest says to the bystanders around the grave, "We therfore committe his body to the ground, earth to earth, asshes to asshes, dust to dust."[31] These words would have been familiar to anyone in late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. Yet the continued outpouring of polemical literature, reviving the old arguments of Fish and More and rehearsing them again and again throughout the reigns of Elizabeth and James, suggests that the boundary between the living and the dead was not so decisively closed.

Shakespeare's sensitivity to the status of the dead may have intensified upon the death in 1596 of his son Hamnet (a name virtually interchangeable with Hamlet in the period's public records) and still more perhaps upon the death of his father, John, in 1601, the most likely year in which the playwright created *Hamlet.* When in April 1757, the owner of Shakespeare's birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon decided to retile the roof, one of the workmen, described as of "very honest, sober, and industrious character," found an old document between the rafters and the tiling. The document, six leaves stitched together, was a profession of faith in fourteen articles, conspicuously Catholic in form; it was, if genuine (for the original has disappeared), by John Shakespeare. The clear implication of this find, that the playwright was probably brought up in a Roman Catholic household in a time of official suspicion and persecution of recusancy, has found support in a recent biographical study by E. A. J. Honigmann. Honigmann has turned up a network of interlinked Catholic families in Lancashire with whom one "William Shakeshafte," possibly a young schoolmaster or player, was connected in the late 1570s or early 1580s.

Shakespeare, in any case, is likely to have encountered *A Supplicacyon for the Beggers,* because it was reprinted in Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* (1546), a copy of which was placed, by government order, in every church in the realm. Shakespeare also may well have read More's *The Supplication of Souls.* Like the Ghost of old Hamlet, More's poor souls cry out to be remembered, fear the dull forgetfulness of the living, disrupt the corrupt ease of the world with horrifying tales of their sufferings, and lament the remarriage of their wives. But all of these ideas and more Shakespeare could have gotten from texts other than More's or from his own not inconsiderable imagination. Rather, these works are sources for Shakespeare's play in a different sense: they stage an ontological argument about spectrality and remembrance, a momentous public debate, that unsettled the institutional moorings of a crucial body of imaginative materials and therefore made them available for theatrical appropriation.

To grasp the significance of this unsettling, let us return to Fish's pamphlet. Like Tyndale's New Testament, *A Supplicacyon for the Beggers* was first printed on the Continent and smuggled into England. Probably as a tribute to government persecution during the chancellorship of Thomas More, only one copy of this edition is known to survive, but inclusion in *Actes and Monuments* assured the widest circulation. Foxe provides a brief account of Fish's life, conveniently omitting More's claim that before his death, Fish "repented himself, and came into the church again, and forswore and forsook all the whole hill of those heresies out of which the fountain of

that same good zele sprang."[32] In *Actes and Monuments,* after he reprints Fish's *Supplicacyon,* Foxe glances briefly at More's answer "under the name and title of the poore sely soules pewlyng out of Purgatory." [33] Foxe does not undertake in this place to refute More's theology; instead he ridicules his art.

More makes the dead men's souls, Foxe writes, "by a Rhetoricall *Prosopopoea* to speake out of Purgatory pynfolde, sometymes lamentably complayning, sometymes pleasauntly dalying and scoffing, at the authour of the Beggers booke, sometymes scoldyng and rayling at hym, callyng him foole, witlesse, frantike, an asse, a goose, a madde dogge, an hereticke, and all that naught is" (viii). Foxe wryly speculates that so much testiness must be the result of the heat in purgatory, and he professes concern that the souls' lack of charity may bring them to hell rather than to heaven. He confesses, however, that he is not after all terribly concerned, for he does not credit the existence of "Purgatory at all (vnlesse it be in M. Mores Vtopia) as Maister Mores Poeticall vayne doth imagine" (ix). "Unless it be in M. More's Utopia": purgatory, as Hugh Latimer had sardonically remarked in a sermon in 1536, is a "pleasant fiction."[34] More precisely, it is, in Foxe's account, a no-place, a piece of poetry with no more claim to reality than More's famous imaginary commonwealth. Elsewhere, Foxe will speak of the pope's conspiracies and cunning frauds, but not here. The passionate claims to remembrance, the institutional structures, the dogmatic elaborations by sophisticated theologians, the popular superstitions, the charges of heresy, the indulgences, the confraternities and masses and chantries, the tales of ghostly apparitions: all are, for a moment at least, deposited not in the realm of lies but in the realm of poetry.

The rhetorical advantage of this polemical game is that Foxe can proceed to play not the committed ideologue but the judicious critic. Quintilian had written of the figure *propopoeia* that "gives both variety and animation to eloquence in a wonderful degree," so that it is "allowable even to bring down the gods from heaven and evoke the dead." But, he warned, "our inventions of that sort will meet with credit only so far as we represent people saying what it is not unreasonable to suppose that they may have meditated."[35] Hence, in Foxe's account of *The Supplication of Souls,* More, "the authour and contriuer of this Poeticall booke," should be censured "for not kepyng *Decorum Personae,* as a perfect Poet should haue done." "They that geue preceptes of Arte," Foxe explains, "do note thys in all Poeticall fictions, as a speciall obseruation, to foresee and expresse what is conuenient for euery person, accordyng to hys degree and condition, to speake and vtter" (ix). Therefore, he continues, if by More's own account, the souls in purga-

tory are made clean and wholesome by their sufferings, then he should not have depicted them railing "so fumishly" against their enemies. They should, after all, be on their way to becoming more charitable, not less so.

The point here is not to make a serious argument against purgatory—many others have done so, he notes, including John Frith—but to make fun of it, to expose it to ridicule. More had tried to exploit horror, fear, and guilt; Foxe tries to blow away this morbid perspective with laughter. Indeed, he proposes treating *The Supplication of Souls* as a comedy. "It maketh me to laugh," he writes, "to see ye mery Antiques of M. More," whose devil arrives in purgatory "laughyng, grynnyng, and gnashyng his teeth." But then he begins to worry about those teeth: how could the evil angel, "beyng a spirituall and no corporall substance" have "teeth to gnashe & a mouthe to grynne?" And where exactly, he wonders, was More standing to see the devil open his mouth so wide that the souls of purgatory all saw his teeth? He decides that More must have been in Utopia, "where M. Mores Purgatorye is founded."

This polemical performance seems very far indeed from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, which probes precisely the fears, longings, and confusions that Foxe attempts to ridicule. The Ghost comes from purgatory bewailing his failure to receive full Christian last rites but then demands that his son avenge his death, thereby initiating a nightmare that will eventually destroy not only his usurping brother but also Polonius, Ophelia, Laertes, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, Gertrude, and his own son. He tells Hamlet not to let "the royal bed of Denmark be / A couch for luxury and damned incest" (1.5.82–83) but then warns his son not to taint his mind or let his soul contrive anything against his mother. Hamlet receives the most vivid confirmation of the nature of the afterlife, with its "sulph'rous and tormenting flames" (1.5.3), but then, in a spectacular and mysterious act of forgetting, he speaks of death as the "undiscovered country from whose bourn / No traveller returns" (3.1.81–82). Foxe mercilessly mocks such representational contradictions. To notice, publish, and circulate them throughout the realm is to declare that key theological principles and emotional experiences cannot hold together and that the institution that generated them is bankrupt, worthy only of contempt and laughter.

But in *Hamlet*, the very contradictions that should lead to derision actually intensify the play's uncanny power. And Foxe's comedy helped make Shakespeare's tragedy possible. It did so by participating in a violent ideological struggle that turned negotiations with the dead from an institutional process governed by the church to a poetic process governed by guilt, projection, and imagination. Purgatory exists in the imaginary universe of

Hamlet, but only in a form that the suffering prince, in a different context, calls "a dream of passion" (2.2.554). Indeed, a striking link exists between Hamlet's description of the player who

> in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
> Could force his soul so to his whole conceit
> That from her working all his visage wanned,
> Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,
> A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
> With forms to his conceit (2.2.554–559)

and the Ghost's description of the effect that his tale of torment would have on Hamlet:

> I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
> Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
> Make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres,
> Thy knotty and combined locks to part,
> And each particular hair to stand on end
> Like quills upon the fretful porcupine. (1.5.15–20)

The link is the astonishingly palpable physiological effect of spectral fiction, dream, tale: "And all for nothing" (2.2.559).

Of course, within the play's fiction, Hamlet does not know that purgatory is a fiction, as the state-sanctioned church of Shakespeare's time had declared it to be. On the contrary, he is desperate to establish the veracity of the Ghost's tale—"I'll take the Ghost's word for a thousand pound" (3.2.274–75), he exults after the play within the play—and hence to establish that the Ghost is in reality his father's spirit and not the devil. But this reality is theatrical rather than theological; it can accommodate elements, such as a Senecan call for revenge, that would radically undermine church doctrine. At the same time, it can offer the viewer, in an unforgettably vivid dream of passion, many of the deep imaginative experiences, the tangled longing, guilt, pity, and rage, evoked by More.

Not all forms of energy in Shakespeare's theater, of course, have been transferred, openly or covertly, from the zone of the real to the zone of the imaginary. Plays can borrow, imitate, and reflect many elements that pass for everyday reality without necessarily evacuating this reality or exposing it as made up. But the power of Shakespeare's theater is here, as elsewhere, linked to its appropriation of weakened or damaged institutional structures.

And at a deep level, we can see something magnificently opportunistic, appropriative, absorptive, even cannibalistic about Shakespeare's art, as if poor, envious Robert Greene had sensed something more important than he knew when he attacked the "upstart crow, beautified with our feathers." In the case of purgatory, important forces had been busily struggling for decades to prepare the playwright's feast. And the struggle did not end with the performance of the play or with the playwright's death.

In 1624, a year after the publication of the First Folio, John Gee, a staunch Protestant who confessed that he had once himself been tangled in the Jesuits' subtle nets, published *New Shreds of the Old Snare.*[36] In the book, Gee relates a series of incidents during the past three years in which Jesuits had tried to convert young women to Catholicism, induce them to flee to the Continent and join nunneries, and lure them to give their money to the Catholic Church. To achieve their cynical ends, "the thrice honourable Company of Iesuites, Players to the Popes Holiness" (10), turn "heaven and holy things" into "Theatrical and fabulous tricks" (16). Their principal device is to stage mysterious apparitions: with a burst of light, "a woman all in white, with countenance pale and wanne, with long tresses of haire hanging downe to her middle" (3) appears before an impressionable young woman and declares that she has come from the torments of purgatory. The young woman is told that she can avert these same torments after death if she is "Nunnified" (7). In a related trick, the apparition—"a shape like vnto a woman all in white: from her face seemed to come little streames of fire, or glittering light" (12)—declares that she is St. Lucy, urging a wealthy woman to whom she appears to follow her holy example by giving away her worldly wealth to the priests and joining a convent.

Gee undertakes to dispel the illusion, which is not, as some think, the result of witchcraft but rather of theater. The mysterious light, he explains, can be produced by "Paper Lanthornes or transparent Glasses" enhanced by the "artificiall directing of refractions." The acting can be done "by some nimble handed and footed *Nouice Iesuitable Boy,* that can as easily put on the person of *St. Lucy* or *The virgin Mary,* as a Play-boy can act winged *Mercury,* or Eagle mounted *Ganimedes.*" The key thing is to understand that the Jesuits are a gifted troupe of actors. "I see no reason," Gee writes, "but that they should set up a company for themselues, which surely will put down *The Fortune, Red-Bull, Cock-pit, & Globe* (17).

But then, as if he has had second thoughts about the actors' chances for success in the competitive world of London theater, Gee considers three problems with their performances. First, he observes, "the plots of their

Comedies twang all vpon one string" (18). The effect is as if they own a single costume and can imagine only one character: "none comes in Acting but *A Woman, A Woman, A Woman,* arrayed in *white, white, white.*" In a repertory company performing daily, the device will quickly lose its force. Still, if you are seeing a performance for the first time, it is, Gee concedes, an impressive show.

The second problem is the more serious one of a failure to observe decorum, the logical and representational contradictions that Foxe had enjoyed observing in More. The Poet, Gee observes, makes an obvious blunder by sending a ghost in a white robe "from the smoakie burning Kitchen of *Purgatory*" (19). Surely that robe should have been scorched. But Gee counters this and similar incongruities with mock generosity, noting that, after all, "the *Poet* kept within his Circle. For he well knew that deepe passions, especially affright and astonishing admiration, doe for the time bereaue and suspend exact inquiring discourse" (19). Once you regard the apparition as performance and not as truth, you can dispense with anxiety about incoherence and admire the calculation of a powerful psychic and somatic effect.

The third problem is the most serious: quite simply, "*they make their spectators pay to[o] deare*" (20). Gee had explained how the Jesuits managed to get the astronomical sum of two hundred pounds from just one of their victims; that amount is, he soberly observes, a very dear market price for the product people are actually purchasing: "Representations and Apparitions from the dead might be seene farre cheaper at other Play-houses. As for example, the *Ghost in Hamblet, Don Andreas Ghost in Hieronimo.* As for flashes of light, we might see very cheape in the Comedie of *Piramus and Thisbe,* where one comes in with a Lanthorne and Acts *Mooneshine*" (20).

"As for example, the *Ghost in Hamblet*": this extraordinary remark goes to the heart of the process I have been describing. With the doctrine of purgatory and the elaborate practices that grew up around it, the church provided a powerful method of negotiating with the dead, or rather with those who were at once dead and yet—because they could still speak, appeal, and appall--not completely dead. The Protestant attack on the "middle state of souls" and the middle place those souls inhabited destroyed this method for most people in England, but it did not destroy the longings and fears that Catholic doctrine had focused and exploited. Instead, as Gee perceives, the space of purgatory became the space of the stage where old Hamlet's Ghost is doomed for a certain term to walk the night. That term has lasted for more than four hundred years, and it has brought with it a cult of the dead that we continue to serve today.

NOTES

1. *A Supplicacyon for the Beggers,* appendix B, in *Yale Edition of the Complete Works of St. Thomas More,* vol. 7, *Letter to Bugenhagen, Supplication of Souls, Letter Against Frith,* ed. Frank Manley, Germain Marc'hardour, Richard Marius, and Clarence H. Miller (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 412. In *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London: Longman, 1988), Paul Slack notes that grain was scarce in some localities in 1527–28, possibility causing cases of starvation, though, like most social historians, he emphasize that the figures are extremely unreliable.

2. John Foxe, "The Story of M. Symon Fishe," in *Actes and Monumentes,* quoted in Frederick J. Furnivall, ed., *A Supplication for the Beggers* (London: EETS, 1871), vi.

3. On Fish and the early Protestant agitators, see W. A. Clebsch, *England's Earliest Protestants* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964); Susan Brigden, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989); and A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation,* 2nd ed. (London: Batsford, 1989).

4. La Boétie's answer was a structural one: a chain of clientage and dependency extended geometrically from the small number of exploiters at the top to the great mass of the exploited below. The analysis is secular, but it was quickly adopted by the Huguenots.

5. Fish refers to the notorious case of Richard Hunne, who refused to pay the customary gift known as a "mortuary"—the priest's claim for a deceased parishioner—for his dead infant son. Hunne was accused of heresy and was found hanging in his cell on December 4, 1514. Catholics (including Thomas More) argued that he had committed suicide; Protestants argued that he was murdered by thugs in the employ of the bishop of London and his chancellor, William Horsey. In February 1515, a London coroner's jury found that Hunne had been murdered and named Horsey and the two jailors as the killers. The case figures prominently in Foxe's writing.

6. "But there be many men of greate litterature and iudgement that . . . have not feared . . . yn perill of deth to declare theyre oppinnion in this matter, which is that there is no purgatory but that it is a thing inuented by the couitousnesse of the spiritualtie onelly to translate all kingdomes from other princes vnto theim" (Fish, *Supplicacyon,* 419).

7. Thomas Becon, *Jewel of Joy* (addressed to Elizabeth I), in *Prayers and Other Pieces,* ed. John Ayre, Parker Society vol. 13 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1844), 413–14.

8. Tyndale, *An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue . . . and Wm. Tracy's Testament Expounded,* ed. Henry Walter, Parker Society vol. 44 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1850), 214. For a similar expression of uncertainty, see Hugh Latimer, *Sermons and Remains,* ed. George Elwes Corrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1845). In "Articles Untruly, Unjustly, Falsely, Uncharitably Imputed to Me"(probably 1533, reprinted in Foxe), Latimer seems to believe that a middle state exists but that the souls in it are not suffering: "They need to cry loud to God: they be in Christ and Christ in them" (236). They might do something for the living, but the living can do (and need do) nothing for them. See also the expression of uncertainty in Hugh Latimer, *Works,* vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1844): "Now my answer is this: 'I cannot tell' " (550).

9. Miles Coverdale, *Remains,* ed. George Pearson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846), 475.

10. Latimer, *Works,* 305.

11. This account is one of two that Foxe gives of the book's transmission. The other account says that the book was brought to the king by two London merchants, who read it aloud. The king reportedly remarked, "If a man should pull down an old stone wall, and begin at the lower part, the upper part thereof might chance to fall upon his head." The apparent meaning of this gnomic comment is that Henry foresaw that he would have to establish the principle of royal supremacy before he could safely meddle with the wealth of the monks and friars. The king in this account put the book away and told the merchants to keep their interview with him a secret.

12. In the event, the interrogation, according to Foxe, did not take place because Fish's young daughter was ill with plague. Fish himself died of the disease within the year. His wife survived and went on to marry James Bainham, another Protestant, who was arrested by More a few years later and burned at the stake.

13. Thomas More, *Utopia,* eds. Edward Surtz, S. J. Hexter, and J. H. Hexter. In *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More,* vol. 4 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 225. "How great and how lazy is the crowd of priests and so-called religious!" (131), More's traveler had earlier exclaimed, in accounting for the grinding poverty in Europe.

14. More follows Jean Gerson's *Querela defunctorum in igne purgatorio detentorum ad superstites in terra amicos* (1427). See Germain Marc'hadour's introduction to *The Supplication of Souls* in *Yale Edition,* vol. 7, xcvi-ciii.

15. John More's will, signed February 26, 1527, "bestows more money on masses to be said for his soul than on any other purpose: œ5 (or more) per year for seven years for two priests studying divinity, one at Oxford the other at Cambridge; an annual obit at St. Lawrence Jewry for ten years; and a trental of masses (in addition to a dirge and requiem) to be said by each of the four orders of friars" (Germain Marc'hadour, "Popular Devotions Concerning Purgatory," in *Supplication of Souls, Yale Edition,* appendix E, 452–53.)

16. For More's use of Scripture, see Germain Marc'hadour's introduction to the Yale edition of *The Supplication of Souls,* lxxiv–lxxxvii. An attempt to justify the doctrine of puratory only "by natural reason & good phylosophye" (Aiiv) was made by More's brother-in-law, John Rastell, in *A new boke of purgatory which is a dyaloge & disputacyon betwene one Comyngo an Almayne a Christen man & one Gyngemyn a turke of Machometts law . . .* (London, 1530). The Turk persuades the German, who is rehearsing Protestant objections to purgatory, that purgatory must exist.

17. "Purgatory," writes Jacques Le Goff, "did not exist before 1170 at the earliest." *The Birth of Purgatory,* trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 135.

18. The passage concludes with a conventional misogynistic joke of a type that More enjoyed: "Yet hear we sometimes our wives pray for us most warmly. For in chyding with her second husband to spight him withal, God have mercy says she on my first husband's soul, for he was y-wisse an honest man far unlike you. And then marvel we much when we hear they say so well by us. For they were wont to tell us far otherwise" (*Supplication,* 149).

19. On the close relation between purgatory and charity, see, for example, Clive Burgess, "By Quick and by Dead: Wills and Pious Provision in Late Medieval Bris-

tol," *English Historical Review* 305 (1987), 837–58. Because the prayers of the virtuous poor were thought to be particularly efficacious, the rich in effect purchased them through charitable donations. Doles of bread or money, Burgess points out, invariably accompanied funerals, and the wills of the wealthy often established long-term alms giving, in the hope and expectation of the beneficiaries' prayers.

20. On poor relief in Tudor England, see Paul Slack, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London: Longman, 1988).

21. Delius makes the interesting observation that Hamlet uses the word *bound* in the sense of "ready addressed," whereas the Ghost uses it as the past participle of the verb *to bind.* The shift then is from preparation or expectation to obligation.

22. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship,* trans. Eric Blackall (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 146.

23. "Claim" rather than "meaning" because the Ghost may only by lying lure Hamlet into a belief that Purgatory actually exists and then lure him further toward damnation by inducing him to commit an act of vengeance.

24. *The Last Judgment,* in *The Chester Plays,* ed. Dr. Matthews, Early English Text Society, Extra Series 115, pt. 2 (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench Trübner, & Co., 1916 [1914], 430. See, similarly, "A lyttel boke . . . of Purgatorye" (London, [1534?]):

> Betwene the payne of hell / certaynly
> And betwene the payne / of Purgatorye
> Is no dyfference / but certes that one
> Shall haue an ende / and that other none.

(Quoted in Marc'hadour, "Popular Devotions," 447.)

25. See Thomas Dekker, *2 Honest Whore:* "S. Patricke you know keepest Purgatory"; and Dekker's *Old Fortunatus* (1600): "here end my torments in Saint Patrickes Purgatorie." See, likewise, John Grange's *The Golden Aphroditis* (1577): "I come not from Trophonius care *[sic]*, for then I should be lothde: / Nor from S. Patrickes purgatorie"; and Ralph Knevet's short poem "Securitye":

> Yet Hee [man] lives, as if Hell,
> Were but a fable, or a storye,
> A place of fancye, that might paralell
> The old St Patrickes Purgatory.
> Hee mirth recrutes with cup's, and seldome thinkes
> Of Death, untill into the grave Hee sinkes.

26. *Missale Ad Usum Insignis et Praeclarae Ecclesiae Sarum [Missale Sarum],* ed. Francis Dickinson (Oxford: J. Parker, 1861–83), 878. The phrase *hic et ubique* is repeated in the *Secreta and Postcommunio* as well.

27. Edgar C. S Gibson, *The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England,* 2 vols. (London: Methuen & Co. 1897), 2:37.

28. *Doctor Faustus,* ll. 876–77, in *The Works of Christopher Marlowe,* ed. C. F. Tucker Brooke (Oxford: Clarendon, 1910).

29. See Alan Kreider, *English Chantries: The Road to Dissolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).

30. See Robert Whiting, *The Blind Devotion of the People: Popular Religion and the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Christopher Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); and J. J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984).

31. F. E. Brightman, ed. *The English Rite,* 2 vols., 2nd ed. revised (London: Rivingtons, 1921), 2: 858. See the remarks in Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c.1400–c.1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 475.

32. More, *Works,* 1557, 881.

33. All citations of Foxe's account are to the introduction of Frederick J. Furnivall's edition of Fish's *A Supplication for the Beggers* (London: EETS, 1871). Foxe took his mock title from More's dead, who characterize themselves as "we sely poore pewlyng sowles" (136).

34. Hugh Latimer, "Sermon Preached Before the Convocation of the Clergy," in *The Works of Hugh Latimer,* 1:50.

35. *Quintilian's Institutes of Oratory, or Education of an Orator,* 2 vols., trans. John Selby Watson (London: George Bell, 1902), 2:161. See the similar warning in Puttenham's account of "Hypotiposis, or the counterfeit representation: The matter and occasion leadeth vs many times to describe and set foorth many things, in such sort as it should appeare they were truly before our eyes though they were not present, which to do it requireth cunning: for nothing can be kindly counterfait or represented in his absence, but by great discretion in the doer. And if the things we couet to describe be not naturall or not veritable, than yet the same axeth more cunning to do it, because to faine a thing that neuer was nor is like to be, proceedeth of a great wit and sharper inuention than to describe things that be true." Puttenham goes on to distinguish between Prosopographia, which includes the feigning of "the visage, speach and countenance of any person absent or dead" and " Prosopeia, or the Counterfait in personation *[sic],*" which includes giving "reason or speech to dombe creatures or other insensible things." Glady Doidge Willcock and Alice Walker, eds. *The Arte of English Poesie* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936), 238–39.

36. John Gee, *New Shreds of the Old Snare* (London: Robert Mylbourne, 1624).

6 America's Transient Mental Illness

A Brief History of the Self-Traumatized Perpetrator

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PSEUDOLOGIA FANTASTICA

In May 2000, the *New York Times* carried a story headlined "G.I.'s Tell of a US Massacre in Korean War." It described an event kept secret from the American public for half a century. The journalists who uncovered the story were assisted by an army veteran named Edward Daily, who provided an eyewitness account and the names of other participants. Daily confessed that he himself had shot many of the Korean refugees and now, decades later, was still haunted by the sound of "little kids screaming." Six months later, he made another confession, revealing that he had *not* participated in the massacre nor in any other military operation in Korea (Barringer 2000a, 2000b; Moss 2000).

In 1998, the Cable News Network (CNN) had broadcast a similar story about the Vietnam War. The account originated with a veteran, Robert Van Buskirk, who described a top-secret mission in Laos in which he had participated. His unit's job had been to either capture or kill a band of renegade American soldiers. In the course of the operation, Van Buskirk told reporters, he had sprayed the nerve gas sarin from his helicopter onto the Americans and the Vietnamese who accompanied them. The use of nerve gas is prohibited by international law, and Van Buskirk sorrowfully acknowledged that he had committed a war crime. Shortly after the CNN broadcast, Van Buskirk retracted his story, claiming that he suffered from "repressed memory syndrome," which explained his false account (Pogrebin and Barringer 1998; Sharkey 1998).

In 1988, CBS television had broadcast a documentary, "The Wall Within," that featured interviews with five Vietnam War veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Three of the men con-

fessed to participating in atrocities during the war. One veteran described how he had flayed scores of live people, including children, and how he held eviscerated human hearts in his hand. In the 1990s, an investigator, a veteran named B. G. Burkett, obtained the military records of the men who appeared in this documentary. Burkett discovered that, despite their passionate confessions, the veterans had not participated in either atrocities or (with one exception) combat operations (Burkett and Whitley 1998: ch. 5).

Each of these episodes begins with a self-incriminating confession, and each confession mentions the perpetrator's feelings of guilt, disturbing and intrusive memories, the responsibility of the American government for putting soldiers in atrocity-producing situations, and the conspiracy of silence that keeps the American public in the dark. Although these men have fabricated their pasts, they are not "simple liars" who set out to deceive people. They may have ulterior motives—perhaps to grab five minutes of fame, gratify sadistic impulses, punish themselves, or make fools of superior people. But they also have a strong psychological identification with their assumed identities and their victims. In their own eyes, their pain is real and is an extension of the victims' suffering. For some, the fabricated past is the product of *cryptomnesia* (or so it seems). They have forgotten or suppressed the actual sources of these "memories," which most likely are news stories and tales told by other veterans.

If we were to describe these false confessions and memories as a disorder, we could call this disorder *pseudologia fantastica*, or "factitious disorder with psychological symptoms" (Newmark, Adiytanjee, and Kay 1999). Freud wrote about a similar phenomenon, the "family romance," in which an individual invents a new family for himself and weaves a new life narrative. The person imagines that he was not born to his real parents and is really the child of someone grander. Through his fantasy, he exalts himself and exacts symbolic revenge and retaliation on his biological family (Freud 1959, orig. 1909). At its most extreme, the imaginary past is manifested as a paranoid delusion. The fraudulent perpetrator engages in a similar project, in which paranoid or conspiratorial elements are often conspicuous. He departs from Freud's model of the family romance mainly in identifying himself with an infamous event rather than an important individual, and with a stock figure, or topos, rather than a real person.

TRANSIENT MENTAL ILLNESSES

This topos is a creation of American psychiatry. He is the person who has been traumatized by the effects of his own violence—the pain, loss, and

death caused to his victims. He is unlike the figure who is familiar to practitioners of forensic psychiatry, the victim whose traumatic past has transformed him into a victimizer, such as the abused child who grows up to be a child abuser. The self-traumatized perpetrator is unlike this figure because he is his own victim. Thus, he becomes a victim as a consequence of being a perpetrator, rather than the other way round. He is likewise different from that other familiar figure, the individual who, like Lady Macbeth, suffers guilt, remorse, and horror in reaction to something awful that she has done. If Lady Macbeth is a kind of victim by our standards, she is a victim in a single sense—namely, that she suffers. Unlike Lady Macbeth, the self-traumatized perpetrator is a victim in a double sense: he not only suffers, but his suffering is somehow unjust. And he is not only a victim and a perpetrator, but he is also a patient (a medical case). Finally, the self-traumatized perpetrator is exceptional in that he is a regional phenomenon, limited mainly to the United States. Some mental health workers have occasionally suggested that this medical-moral identity be extended to other countries—notably to include child soldiers who have participated in grisly atrocities in Angola, Mozambique, and Sierra Leone (Goleman 1987; Boothby Upton, and Sultan 1992; Cohn and Goodwin-Gill 1994; Shaw and Harris 1994). However, in these cases, the identity has failed to find a place or a reality either in African medical institutions or in popular consciousness.

In other words, the self-traumatized perpetrator (and therefore the spurious perpetrator) represents a psychiatric disorder that has emerged at a particular time in a particular place. Although the characterization may be adopted elsewhere, it has not yet found traction. In the following pages, I describe the disorder's historical origins and explain why it is likely to fade way within a few decades. In *Mad Travelers* (1998), Ian Hacking coined the term *transient mental illnesses* as a label for such disorders. The book is about hysterical fugue in late nineteenth-century France and Germany. This disorder is unrelated to my subject: Hacking's concept rather than his history interests me here. Every transient mental illness, he writes, comes to life within an "ecological niche" formed by four (possibly more) historical conditions.

The first condition is a contemporary diagnostic framework within which the emergent mental illness has a place. The third edition of the official nosology of the American Psychiatric Association, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (*DSM-III*, 1980), opened a taxonomic box called "post-traumatic stress disorder," inside which self-traumatized perpetrators have a place as a distinctive "patient population."

Diagnosticians, psychotherapists, and psychiatric researchers also consider this group to be a special class of patients. The spurious perpetrator fits into another taxonomic box, among the "factitious disorders."

Hacking's second condition is visibility: the disorder must possess features that make it strange, disturbing, and noticed. In a moment, I will describe in some detail how the two disorders acquired these qualities. Visibility likewise entails a system of detection, within which the patients come to the attention of experts. In our case, two systems performed this task. In the decade leading to the adoption of *DSM-III*, patients were identified through a network of psychiatrists and antiwar activists, Following the publication of *DSM-III*, the job of identification became the responsibility of specialized diagnostic and therapeutic facilities operated by the U.S. Veterans Administration (VA) Medical System.

Hacking's third condition is that the illness must provide dysfunctional individuals with a psychological release that would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to find elsewhere in their culture.

The final condition consists of a "cultural polarity": the illness takes shape between historically contingent and morally opposed elements of contemporary culture. This element is the least transparent of Hacking's four conditions. In the case of hysterical fugue, one pole is virtuous, and the other is vicious and criminal. The fuguer's compulsive travels imitate emergent forms of mass tourism. This pole is the virtuous one, because of its association with self-education and the like. The fuguer also resembles the vagabonds and wandering felons who are targets of the police. This element was the criminal pole. The fuguer sits between the poles: too poor to be a true tourist, too faithful to social convention to become a criminal. These "poles" are aspects of institutions and forensic and clinical practices. Clinical narratives, authored by nineteenth-century French physicians, tell a typical story. A fuguer crosses the German border and is arrested by the police. He is sent to jail as a suspected felon, but an investigation and exchange of telegrams with France establish that he is an innocent amnesic.

Hacking does not explain why he believes that cultural polarity is a necessary feature of transient mental disorders. Nevertheless, he is correct about the situation of self-traumatized and fraudulent perpetrators. An obvious polarity arises here—victim versus perpetrator—and it surfaces whenever clinicians and Vietnam War veterans engage in diagnosing and treating PTSD. The poles do not coincide entirely with Hacking's virtue-versus-vice model. The perpetrator fits Hacking's model: he is vicious and criminal. But the victim of violence is not a perfect match, because victim-

hood is not intrinsically virtuous, at least not in any currently accepted sense.

A second difference applies as well. The opposites that define the fuguer are juxtaposed but never intersect. The patient is neither a criminal nor a tourist but mimics them both. This phenomenon marks him as strange and visible. In contrast, the self-traumatized perpetrator makes an appearance at the intersection of opposites. What is a victim? Someone who suffers pain or loss without deserving it. What is a perpetrator? Someone who inflicts pain or loss and who must accept responsibility. Victim and perpetrator are poles apart so long as the perpetrator is a morally autonomous agent, in complete control of his actions. What about situations in which a perpetrator is not an autonomous agent but is compelled to accept responsibility anyway. He suffers pain and loss without (entirely) deserving the suffering. The opposites intersect: he is both perpetrator and victim.

Moral autonomy is a recurrent theme in psychiatric accounts of atrocities committed in Vietnam. One argument suggests that the psychological conditioning during military training reduced soldiers' capacity for critical thinking (Shatan 1973: 646–47). This capacity was further weakened during moments of extreme physiological arousal and fatigue, common events in the combat zone (Shay 1994: ch. 4). Soldiers had to choose between contradictory moral principles—between traditional, universalistic codes acquired in childhood and the moral code of men at arms, which gives highest priority to group loyalty and submission to authority (Bourne 1971). The traditional morality categorically forbids doing certain things to other people; the morality of men at arms is more pragmatic. Is torturing prisoners morally wrong if one obtains information that might prevent the death or injury of one's comrades? Is a policy of political terror morally wrong if killing or maiming a small number of innocent people serves to intimidate a large number of potential troublemakers (Nagel 1972: 123–24)? Group pressures, including the realistic fear of violent retribution from fellow soldiers, further reduce a man's options and moral autonomy (Bilton and Sim 1992: 123; Lang 1970).

The cultural polarity that defined hysterical fugue was a product of historical developments: cheap railway travel, telegraphy, the invention of the passport, a period of peaceful relations among the European states, and so on. Of course, the emergence of self-traumatized and fraudulent perpetrators a century later grew out of a very different set of developments. But another, less obvious difference exists. In the case of hysterical fugue, the opposites—tourism, vagabondage—aligned themselves spontaneously. No

one *intended* to create the symbolic space within which the fuguer gestated. As we shall see, the perpetrators' illness is different, for it emerged within a tailor-made space.

ORIGINS OF THE SELF-TRAUMATIZED PERPETRATOR

Psychiatric casualty rates during the Vietnam War were initially low, only 6 percent of total medical casualties (versus 23 percent in World War II) (Bloch 1969). Military psychiatrists attributed the low figures to the environment: intense but sporadic combat, short tours of duty, high morale and esprit de corps (Tiffany 1967). Toward the end of the war, a different view took hold: psychiatric problems were common and a consequence of fighting a guerrilla war that entailed atrocities and civilian casualties (Gault 1971; Shatan 1973; Laufer, Gallops, and Frey-Wouters 1985). In reality, the Vietnam War was less exceptional than either account suggested. It was not America's first guerrilla war, nor was it the first conflict in which American atrocities were common. Operations against Filipino insurgents early in the century had been very brutal (Wulff 1961: 252–54, 304–307, 318; Asprey 1975: 207–208, 211–12), and many atrocities were committed by American forces in the Pacific Theater during World War II (Jones 1946: 49–50; Dower 1991; also Bourke 1999: ch. 6).

A niche favorable to the emergence of the self-traumatized perpetrator failed to develop on these occasions. This fact can be explained partly by the spirit of the times. American soldiers tended to think of atrocities against the Japanese as acts of retribution rather than crimes. Nearly all of the atrocities were inflicted on soldiers and not civilians. American soldiers were welcomed home as heroes, and their war work was uncritically celebrated. In these conditions, neither perpetrators nor anyone else had a psychological or social need to focus on atrocities. No one was likely to call them to account, and, in some social circles, a perpetrator could be proud of his actions. Substantial numbers of returning soldiers were diagnosed with war neurosis, a syndrome that combined guilt, depression, anxiety, and disturbing memories. No doubt some patients were troubled by memories of atrocities, but they were treated no differently from other traumatized veterans. Symptoms were generally explained in developmental and characterological terms. Treatment favored the abreaction of repressed emotions (using hypnosis and drugs such as sodium pentothal), not the investigation of traumatic experiences (Watkins 2000). When clinicians did explore mental content, their investigations led them away from the battlefield, toward the discovery of the patient's "consecutive depressions—the depression of leav-

ing his family, friends, and the life he would have had if not for military service; and finally the depression caused by separating from his fellow soldiers either by their deaths or his discharge" (Haley 1974: 92). This strategy persisted long after the end of World War II and was still common during the Vietnam War (Goldsmith and Cretekos 1969; Strange and Brown 1970).

The situation began to change in the 1970s. The defining event was the decision, in 1980, to include PTSD in the official psychiatric nosology (*DSM-III).* Not everyone welcomed the decision. A segment of the psychiatric community believed that PTSD was not a valid classification but merely a syndrome that combined depression, generalized anxiety, and panic disorder. The only feature that made PTSD distinctive was its unscientific etiology. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs was also unhappy with the classification, because PTSD would now qualify as a "service-connected disability." The VA would now be obligated to develop specialized diagnostic and treatment units, establish a process for assessing claims and dispersing compensation, and obtain the staff and other resources required for this major undertaking. The prevailing opinion in the VA was that insufficient psychiatric evidence existed to justify this effort.

Like other *DSM-III* classifications, PTSD was the work of a committee (Scott 1993: ch. 3). This eight-member Committee on Reactive Disorders had included Robert Jay Lifton, a professor of psychiatry at Yale University, and Chaim Shatan, a psychoanalyst. During the 1970s, the two psychiatrists had collaborated in a weekly discussion group with troubled veterans (Lifton 1973: 75–80). Another member, Jack Smith, had been nominated by Lifton and Shatan. He had been a Marine Corps sergeant in Vietnam and was now an activist for veterans' rights. The committee also included Mardi Horowitz, the author of a widely consulted monograph on stress-response syndromes (Horowitz 1976). A majority of the committee wanted to define the disorder in a way that would facilitate eligibility for service-connected status and reduce the possibility of "false negatives," patients who fail to get the diagnosis they deserve. PTSD's defining feature is its etiological event and traumatic memory, the motor that drives the other symptoms—flashbacks, phobias, and so on. The committee did not specify the content of these events and said nothing about the source or direction of etiological violence. In this way, the definition they adopted opened the diagnostic door to self-traumatizing acts (Young 1995: chs. 3 and 4).

The new classification included cases in which the syndrome emerges months or even years after the etiological event ("delayed-onset PTSD"). This scheme admitted cases for whom the etiological events, notably atrocities, were not unpleasant. How is this situation possible, given that trau

matic events are defined as "distressful"? If one assumes that distress is always conscious and that patients invariably recall their actual emotional states, then the idea of a pleasurable traumatic experience is absurd. The psychiatry of trauma does not make this assumption, though. Emotions can be dissociated (split off from awareness), and a patient may be unaware of the emotional meaning of his experience. Doctors who treated shell-shocked soldiers during World War I believed that they had observed this phenomenon (Leys 1994), and the mechanism is frequently mentioned in traumatology today (van der Kolk, van der Hart, and Marmar 1996; van der Kolk 1996). When the committee defined traumatic events as intrinsically distressful, they did not bar self-traumatized perpetrators.

I am not suggesting that the PTSD committee tailored the diagnostic criteria to fit self-traumatized perpetrators. Rather, *DSM-III* created a taxonomic space within which self-traumatized perpetrators could emerge.

ORDINARY MEN

The Committee on Reactive Disorders understood the implications of its definition of PTSD. Lifton was an opponent of American military involvement in Vietnam, as were Shatan and Smith. During the late 1960s, the three men had ties to the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW; Scott 1993: chs. 1–3). The organization had two goals: end American intervention in Vietnam, and end the victimization of Vietnam War veterans. The VVAW claimed that many veterans were psychologically damaged by their experiences in Vietnam and their homecoming reception in the United States. The public treated them with contempt, the press called them "baby killers" and "walking time bombs," the VA was unable or unwilling to provide necessary services, and the Department of Defense inserted secret codes in their discharge papers, warning prospective employers about their supposed mental problems (Lifton 1973: 75; Helmer 1974: 91, 94–5; Swiers 1984; Meshad 1984). These circumstances had kindled an epidemic of self-destructive behavior that could be seen in the veterans' high rates of suicide, parasuicide, alcohol and drug abuse, domestic violence, divorce, nomadism, unemployment, poverty, and criminal behavior. (This view is that of the VVAW; for systematic critiques, see Dean 1997: ch. 1; Lembcke 1998; Burkett and Whitley 1998: chs. 1–4.)

The VVAW was initially more of a social network than a movement. It lacked an effective strategy and the resources necessary to publicize its grievances (Scott 1993: chs. 6–7). The situation changed in October 1969, with news of a massacre that had occurred during the previous year, when

American troops had murdered five hundred unarmed civilians—mainly children, infants, women, and old people—in the hamlet of My Lai. An army photographer had been present, and his pictures appeared in *Life* magazine in November. In the same month, one of the soldiers was interviewed on television. Following the interview was a highly publicized series of trials, appeals, petitions, and an intervention by President Nixon on behalf of the most notorious perpetrator, Lieutenant "Rusty" Calley.

American public opinion was deeply divided by the war, and no consensus emerged about the meaning of the incident (see the results of newspaper polls in Hersh 1970: 151, 155, 161). The one point on which everyone seemed to agree was that the massacre had been carried out by perfectly *ordinary* American soldiers. The perpetrators' ordinariness, not just the scale of their atrocities, was the aspect that Americans found disquieting. E. M. Opton, a psychologist who had visited Vietnam, informed a congressional commission on the massacre that

> No one has reported behavior of the officers or enlisted men before or after My Lai that smacks of abnormality. Parents of the [My Lai] men have rarely complained that their sons returned from Vietnam in any abnormal state. The men are reported to have gone about their gruesome work for the most part with cool efficiency and tragic effectiveness. The fact that the accused officers and men did nothing to draw attention to themselves in the months before or after the massacre indicates that they were not remarkably different from the run-of-the-mill soldier. (quoted in Knoll and McFadden 1970: 112)

Lieutenant Calley had described himself as a "run-of-the-mill-guy," and a psychiatric examination conducted prior to his trial found no evidence of "disease, defect, derangement or impairment or anything we could observe that would make us feel his mental functioning was disturbed." (Everett, Johnson, and Rosenthal 1971: 190–91, 221; Sack 1971: 103).

The perpetrators' ordinariness also attracted the attention of Lifton and the VVAW. In comments to the National Veterans' Inquiry tribunal in 1970, Lifton observed that

> it does not require an abnormal person to commit atrocities. Atrocities are . . . the well adjusted form of behavior in Vietnam. . . . It takes the unusual man—someone who is in some way idiosyncratic or not too well adjusted—to avoid atrocities. . . . I had occasion to talk to a man who had been at My Lai, who had not shot at all, and sure enough it turned out that he was not too well adjusted in many ways. He was a kind of a loner. He was not in with his group. (Quoted in Kunen 1971: 273–74, 281)

The same year, the VVAW organized a tribunal, modeled on highly pub-
licized European tribunals held prior to My Lai (Jackson 1971; Russell 1967;
Limqueco and Weiss 1971; Sartre 1968). Veterans gave eyewitness accounts
of atrocities committed by American units throughout Vietnam, and the
point was repeatedly made that these war crimes were routine and not iso-
lated acts of out-of-control berserkers (Hubbard 1972: xiii; see Shay 1994:
87). The tribunal sought to track responsibility for the war and its atrocities
up the military chain of command and into the White House.

The atrocity strategy was initially effective. In 1968, the VVAW con-
sisted of six hundred veterans, and its fortunes were in decline, by 1971,
membership had increased to twenty thousand, and the organization had
acquired the support of members of Congress (Helmer 1974: 93). (Some
members of the VVAW were concerned that the plan might further stig-
matize veterans, notwithstanding its exculpatory "ordinary man" clause.
See Scott 1993: 12, 19, on Lifton's advocacy.) But events soon overtook the
plan. Large-scale troop reductions began in 1970; by 1973, relatively few
American combat troops remained in Vietnam, and the war ended two years
later. The VVAW's reason for existing disappeared, and the organization
dissolved. Militant veterans now focused on obtaining government pro-
grams to improve their life conditions. Psychiatric problems remained a pri-
ority.

The atrocity strategy had produced two versions of the American perpe-
trator. Version number one was *the unwilling executioner,* the ordinary
man who had been victimized by politicians and military careerists and
whose atrocities symbolized the moral bankruptcy of American interven-
tion in Vietnam. By 1975, the war was over, and this version of the per-
petrator had faded from collective memory. Version number two was the
psychiatric counterpart of the unwilling executioner. He was *the self-
traumatized perpetrator,* the ordinary man who was not merely a victim
but also a patient. The unwilling executioner was gone, but the self-
traumatized perpetrator survived.

A COUNTERTRANSFERENCE NEUROSIS

Sarah Haley, a VA social worker, was one of the first writers to describe the
problems of providing psychotherapy for Vietnam War perpetrators. She
wrote the following in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* about one of her
patients, a veteran who participated in the My Lai massacre:

> When a patient reports atrocities, where does the therapist begin? . . .
> The first task . . . is for the therapist to confront his/her own sadistic
> feelings, not only in response to the patient, but in terms of his/her
> own potential as well. The therapist must be able to envision the possi-
> bility that under extreme physical and psychic stress, or in an atmos-
> phere of overt license and encouragement, he/she might very well mur-
> der. (Haley 1974: 194–95)

Haley's approach to the patient was psychodynamic, and her comments
are to be understood in relation to Freud's ideas about "transference." Dur-
ing the clinical encounter, Freud wrote, the patient transfers to the analyst
unconscious wishes and fantasies that he or she originally attached to the
love objects and authority figures of childhood. Freud called this clinical
phenomenon an "artificial neurosis" and described it as a medium in which
a patient acts out unconscious desires and conflicts. These unconscious ele-
ments are now accessible to analyst and patient and help to advance the an-
alytic process. Freud likewise cautioned against dangers inherent in the
transference relationship. The therapist must refuse to be seduced into a
reenactment of the patient's imagined past; the patient's psychoneurosis
cannot be permitted to displace the artificial neurosis. And the therapist
must control "countertransference" of the sort that Haley described. The
therapist must avoid situations in which she displaces her own libidinal or
aggressive desires onto the patient.[1]

Some writers "take the counter-transference to include everything in the
analyst's personality liable to affect the treatment, while others restrict it to
those unconscious processes which are brought about in the analyst by the
[patient's] transference" (Laplanche and Pontalis 1973: 92–93; also Blum
and Goodman 1995). Haley had the second meaning in mind when she
mentioned the therapist's sadistic feelings. Therapists treating PTSD are
still concerned with problems of countertransference, especially with pa-
tients who are the victims of violence. Haley warned clinicians about feel-
ings of guilt, anger, and fascination that might distort the therapeutic pro-
cess (Kinzie 1993; Simpson 1993: 681; Weiss 1998) and about the mental
"contagion" that induces therapists to overidentify with their patients'
traumas to the point that they develop similar symptoms, in a subclinical
syndrome called "vicarious PTSD" (Braun 1993: 44; Agger and Jensen
1993: 689, 690). The patient who is a perpetrator creates a special problem
in this regard, and his illness can undermine the solidarity of the therapeu-
tic regime by splitting the staff into conflicting factions: one side identifies
with the patient's victim and longs to punish the patient, whereas the other

side identifies vicariously with the patient's violent acts and aggressive urges (Herman 1992: 598–99).

In Haley's account of her relations with the My Lai soldier, the engagement takes a form that we might call a *countertransference neurosis*—a newly invented piece of psychiatric theater that parallels Freud's conception of the transference neurosis. In the countertransference neurosis, however, the moral hierarchy of the clinic is challenged rather than confirmed; the therapist acts out unconscious conflicts and drives in a way that demands attention and remediation.

PARANOIA

Haley introduced her My Lai veteran to Lifton, who fully explored the possibilities of a countertransference neurosis in his books, articles, and talks. Lifton's interest in the victims and perpetrators of traumatic violence began with *Death in Life: Survivors in Hiroshima,* published a year before the My Lai massacre. Lifton writes in the book that Japanese A-bomb survivors experienced "a permanent encounter *with death;* the fear of annihilation of self and of individual identity, along with a *sense of having virtually experienced that annihilation.*" Survivors are overcome with guilt (believing that survival was purchased at the price of their relatives' death), paranoia, and "rage over having been rendered so thoroughly helpless and inactivated" (Lifton 1967: 30, 35, 36; 1973: 513). Lifton's literary point of reference is *Crowds and Power,* in which Elias Canetti examines the case of Paul Daniel Schreber, author of *Memoirs of My Nervous Disease* (1903) and the subject of Freud's paper on paranoia. Schreber believed that a plague had killed everyone on earth but that he was immortal. Canetti described Schreber's delusion as a defense against overwhelming fear.

> He wants to be the only man left alive, standing in an immense field of corpses. . . . It is not only as a paranoic that he reveals himself here. To be the last man to remain alive is the deepest urge of every real seeker after power. Such a man sends others to their death; he diverts death on to them in order to be spared it himself. . . . Once he feels himself threatened his passionate desire to *everyone* lying dead before him can scarcely be mastered by his reason. (Canetti 1973: 443)

His delusion is the purest expression of survivor paranoia, and it is also the mental state of extreme despots. Schreber, Hitler, and Stalin are peas in one paranoid pod—the great difference being that the despots possessed the means to enact their destructive impulses.

In 1973, Lifton published his widely read book on Vietnam, *Home From*

the War, which drew on interviews with veterans, including participants in the My Lai massacre. Like his Hiroshima book, this volume is about death immersion, feelings of helplessness, and fears of annihilation. Lifton discusses the efficacy of atrocities, but the paranoid despot is gone. To be more precise, the despot is democratized, replaced by ordinary men who are marooned in a state that Lifton calls "the atrocity-producing situation." This state is the moral equivalent of Hiroshima ground zero, a place where men are overwhelmed by unbearable fear and guilt (for their atrocities and survival). Back home, they protect themselves from their painful feelings through a "psychic closing-off." The end state of this process is a form of "symbolic death," a refuge from madness (Lifton 1967: 34, 35, 500).

At this point, Lifton considers the possibilities of countertransference. He writes that all psychiatrists fear the "psychic death" that they associate with mental illness (Lifton 1973: 520). They protect themselves by closing themselves off to their patients' suffering, which is a source of "contamination." The easiest way to do so in cases involving atrocities is to demedicalize the patient's condition—define him as morally perverse. Alternatively, a psychiatrist can limit himself to treating the patient's symptoms (depression, anxiety) and refuse to engage the source of his despair. The therapist who responds in these ways commits a grave act, because he revictimizes the victim. He reenacts his patient's etiological aggression, *mutatis mutandis,* and enters the circle of perpetrators and victims (Lifton 1973: 519; also, see Mason 1998 on therapists who are fascinated rather than repelled by perpetrators' accounts). But the clinician has another option. He can bear witness to the patient's condition, listen to his privileged knowledge of the world, and grasp the "image beyond the atrocity," the point at which perpetrators become victims and doctors can become perpetrators (Lifton in Lifton et al. 1972: 517; 1973: 127, 129n.). The act of acceptance is simultaneously an act of healing. This phenomenon is also what Haley meant when she wrote that "Establishment of a therapeutic alliance for this group of patients is the treatment rather than facilitator of treatment" (1974: 195).

Lifton believed that German psychiatrists faced and failed a similar test following World War II, when their patients included people "who had experienced the most extreme forms of death immersion and brutalization." The doctors responded to this terrible suffering by numbing themselves. Patients were "refused compensation on the grounds . . . that such symptoms were due to 'constitutional impairment' or to previously existing [constitutional] tendencies . . . [or because] the specific relationship of these symptoms to persecution could not be proven" (Lifton 1973: 519). The doctors

were shielded from their patients' traumatic knowledge by the biological orientation of German psychiatry, which allowed them to ignore the psychological and existential dimensions of illness. A parallel situation seemed to be developing in the United States at this point, circa 1973, in the opposition to a PTSD classification and the movement of neo-Kraepelinian positivists into positions of influence in the American Psychiatric Association.

WHOSE HISTORY?

The countertransference neurosis is powered by the therapist's fear of contagion. He defends himself against his patient's traumatic memory. The more frightening the events in this memory, the more desperate is the defense. The more desperate the defense, the greater is the moral danger to the therapist—the risk that he will be drawn into the patient's disorder. The calculus of countertransference and contagion extends beyond clinical work with Vietnam War veterans. Therapists treating civilians frequently experience "disgust, revulsion, despair, terror, and helplessness" (Miller 1998: 253):

> The affront to the sense of self . . . can be so overwhelming that . . . [therapists] exhibit the same characteristics as their patients . . . [and] experience a change in their interactions with the world, themselves, and their families. They may begin to have intrusive thoughts, nightmares, and generalized anxiety. At this point, therapists themselves clearly need supervision and assistance in coping with *their trauma.* (Cerney 1995: 13, my emphasis; also Catherall 1991 and 1995; Figley 1995; Munroe, Shay, Fisher, Makary, Rapperport, and Zimering 1995; Valent 1995)

> Countertransference feelings can lead [the therapist], under the guise of giving comfort, to repeat the trauma of the previous experience . . . [by] taking an overly rigid or punitive stance or tone. . . . The patient experiences feelings of being persecuted by the therapist. When these persecutory feelings become unbearable, the patient tends to project them outward, often with such intensity that the therapist internalizes the feelings to the point of identifying with them, and then acts accordingly, as a persecutor. (Miller 1998: 253–54)

The most repellent traumatic memories are atrocity memories, which are highly contagious and therefore dangerous (Newberry 1985: 155). In principle, all atrocity confessions should work in this way. In practice, a complication exists, which we can trace back to the VVAW's atrocity strategy. The perpetrator must be a victim in a double sense: he must suffer as a result of

his atrocity (like Lady Macbeth) and he must have diminished moral responsibility for his atrocity (unlike Lady Macbeth). Lifton sought to make this point when he coined the term *atrocity-producing situation*—a place where soldiers are overwhelmed by "a combination of fear, confusion, rage, and frustration, and . . . a desperate need for an enemy" (quoted in Kunen 1971: 273–74).

The My Lai massacre typifies the atrocity-producing situation for Lifton. He interviewed My Lai soldiers for his book on Vietnam veterans, and he seems to be familiar with the documentary evidence that has accumulated over the past thirty years (Lifton 1998).Other commentators have questioned whether My Lai actually was a product of this kind of "atrocity-producing situation." For example, according to Christopher Hitchens,

> [My Lai] was not some panicky "collateral damage" firefight: the men of Charlie Company took a long time to dishonour and dismember the women, round up and despatch the children and make the rest of the villagers lie down in ditches while they walked up and down shooting them. Not one of the allegedly 'searing' films about the war . . . has dared show anything remotely like the truth of this and many other similar episodes, more evocative of Poland or the Ukraine in 1941. (Hitchens 1998: 14)

Lieutenant Calley, testifying at his own court martial, gave no grounds for supposing that he had been a victim of "fear, confusion, rage" when entering My Lai:

> Well I was ordered to go in and destroy the enemy. That was my job that day. . . . I did not sit down and think in terms of men, women and children. . . . I acted as I was directed, and I carried out the orders that I was given, and I do not feel wrong in doing so, sir. . . . We weren't in My Lai to kill human beings, really. We were there to kill ideology that is carried by . . . Pawns. Blobs. Pieces of flesh. (Calley, quoted in Everett, Johnson, and Rosenthal 1971: 190–91, 221; also Sack 1971: 103)

Everything that we have learned about the massacre since the Calley court martial seems to confirm Hitchens's judgment. For example, the meticulously detailed book by Michael Bilton and Kevin Sim (1992) includes an interview with My Lai veteran Michael Bernhardt. Lifton had also interviewed Bernhardt for his Vietnam book and believed that he vindicated "the ordinary man thesis" of the massacre. Bernhardt had refused to kill villagers (see above). According to Lifton, he was the odd man who did not fit into his primary group because of his "loner" personality (Lifton 1979: 140–42). Bilton and Sim reached a different conclusion—namely, that Bernhardt's sense of isolation had nothing to do with his personality. He became

a loner after the massacre, as a consequence of his refusal to murder civilians:

> It occurred to me [following the massacre] I might get killed by my own people. [Captain] Medina called me to the command post bunker; there were the platoon leaders, my platoon sergeant, and some others there. Medina asked me some questions about what I thought happened. Was I thinking of writing to my Congressman or was I going to tell anybody back home? . . . I had to spend the rest of the tour . . . with a company of men just about all of whom would be considered culpable and they knew it. I knew I had nobody else to rely on [and that] . . . the men I was with probably would not be too unhappy if I didn't make it back. (Bilton and Sim 1992: 180; see also Lang 1970)

These reports notwithstanding, Lifton's position has remained unchanged: "[In] all psychological judgement there has to be ethical judgement. There is no separation in an absolute way of ethical and psychological judgement . . . Killing on a large scale is always an attempt at affirming the life-power of one's own" (in an interview, Caruth 1991: 168). One would think that the unhurried and pleasure-taking elements of massacre—rape, infanticide, mutilation, and mass murder punctuated by a lunch break—are symptomatic of a deeper truth, to which we gain access by *going beyond our spontaneous moral response to the events.* Lifton does not ask his audience to suspend moral judgment. To the contrary, he believes that judgment in such cases is inevitable but that it should be within the moral calculus of the countertransference neurosis (see O'Brien 1998 for an opposing view).

THE MISSING LINK

I have described the genesis of two, relatively recent transient mental illnesses: the illness of the fraudulent perpetrator and the illness it mimics. These two illnesses emerged from a shared ecological niche and a new piece of psychiatric theater, the countertransference neurosis. But there is a missing link. I have said nothing about the medium on which the theater is performed. This medium is Freud's concept of neurosis. The neurosis concept is alive and well in American psychiatry. How can it persist when everyone knows that mainstream psychiatry has seen the last of Freud and his neuroses?

Let us go back to 1980 and the adoption of *DSM-III.* The editorial board made two claims about its diagnostic classifications in the manual: the classifications are symptom based and empirical, and they are compatible with all the major clinical orientations. The psychoanalytical community rejected

the compatibility claim. The proposed symptom-based diagnostic system would be antithetical to psychoanalysis, in both principle and practice. Psychiatric problems are expressed in polymorphous symptoms, and disorders cannot be reduced to unvarying diagnostic criteria, said the psychoanalysts. The American Psychiatric Association adopted the *DSM-III* system nevertheless. The new system became the standard for record keeping, training, insurance and billing, and the preparation of manuscripts for publication in mainstream psychiatric journals. Psychoanalysts complained that adoption of the *DSM-III* system was a coup d'état to unseat them. If so, the revolution's most visible victim was to be their concept of neurosis.

DSM-III gave two pages to explain why the neurosis concept had to be purged. Its reference point was Sigmund Freud. According to the editors, Freud used the term *neurosis* in two ways: descriptively, to contrast neurosis with psychosis and organic brain disorders; and etiologically, to identify disorders that originate in anxiety-producing mental conflicts that elicit defensive reactions. To preserve the new manual's symptom-based nosology, the editors wrote, *DSM-III* would use *neurosis* only in the descriptive sense (in parentheses following the names of approved disorders). The current edition, *DSM-IV* (1994), dropped the term *neurosis* altogether, casting it into the waste bin of history along with disorders like "monomania" and "psychasthenia."

Or so one might think. Let us return to the editorial reference point, Sigmund Freud. Over the years, Freud referred to several kinds of neurosis. His main interest was in *psychoneurosis,* disorders traced to psychosexual conflicts. But he also had much to say about *traumatic* neuroses, the subject of his earliest clinical writing, *Studies on Hysteria* (1893–95) and a topic that continued to attract his interest, from *Totem and Taboo* (1913), *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921), and *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (1926) to the time of his final monograph, *Moses and Monotheism* (1938). But *DSM-III* mentions only psychoneurosis. Why no reference to the traumatic type? The two kinds of neuroses are quite similar. Their polymorphous symptoms represent the patient's efforts to cope with anxiety. The present is a symbolic continuation of the past. And the phenomenon of clinical transference emerges from this past-present connection.

Why does the introduction to the *DSM-III* make no reference to the traumatic type of neurosis? The manual fails to mention traumatic neurosis because the editors had no need to explain its disappearance. The name *traumatic neurosis* is absent, but the neurosis is there with the new name of "post-traumatic stress disorder." The committee that produced PTSD re-

lied on two canonic sources, Abram Kardiner's *Traumatic Neuroses of War* (1941) and Mardi Horowitz's *Stress Response Syndromes* (1976). And both books relied on Freud's post-1920 theory of traumatic neurosis as their source.

Freud did not invent the term *neurosis*. William Cullen coined it in 1769 as a tag for nervous disease, and it soon became associated with a ragbag of symptoms and "functional" conditions. By the 1870s, physicians had adopted the distinction between neuroses and psychoses (Beer 1996; Laplanche and Pontalis 1974: 266–69). The *DSM-III* "descriptive" definition of neurosis was an effort to freeze the "neurosis" at this point, circa 1870. This plan did not succeed, however. The real victim of *DSM-III* was the psychosexual version of neurosis.

The traumatic version survived because it served the interests of its target population: American veterans of the Vietnam War. Freud's repetition compulsion is a causal and exogenic explanation. Its disorder originates in conditions that are outside the patient's body and mind—life in the combat zone, for instance. This quality gives PTSD its "service-connected" designation and explains away the disorder's otherwise embarrassing resemblance to depression and generalized anxiety disorder—psychiatric conditions that are ineligible for compensation by the VA. The newly coined syndrome needed a proper etiology to work. The PTSD committee reached for the most credible candidate.

HAS THIS TRANSIENT MENTAL ILLNESS A FUTURE?

If we take Hacking's notion seriously, we can expect every transient mental illnessto disappear within a reasonable span of time. True, the self-traumatized perpetrator is still with us, but his ecological niche seems to be drying up. The political conditions and cultural polarities that made him possible and useful are gone, at least for the present. In the United States, an aging cohort of self-traumatized perpetrators lingers on. Perhaps a future minipopulation will emerge from psychiatric clinics in the Balkans: the region is saturated with perpetrators, visiting traumatologists, and homegrown PTSD counselors. So far, this group has failed to find mention in any mainstream psychiatric journal.

Also uncertain is whether the Freudian concept of neurosis has much of a future. Will research on PTSD (its current home) continue in its present direction, exploring the anatomy and physiology of trauma? Will the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis and hippocampus replace mind and

memory in efforts to explain the pathogenesis of this syndrome? Without a clinical commitment to the concept of neurosis according to Freud, the theater of countertransference will close. Once this concept is gone, the self-traumatized perpetrator—victim *and* patient—will no longer be tenable, only hateful.

We have reasons to suppose that the fraudulent perpetrator may outlive the authentic article. In 1994, Helen Demidenko, a young Australian of Ukrainian descent, published *The Hand That Signed the Paper.* The novel won the Australian equivalent of the Booker Prize, notwithstanding the fact that it was a sympathetic account of the Ukrainian auxiliaries who collaborated with the Nazis in the mass murder of Jews during World War II. Demidenko said that the novel's events are grounded in the experiences of her own family. Part of her message is that the Jews had brought Ukrainian vengeance on their own heads through their murderous association with the Bolsheviks. "Most of my father's family, including my grandfather, were killed by Jewish Communist Party officials," she wrote. A reviewer for the Australian Broadcasting System described the novel as a "work of extraordinary redemptive power" and commended her for confessing that her own family included war criminals.

In August 1995, an Australian newspaper revealed that the autobiography was a fabrication. The author is really an Anglo-Saxon named Helen Darville. Darville admitted her true identity but told reporters that an anonymous young Ukrainian neighbor had been her actual source and that her book's details are accurate. This statement was followed by a second discovery, involving plagiarism. Large parts of Darville's prize novel had been lifted from other works, including an obscure pseudohistory called *The Black Deeds of the Kremlin.* Helen confessed to this deed also. Her confession included a fascinating bit of self-diagnosis, recalling the cases of cryptomnesia and family romance with which I began. Helen claimed that she is neither a self-conscious plagiarist nor a poseur. She believes that she is the victim of an uncontrollable photographic memory—an example of hypermnesia that parallels or imitates the intrusive "flashbulb memories" sometimes attributed to PTSD. Helen's self-analysis was that she had appropriated the narratives that she read and heard (from her spectral friend) and with which she felt a powerful psychological identification. Other people's stories became a part of her own memories, transforming her into this other person. Or so she was able to say, thanks to the developments I've described here. (See Craven 1995 and Daniels 1999 for accounts of the Demidenko case.)

NOTE

1. Compare Haley's reaction to her My Lai veteran with a report from Denmark. The patient was a refugee, a veteran of a Middle Eastern army, trained to torture prisoners. He reported that he initially enjoyed his work but, in time, experienced nightmares and somatic symptoms. He deserted, was captured, and was sent to prison, where he was tortured. He was released and sent into combat, where he was wounded. He escaped from hospital, made his way to Denmark, and was now requesting refugee status. He continued to suffer psychological and somatic symptoms, and a Danish doctor referred him to a unit specializing in post-traumatic stress disorder. His psychotherapist at the unit was sympathetic, but the therapist's attitude changed when he saw the patient, while in a dissociative state, assume the role of a torturer. The therapist, untroubled by thoughts of countertransference, now regarded the patient "with a feeling of discomfort and disgust rather than 'empathy' . . . feeling anger toward a [refugee] system which grants quick asylum to murderers while many victims of torture have to wait in insecurity for long periods of time" (Agger and Jensen 1993: 695, 696).

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7 Violence and the Politics of Remorse

Lessons from South Africa

NANCY SCHEPER-HUGHES

"Brother, Brother, what are you saying? I mean you have blood on your hands!" Dunya cried in despair.
—Fyodor Dostoyevsky

There is therefore a poetics of blood. It is a poetics of tragedy and pain, for blood is never happy.
—Gaston Bachelard

PROLOGUE

This chapter does not pretend to offer an anthropological theory of remorse, a field that does not exist and that I have no intention of inventing here.[1] Anthropologists' lack of attention to remorse either suggests an appalling oversight or alerts us to the Western and modernist nature of the concepts. Although anthropological references to vengeance, blood feuds, counter-sorcery, and witch hunts are many, ethnographic descriptions of individual or collective rituals of remorse and reparation are few indeed.

At the heart of this lacuna are the culturally specific meanings and experiences of human emotions—like sorrow, grief, rage, regret, and remorse—often thought (by nonanthropologists) to be universally shared. Earlier generations of psychological anthropologists invoked a rickety dichotomy between *guilt-* and *shame*-oriented societies (Benedict 1946; Lebra 1971; Doi 1973). The experience of deeply personal and internalized feelings of responsibility, guilt, and remorse[2]—as distinguished from public spectacles of confession that stem more from externalized social sentiments of blaming and shaming—were assumed to be weakly developed or absent in many non-Western societies. Remorse presupposes the existence of a certain kind of Western-"civilized" or "cultivated" self (Elias 1978; Foucault 1986), a culturally produced "self" that is acutely self-conscious, highly individuated, autonomous, reflexive, and brooding—a prototypical Hamlet figure, if you will, overly preoccupied by a guilty, confessional conscience.

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The overly scrupulous Irish Catholic conscience that James Joyce captured in his *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is a good example of this phenomenon. The almost gleefully, shamelessly, unrepentant, head-hunting Ilongot warriors of northern Luzon, Philippines—studied by Michelle Rosaldo (1980, 1983) and Renato Rosaldo (1980, 1983)—exemplify something very different.

An older Ilongot man explained to Renato Rosaldo that the practice of severing and "tossing away" a victim's head allowed Ilongot males to "toss away" their anger following the death of a loved one. Instead of centering around depression, immobilization, guilt, anger, and remorse, the Ilongot ethnopsychiatry of mourning was built around excitement, exhilaration, hyperactivity, and murderous, even gleeful rage. The Ilongot "self" was a social self, relatively undifferentiated, nonautonomous, and embedded within an alternative moral/ethical system.

Rosaldo's Ilongot informants denied any "rational" explanation for their head-hunting practices. Their actions were not motivated, they said, by ideas about social interchangeability, such that one death (or one head) might cancel the death of another. Head-hunting, they insisted, was for pleasure and a sense of well-being. Taking a stranger's head "lightened" a personal loss, and the singing of head-hunting war chants made Ilongot informants feel happy, calm, and at one with the world.[3] Only upon the tragic experience of his wife's death in the field was Renato Rosaldo able to overcome his cultural resistance to the Ilongot ethnopsychology of emotions. Following Shelly Rosaldo's fall to her death, Ilongot emotions finally made sense to Rosaldo, not because they conformed to a universal script of mourning, but because the anthropologist had learned Ilongot ways of experiencing emotions and the self. The Ilongots' unforgiving—we could almost say remorseless—way of grieving suddenly became tragically available to the anthropologist. He *knew* how they felt.

Like Rosaldo, I resisted accepting at face value what impoverished Northeast Brazilian women told me about their lack of grief, regret, or remorse upon the deaths of their infants—deaths they sometimes facilitated by reducing or withdrawing food and liquids from babies they saw as "doomed." "Infants are like birds," women of Alto do Cruzeiro said. "Here today, gone tomorrow. It is all the same to them." "They die," mothers explained, "because they *want* to die, because they have no 'taste' or 'knack' for life." Eventually, I interpreted the lack of grief and maternal remorse for their "angel babies" in terms of a political economy of emotions in which mothers responded to the culture of scarcity and lived in a constant state of anticipation and psychological mobilization for loss (Scheper-Hughes 1993, ch. 9).

Some isolated ethnographic accounts of remorse stand out. One is Colin Turnbull's (1962) account of the remorse of an Mbuti Pygmy hunter, Cephu, who violated the social mores for communal hunting and redistribution of game. Cephu cheated by running ahead of his band and capturing some of the game for himself just before the animals ran into the communal nets. Caught cooking the purloined game alone in his hut, Cephu was banished to the forest. Before two nights passed, however, the selfish hunter crawled back to the base camp, shamefaced, remorseful, and repentant. He confessed his guilt, begged forgiveness, and promised to observe Mbuti mores . Consequently, Cephu was allowed to rejoin the small group.

Anthropologist Jean Briggs (1970) wrote a moving account of her experience of transgression and social ostracism by her Netsilik Eskimo "family" after her culturally inappropriate outburst of anger in a society in which group survival demanded rigorous repression of dangerously negative emotions. The modern North American value of honest and direct emotional expression was perceived as antisocial and immature in this small-scale society. Like Cephu, Jean Briggs was made to apologize for her childlike and unruly outburst before her family would readopt her and feed her from the communal store of scarce winter-camp rations.

In this chapter, I focus on a single ethnographic instance—an account of political violence and remorse during the transition to the new South Africa. I am assuming the politically and morally ambiguous task of telling the story of political violence, remorse, and reconciliation largely through the experiences, narratives, and points of view of a small number of white South Africans, drawn from the full spectrum of social class and political affiliation. This account seeks to provide a psychological, anthropologically informed reflection on the experiences of white South Africans (who along with black and brown compatriots) were historically and "existentially thrown" into a nightmarish political scenario in which they were cast, willingly or coercively, into the roles of active collaborators, passive beneficiaries, bystanders, victims, and/or revolutionary and (if white) "race traitors" vis-à-vis the apartheid state. Today, these same South Africans (who in the illustrative cases I describe below share little more than the color of their skin) are also trying to make sense of their country's violent past and of their roles in that history. Most white South Africans are merely trying to preserve their social and economic privileges and to resume interrupted lives. Some are also trying to undo past wrongs. A much smaller number of white South Africans have wholeheartedly cast their lots with the new political dispensation and have gracefully accepted a reduced realm of political (if not economic) influence. In a distressing number of cases, however,

white South Africans remain mired in a bitter and disgruntled refusal of the new order. For these hard-core "refusenik" individuals (as well as for the thousands of previously unacknowledged victims of apartheid's violent madness), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established (Boraine, Levy, and Scheffer 1994).[4]

Given the long history of apartheid, "Black," "Colored," and "White" South Africans still inhabit vastly different spatial, social, psychological, moral, and lived worlds. They have developed elaborate protocols and defenses for dealing with each other across the vast class, ethnic, and cultural divides. Humor (including gallows humor) is rarely used as a survival tactic.[5] If one may dare to speak at all of a South African "ethos" or "national culture," one might note that both black and white South Africans are markedly decorous, reserved, guarded, and sensitive (if not brittle) in their *public* presentations of self (this stance, however, may be an artifact of late apartheid and the bitter contestations around it). And because of their extraordinary experience of social and geographical segregation, white and black South Africans have obviously experienced the transition and the formal processes of social healing and new nation building with a very different range of emotions, meanings, expectations, and consequences.[6]

STILL WAITING

I went to the Cape of Good Hope in 1993 in a fit of postpartum depression following the publication of *Death without Weeping* (1992), which concluded more than twenty years of intermittent research on hunger and death among impoverished sugar-plantation workers and their families in Northeast Brazil. I went to lose my self in a new "field site." This time, I wanted to be in a place where something good, beautiful and hopeful was about to happen. The first-ever democratic elections in South Africa were surely a beacon in an otherwise increasingly dark and chaotic world. Temporarily assuming a senior position at the University of Cape Town, I hoped that during my tenure I could document some aspect of the radical changes that were occurring and to be something of an ethnographer of the (democratic) transition.

I had intended to revisit the small and "picturesque" Western Cape fruit- and wine-producing village of "Wyndal" [Franschhoek], which was the ethnographic setting for Vincent Crapanzano's (1985) brilliant and controversial book *Waiting: The Whites of South Africa.* Out of his conversations with some forty white villagers, Crapanzano produced a devastating portrait of South African whites. As a skillful pathologist of the South African con-

1. Franschhoek, White Farmhouse. (Nancy Scheper-Hughes)

dition, he deftly exposed the soft underbelly of race apartheid in the dark, airless, occasionally soulless narratives of affluent white farmers during the early 1980s. His study took place when the antiapartheid struggle was gathering its greatest momentum, strength, and moral conviction amid heightened police and state repression.

According to Crapanzano, the response of the white villagers of Wyndal/Franschhoek to the political storm clouds gathering over their heads was to retreat all the deeper into a kind of paranoid, isolated domesticity. Some sought redemption through participation in a charismatic, Evangelical Christian Renewal movement that was sweeping white rural villages and towns in the Western Cape, even reaching cosmopolitan Cape Town. He portrayed the whites of Wyndal as comfortable, self-absorbed racists trapped in a passive mode, a "dead time" of suspended animation, waiting in fear and dread for the inevitable future to somehow miraculously pass over them and leave them alone to pursue life as they always had. Because the protagonists lacked any critical self-awareness, a situation that could have been tragic was simply pathetic, little more than a story of self-indulgence, cowardice, and bad faith. The root metaphor Crapanzano evoked, "waiting," implied a bunker or citadel mentality, a stubborn, head-in-sand, waiting it out.

Waiting was heatedly contested by white South African anthropologists

and intellectuals, who saw in the portraits a caricature of South Africa's far more complex white spectrum. The book was unfair and "biased," local critics charged, a blow beneath the belt. Above all, they felt that it was self-serving, projecting an image of white South African racists to ease the guilt of American whites, who would at last find a population even more despicable than they in the politics of race. According to his South African critics, Crapanzano had betrayed his hosts at the university and in the gracious farm homes of Wyndal/Franschhoek where he had been kindly received. "Don't *Crapanzano* us!" white South Africans often warned me during the early months of my fieldwork. Had they known more about my own complex relations with those whom I have studied (Scheper-Hughes 2000), they might just as easily have said, "Don't Scheper-Hughes us!" Indeed, the problems of subject/object relations in the field do not disappear when anthropologists study people who are very much like themselves.

Of course, whites were not the *o*nly South Africans who were "waiting." Black South Africans were also waiting, but their waiting was illuminated by hope and poised for decisive action. Theirs was the waiting of angry young lions, the image and metaphor that young militants adopted for themselves. ("Wake up and roar, young lions, *roar!* " was how Winnie Mandela opened one of her political rallies in 1993 in the Western Cape. And roar they did!) The large Colored population, caught in between, were also waiting, of course, though given their liminal social and political position—caught halfway between white and black worlds, theirs was a cautious *watchful waiting,* in which hope for the future was seasoned with fear that things might not work out so well for them (Scheper-Hughes in press).

I wondered what I could learn by revisiting the Wyndal/Franschhoek farm community more than a decade after Crapanzano's fieldwork and just as the nation was on the cusp of its democratic revolution. By the time I arrived in Cape Town in July 1993, official apartheid was over. The ban on radical movements and oppositional political parties had been lifted, and Nelson Mandela had been released from his final prison, a kind of "halfway house," where he was held under a complicated form of house arrest. A kindly prison guard took me to see the pleasant suburban California-style stucco ranch house on the grounds of Victor Verster prison, just a few miles from the village of Franschhoek, where Mandela was being carefully prepared for release—to assume his destiny, which, by then, even his Afrikaner jailers saw as inevitable.

I went to Franschhoek for four successive periods of intensive fieldwork (each lasting a few months), between 1993 and 1999 during which time I moved freely among the older (Afrikaner) and more recently arrived

English-speaking whites, the larger population of Coloreds (with whom I lived for most of the time I spent in Franschhoek), and the new black "settlers" in Chris Hani squatter camp (Scheper-Hughes 1995a).[7] From the outset, however, the intense political events of the period interrupted my original research plans.

The elections that would eventually sweep Mr. Mandela and the ANC (African National Congress) into power in a glorious display of popular victory in April 1994 were preceded by a final, desperate attempt of the National Party government's internal security forces to disrupt the transition. Meanwhile, the PAC (Pan Africanist Congress) and its military wing, Azanian Peoples Liberation Army, and other radical factions on the extreme right and left of South African politics were dissatisfied with the direction of the negotiated settlement being hammered out in Kempton Park, and they were stepping up the militant struggle.

The assassination of Chris Hani, hero and intellectual mentor to the politicized youth of the townships, in the spring of 1993 spurred riots and other acts of township resistance. The leaders of PASO, the Pan African Student Association, launched Operation Vala (close down) and then Operation Barcelona, a campaign of antigovernment burnings and stonings by township youths. The latter campaign took its name from the Olympic Games in Barcelona and took its symbolism from the torches carried by lead athletes and runners. But the PASO torches would be used to clear out all suspected government agents and to prevent white motorists from entering the townships, which were declared "no go" zones for all white outsiders during this period. The violence peaked in a government-orchestrated "Third Force" attack of bombs, bullets, stones, and sticks designed to block the coming elections. Thus, 1993 was the most violent year in more than a decade of undeclared civil war in South Africa: 3,794 people died in political violence that year, the first year of my field research.
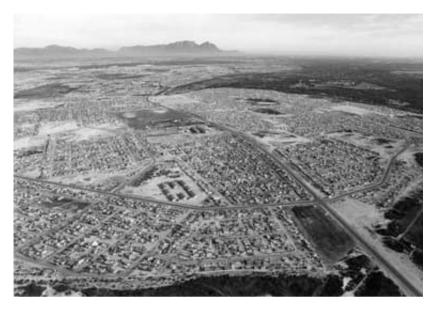
BLOOD IN THE GARDEN

The day after my family and I arrived in Cape Town on July 25, 1993, three young men dressed in overalls and head scarves burst into the evening service of the St. James Evangelical Christian Church in the white suburb of Kenilworth, which bordered the University of Cape Town (UCT) community where we had just settled into a faculty-student dorm on Main Road. The young men—one was a boy of seventeen years—opened several rounds of ammunition and tossed nail-spiked hand grenades into the congregation of more than six hundred worshippers as they sang the opening

hymn, "Come to the Garden." In seconds—for an attack of this sort happens that quickly—eleven people were dead and more than fifty others were seriously wounded and maimed. Some would lose their arms and legs; others lost their voices from the shock. Hundreds lost friends and loved ones. Thousands lost their faith, at least temporarily. Even more might have died in the St. James Church Massacre, as it came to be called, had not a young white parishioner pulled out a gun and fired back at the assailants, who turned and fled from the church auditorium. The attackers escaped in a getaway car they had stolen earlier that day in Khayalitsha, a sprawling black township containing nearly a million refugees from former apartheid-designated homelands.

Less than a month later, during Operation Barcelona, American Fulbright student Amy Biehl was dragged from her car as it approached the entrance to Guguletu township in Cape Town, and she was stoned and stabbed to death by a few PAC ringleaders, who were egged on by a cheering crowd of "toyi-toying" high school students. The driver of the car was identified as a "white," "a settler" (a non-African), and therefore, an enemy of the people of Guguletu. The murder of Amy Biehl was a watershed in the final months of the antiapartheid struggle; her death was invoked to explain, depending on the speaker's political views, why the elections *must* go forward or why the elections must *never* go forward.

Then, on New Year's Day, 1994, a nondescript tavern in the student "bohemian" quarter of Observatory in Cape Town was attacked by PAC revolutionaries. Four people were killed, two of them University of Cape Town students, one white and one brown. A third victim was an acquaintance of ours, the owner of a Portuguese seafood restaurant, Machados, where we often went to *matar saudades* (kill our homesickness) for Brazil. The fourth victim was a young, mixed-race ("Colored") woman, a grade-school teacher. Two of our own UCT student children were down the street at another student hangout when the Heidelberg Pub Massacre took place. Indeed, everyone—black, white, and Colored—was suspect of harboring some sort of violent sentiments during the final phase of the antiapartheid struggle. The Heidelberg tavern massacre, though modest in its carnage, stayed with me the longest—along with the images of the frozen, startled faces of the four victims—for I accompanied a state pathologist, Len Lehrer, to the Salt River Mortuary for the autopsies and identifications (Scheper-Hughes 1994a)—and their "random" deaths determined the focus of my research on democracy and violence.

But, of course, these much-publicized incidents of "black-on-white" violence were exceptions to the general rule of official, institutionalized, and

2. Aerial view of Khayelitsha township, Cape Town, an apartheid-invented South African ghetto with more than one million inhabitants. (Nancy Scheper-Hughes)

3. Heidelberg Pub massacre, December 31, 1993. (Courtesy of *The Argus* newspaper)

sanctioned "white-on-black" violence, some of which were promulgated by paid or intimidated black collaborators. So overwhelming were the daily "stats" on township deaths that year (1993–94) that both black and white newspapers recorded them only as body counts: "Another 40 Bodies Found on the East Rand"; "Dozen Bodies Removed from Guguletu in Weekend Casualties"; "Nine Bodies Found in Two Shacks Gutted by Fires in Khayelit-sha," and so on. Violent and premature deaths were, and remain today, the legacy of black South Africans.

Still, the democratic elections prevailed, and a celebratory mood bathed all South Africans momentarily in a luxurious sea of goodwill. A sense of humor and vitality appeared, and the intensely private, claustrophobic worlds of long-hibernating white Capetonians opened up to a newly fashioned public space. Indeed, people had much to celebrate in this land of terrible beauty. But the legacy of the violence remains. The scars are deep—etched into the gut-ted and destroyed landscapes left by the apartheid state, in the empty spaces left by those who died in the political violence, and in the wounded bodies of those who survived the violence and chaos, but just barely. The following entry from my field notes in February 1994 illustrates the situation:

> You cannot avoid them for they are present at every political event. Fa-ther Michael Lapsley with the startling metal hooks where his hands should be. . . . There he is mischievously lighting a young woman's cig-arette (a magician's trick!) or, over there, skillfully holding the stem of a wine glass raised in a defiant toast. . . . Once the shock leaves one wants to caress his gentle hook-hand, to stroke the ruptured, discolored skin where his unwounded eye once was, and to toast him, noble wounded warrior, with goblets raised high, clinking glass with metal, champagne with tears. And over there, with his back carelessly turned to the door, stands Albie Sachs with his handsomely lined face and his resonant soothing voice, the agnostics' theologian, dressed in his priestly robes, his bright and bold dashiki . . . with its freely waving sleeve, Albie's sweet banner of liberty. . . . .Of thee, I sing, Albie."

My new research questions were ready-made. What narratives of self, suffering, and reconciliation were South Africans telling? How did people emerging from a past characterized by competing and contradictory histo-ries begin to build a new sense of individual, social, and national identity? What role did South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission play in personal, collective, and national reconstruction given the Commission's uncompromising demands for "truth," reconciliation, and forgiveness?

In focusing here primarily on the experiences of "white" South Africans, I am walking on thin ice. I run the risk of highlighting the "suffering" of one

4.   Father Michael Lapsey, African National Congress warrior, displaying his wounds under the icons of Christ and Che Guevara. (Nancy Scheper-Hughes)

5.   South African Constitutional Court Justice Albie Sachs demonstrating his "soft vengeance" against the apartheid murderers who put a bomb inside the boot of his car. (Courtesy of Albie Sachs)

social group, indeed, those generally identified as either the perpetrators or the passive beneficiaries of race apartheid, at the expense of other social groups—namely, black and Colored South Africans, who are the primary victims of that same genocidal-like system. In mixing and combining the narratives of white South Africans who suffered violence and death as the anonymous "soft targets" of end-stage PAC terrorist attacks with those of whites who suffered *strategic* attacks on their lives as the targets and known political enemies of the apartheid government (interspersed with the testimonies of white South African operatives of apartheid's death machine), I risk perpetuating a category fallacy. For the only things that this small assemblage of "white" South Africans have in common is the color of their skin and the accident of their birth in a nation obsessed with race and ancestry.

The old apartheid state constructed and enforced, often with violence, a set of arbitrary racial categories and group identities (Boonzaier and Sharp 1989).[8] Over time, the state revised and modernized the official system of classification and its discourses. Ethnicity, culture, and tribe became the

softer proxies for race and racism. The language of development and urban renewal replaced the cruder apartheid language of eradicating "black spots" and racial containment. "Public security" was the covert language used by the police state to control political dissent and to eradicate so-called enemies of that state (Gordin 1998). Consequently, one of the deepest collective scars left by the old apartheid state is the legacy of spoiled identities. Erving Goffman (1963) identified the social dynamics of "spoiled identity" resulting from the stigmas of physical difference, ethnicity, and tribe, to which I would add the stigmas of history and place. But if the history of apartheid spoiled all cultural and racial identities, some are more spoiled than others: Zulu identity, because of its identification with the right-wing Inkatha Freedom Party and that party's collusions with the apartheid government; "Colored" identity, because it was a fictive category, an invention of apartheid; Black "youth" once the courageous "young lions" of the antiapartheid struggle, relabeled a lost generation once the official struggle was over .

A strong counterculture of political resistance has sought to free South Africans from the legacy of racist thinking by constructing alternative identities in terms of political commitment to the antiapartheid struggle and to the creation of a democratic and pluralistic state. Most South Africans are keenly aware of the uses and abuses of the socially invented categories of "race," "color," "tribe," "ethnicity," and "culture" in service of apartheid.[9] Thus, South Africans from all communities now have their hands raised and fingers flexed, ready to supply the necessary "air quotes" that question and destabilize the race terms and the social fictions that the old state wanted South Africans to accept as plain facts and as part of the natural, given world (Sharp 1994).[10]

THE UNBEARABLE WHITENESS OF BEING

> And that, my friend, is why I ran away. I ran away because I was scared of the coming changes, and scared of the consequences of not changing. I ran because I wouldn't carry a gun for apartheid, and because I wouldn't carry a gun against it. I ran away because I hated Afrikaners [white Afrikaans-speakers] and loved blacks. I ran away because I was an Afrikaner and feared blacks. You could say, I suppose, that I ran away from the paradox.
> —Rian Malan, *My Traitor's Heart*

To be "white" in South Africa was and remains a heavy and fraught condition (De Villiers 1987; Giliomee 1994; Goodwin and Schiff 1995). Of course,

no easy way exists to be "White" in South Africa, even in the "new" non-racial South Africa (Malan 1990; Gordimer 1998; Krog 1998; Coetzee 1999). During apartheid, whites of good conscience faced a double bind: If they left the country, they were deserters and cowards. (Where were you during the antiapartheid struggle? How did your life, your family, your home, your choices, your work, your profession figure into the struggle?). If they stayed behind (unless engaged in the armed struggle), they were suspected of complicity and of enjoying white privilege and riding on the coattails of apartheid. All white South Africans—English or Afrikaans speaking, Jewish, gay, or Marxist—at times had to prove their political credentials to the outside world (and to themselves as well), graphically on the canvas of their own wounded bodies Worsnip 1996; Sachs 2000).

During a visit to the University of California, Berkeley, campus in the late 1990s, Judge Richard Goldstone, who headed the Standing Commission of Inquiry into Violence and Intimidation (the so-called Goldstone Commission) and who was one of the few judges who used his power during apartheid to assist political detainees (becoming known among Transvaal political prisoners as the "comrade judge") remarked on the difference between his reception in 1997 his reception during his first visit to Berkeley in 1991, when anyone associated with the South African justice system were suspect of evil complicity.

Rian Malan, the author of the problematic and politically incorrect but powerful testimonial *My Traitor's Heart*, traces his family roots through colonialism and apartheid, going back to Jacques Malan, who had fled religious oppression in France to arrive as a "settler" to the Western Cape. Before fleeing into exile himself, the younger Malan struggled with his inherited history and imposed race identity. He asked himself the question raised by a hybrid "Boer reggae" song: "How do I live in this strange place?" Initially, he tried to escape his whiteness by becoming a communist, experimenting with drugs, taking a black lover, espousing violence, espousing nonviolence, smoking *daccha* (dope), growing his hair long, cutting it short, spray painting American Black Power slogans on the walls of white monuments in the white suburbs of Johannesburg: "I'm Black and I'm Proud." And then, in confusion, he simply ran away. Malan returned for the transition to African rule, but still he is "caught."

What, in short, does "whiteness" (Lipsitz 1998) mean today for the descendants of Afrikaner "settlers" and farmers? Afrikaner whites cannot leave the land, because, unlike English-speaking South Africans, they have no other option. Neither can they freely inherit or inhabit comfortably the

land of their settler ancestors (Gordimer 1998; Gordimer 1998). Can the South African "Boer" identity (which once meant simply Dutch/Huguenot "farmer") be reclaimed and reconstituted today?

Michael Lapsley, a naturalized South African from New Zealand and a chaplain to the ANC, reflected on his "whiteness" for the first time when he arrived as a young Anglican priest in South Africa and experienced his white skin as a mark of Cain, a stigma. He said, "Whiteness became for me like leprosy, something that wouldn't wash off. Although I knew a lot about apartheid before I came, I never understood what it would mean, really, to be seen as an oppressor. . . . So my decision to join the struggle for liberation was actually a struggle for the recovery of my own humanity." I knew exactly what he meant.[11]

GETTING OVER VERSUS UNDOING

In contrast to John Borneman's (1997) notion of "settling accounts" (in his book of the same name), with its obvious subtexts of getting even and of harboring barely submerged rage and vengeance, Lawrence Weschler (1990, 1993) settled on a more pragmatic metaphor for the processes of personal and national recovery: "getting over" (see also Ignatieff 1997). "Getting over" evokes biblical images of river crossings, safe passage, and overcoming, the key symbol of the American civil-rights movement. I have chosen, however, Hannah Arendt's metaphor, "undoing," despite its utopian premise. Although individuals can eventually "get over" a personal and collective history of violence, undoing demands a more Herculean task of mending, healing, repairing, remaking, even rebirthing the world. If the term carries a touch of the sorcerer's magic, we can excuse it. World repair cannot be accomplished through the applications of reason and the rule of law alone.

In *The Human Condition,* written barely a decade after the Holocaust, Arendt (1969) grappled with the terrible "burden of irreversibility," with deeds that can never be undone because the process that any single human act sets into play "is never fully consummated."[12] For Arendt, the only escape from the "predicament of irreversibility" comes unbidden, in the form of grace expressed in unconditional forgiveness (an act that Derrida [2001] calls "forgiving the unforgivable") accompanied by the ability to make and keep new promises. *Nunca Mas!* Forgiveness *and* forging a new social contract seem to offer the only possibility for overcoming past horrors.

But is this kind of forgiveness and reconciliation possible without the mediating presence of a powerful, transcendental, or political faith? Joe Slovo (1996; and Scheper-Hughes 1995b), the "believing atheist" (as he

once called himself) offered one model of secular faith and a refusal to dwell on his past suffering at the hands of apartheid murderers. Ginn Fourie, the still-grieving mother of Lindy-Anne, one of the four victims of the 1994 Heidelberg Pub massacre in Cape Town, expressed her doubts to me during a meeting in 1999:

> How can we possibly get over and *re*-concile what was never *con*ciled in the first place? We are starting from ground zero, less than zero, for we [affluent whites] must try to overcome hatreds and angers we never even recognized as existing in our lives. It was as if we were anesthetized and emotionally eviscerated.

Meanwhile, many Black victims and survivors of South Africa's violent history are wary of premature calls for national reconciliation, recognizing in them coded language for a return to the "quiet life," to life as usual, which is the last thing they want. Their resistance to the rhetoric of reconciliation—though by no means universal in a larger population that has proven itself to be extraordinarily generous, at times almost unbelievably so, toward their former white oppressors—bears some resemblance to Laura Nader's cogent critique of the "controlling processes" (1997) that are silently, sometimes lethally, at work in all "harmony ideologies" (Nader 1990).

For most victims and survivors, however, a first step in the process of "getting over" a collective trauma is knowledge seeking, learning exactly what happened to whom, who did it, and why. Here, the work of a truth commission, with all its built-in limitations and failures, is absolutely indispensable.

"I sometimes wonder," Father Michael Lapsley said to me in 1995, "just who that man or woman was who carefully typed my name on the manila envelope that was meant to kill me. I wonder what did they tell their spouses or children that night at supper about what they did in the office that day? Either they are so dehumanized that they don't care or else they have learned to live comfortably with their guilt. . . . I don't so much want vengeance, but I think that the names and faces of these people should be made known."

The official vehicle to facilitate individual and collective "getting over" so as to liberate South Africa from the ghosts of its past was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Krog 1998; Minnow 1998; Scheper-Hughes 1998; Gobodo- Sachs 2000; Wilson 2000, 2001; Ross 2001; Hamber and Wilson 2002; Madikizela 2003; Colvin 2005). In hundreds of hearings around the country, more than two thousand victims of apartheid-era brutality told their stories to the TRC's committee on human-rights violations. A smaller

number of perpetrators of the violence have come forward to confess the details of their attacks on civilians in exchange for political amnesty.

Many scholars and ordinary South Africans have criticized the TRC process. Some have objected to the focus on the "exceptional," "extreme," and "gross" human-rights violations, which they believe has obscured the damage caused by the more ordinary and pervasive routines of apartheid violence: the legal, medical, economic, bureaucratic acts of violence against Black South Africans. Residential and economic apartheid remains largely unchanged, and accusations of betrayal of the struggle are rife among aging young lions and marginalized youth. But one could not expect a single institution like the TRC, with its limited brief, to remedy the effects of apartheid itself. Other critics have expressed worry about the "numbing" of South Africans by the constant barrage of media images and televised segments, which threatened to routinize the atrocities and trivialize the suffering of survivors. Meanwhile, the very structure of the TRC pits victims and perpetrators against one another in a battle over memory and truth. Richard Wilson (2001) argues that the South African TRC was designed primarily to legitimize the postapartheid state by promulgating the image of the new South Africa as a world leader and defender of human rights and liberal democracy. Popular support for the process was generated by the crafty blend of Western human-rights talk and "traditional" African humanism expressed by Bishop Tutu's marshaling of *ubuntu* (the idea that no man or woman is an island) and "African" notions of justice. Although "confession" and "forgiveness" are important elements of South African popular justice, the TRC did not recognize popular calls and demands for vengeance and revenge or for material (over symbolic) restitution.

Prior to the South African TRC, many other countries, mainly in Latin America, had tried to establish official or independent, church-run truth commissions to clean up after military states and dirty wars. Not all were successful at producing either truths or justice. Michael Taussig told me about a chilling scene he observed some years ago in the capital of a South American country during a period of official truth and soul searching. In a local municipal building in a rural town, people who had been tortured during the previous regime sought to file documents with bureaucrats seated at a long table. In front of each official stood a long line of ordinary people (some of them poor and barefoot), each in turn testifying to the suffering he or she had endured. Each had already had to complete an official protocol and was now allowed a few minutes at best to answer the questions: When were you abducted? Where were you taken? Were you beaten? tortured? On which parts of your body? What instruments were used? What

questions were you asked? How did you reply? The government agents might have been tax collectors. Taussig suggested that this (indifferent) state interrogation mimetically reproduced the original torture.

MAKING SENSE OF SUFFERING

In recent years, an anthropology of suffering has emerged as a new kind of theodicy, a cultural inquiry into the ways that people attempt to explain the presence of pain, affliction, and evil in the world (Kleinman, Das, and Lock 1997; Das, Kleinman, Ramphele, and Reynolds, 2000; Das, Kleinman, Lock, Ramphele, and Reynolds, 2001). At times of crisis and moments of intense suffering, people everywhere demand an answer to the existential questions "Why me (of all people), oh God? Why now?" The quest for meaning may seek to vindicate an indifferent God, quell one's self-doubt, or restore one's faith in an orderly and righteous world. The one notion that humans seem unable to accept is the idea that the world is deficient in meaning.

Accounting for one's own suffering is one thing. Making sense of the suffering of the other is quite another and is fraught with ethical quandaries (Levinas 1986). This distinction is explicit following any collective tragedy, whether it is a natural one or a political one. "Why me?" question becomes "Why *not* me? Why was *I* spared?" as survivors try to account for their exemption, their saving grace.

Although members of the St. James Church congregation are extremely faithful in their attendance, some regular worshippers did, of course, miss the Sunday service on the rainy evening in late July 1993 when the massacre occurred. A clerical worker had car trouble; a teacher was down with the flu; a university student grew impatient waiting in the rain for a friend to arrive, and she went home rather than disrupt the Sunday evening service after it had begun. Several people shared their thoughts with me about why God had chosen to spare them on that night, along with their doubts about whether being spared was a good or a bad thing. "You see," said Nadja, "God was speaking very directly to us at that moment." And for those present during the ninety-second attack that changed their lives and transformed their understanding of the world forever, the challenge was to make sense of the checkerboard pattern that killed some, injured so many others, and left the others physically unscathed.

Dawie Ackerman, who lost his wife in the massacre, has played over and over in his mind the moment that he walked into the church a few minutes after his wife and, rather than disrupt Marita and the woman with whom

she was sitting and chatting in the front left pew, quietly took his place sev-
eral pews behind her. During a painful interview in February 1998, he said:

> Now why didn't I take my seat next to my wife? Why didn't I interrupt
> the conversation and smiling take her by the arm to sit beside me where
> she might have been safe? But I left her, instead, in the front line of the
> attack, surely one of the first to be killed. . . . My nature is to act
> quickly, so that when the attack happened I would have thought that I
> would have been one of the first up there to try and stop it. But, obvi-
> ously, I had no gun . . . and. . . . and well, I just fell down and hid like
> everyone else. Which I don't have a problem with . . . but I wonder
> what if I had sat next to my wife? Knowing myself I think I would have
> jumped up and wrestled with the attackers or tried to take their gun or
> something. But I didn't, I didn't . . . and those are the sorts of things
> that were always going through my mind at first. You would try to
> sleep and it would get to you. . . . .But I realize now, afterwards, that
> there was a reason why I did not die. I was protected through God's in-
> tervention. The two hand grenades that were thrown into the congrega-
> tion just missed me. One exploded only three meters away and the
> other was about six meters from me. That is very close. People all
> around me were hurt, hit by shrapnel, some were sprayed with rifle
> bullets, some people sitting just behind me were killed by stray bullets.
> A man sitting on one side of me lost both his arms and his legs. I had to
> walk over several dead and wounded bodies to get to my wife. But nei-
> ther the grenades nor the bullets caused me any damage. Not a bit of
> the shrapnel hit me. I was spared.
>
> Why?
>
> I believe I had been spared to take care of my three children. In the
> grand scheme of things, I had to ask why it was *me,* a leader and Elder
> of the Church, who was spared. Later on I had to accept that God had
> both chosen our Church [for the attack] and He had chosen those who
> survived to give testimony that would bring honor to His name. And,
> since the first moment of the attack that has been the desire of my
> heart, to do that. That became my purpose in life.

Two weeks after the massacre, I joined a few dozen church members at
the large tearoom above the auditorium following Sunday evening service.
The massacre was still, of course, uppermost in everyone's mind. Their pas-
tor, Bishop Reteif, had been leading them through a series of theological re-
flections on the meaning of suffering. But their own independent interpre-
tations were, paradoxically, both more mystical and more embodied than
the smart and intellectualized sermon "Where was God?" they had just
heard their pastor deliver. Instead, they spoke intensely among themselves
about a "secret message" encoded in the attack. If only they knew what it

was. "We *know* God was trying to tell us something," said Marlene Sidreic. "Only, the true meaning hasn't been revealed to us yet." Most agreed, citing the inscrutability of God's ways, but Cynthia had a more direct interpretation: "I believe God's message to us was that life is given, life is taken away. Live life fully, day to day. Be kind to those you love, cherish them now, for you never know if they will all be wiped out tomorrow."

Barely a week after the Heidelberg tavern massacre, I attended two post-trauma therapy and healing sessions for several survivors at the Anglican Church–sponsored Center for Victims of Torture and Political Violence in Cape Town. All the survivors were preoccupied with having so narrowly escaped death. "I was in Cape Town," said an older woman, "to celebrate my daughter's wedding. I almost celebrated her funeral instead." But despite the heavy media coverage and the informed commentary about this attack on "innocent" soft targets during the late and extremely optimistic stages of political negotiations, all these survivors understood the attack as strategically and politically motivated. "This is South Africa," said a white former soldier. "We knew something like this was going to happen sooner or later."

Another survivor, a young mixed-race "Colored" man said, "I live in a township and I understand the rage that lies behind this attack, and the feelings some young people have that the negotiations aren't going right, that things are not going to change their lives for the better." A local hospital worker who lost a friend in the attack agreed. "Every day I see the wounds of the townships that come into the emergency room. And I think to myself, 'how long can things go on like this?' " While attributing a larger political meaning and purpose to the attack, all saw themselves as misplaced, misidentified targets. "Why did they go for us? We are not the enemy. People of all colors come to this pub." And they doubted, even as they hung onto the hope, that—as one participant said—"some good might come out of this in the end."

The ability to transform evil into good requires either a strong religious faith or powerful political convictions. In South Africa, both are often called into play simultaneously. Father Michael Lapsley, the victim of a 1990 deadly letter bomb sent him by some still-unknown officials of the apartheid government, reframes his experience by insisting that he is a *victor* and not a *victim* of the state that tried to kill him. Each day that he lives and participates in the construction of the new South Africa, he defeats evil and death. Like some of the St. James Church survivors (albeit survivors of a different sort of violence), Lapsley believes he was never closer to God than in the transcendent moment of the bomb explosion that took away an eye and both of his hands: " I sensed the presence of the Holy Sprit accompa-

nying me and sustaining me," he said to me in 1994. During a visit to Harlem's Caanan Baptist Church of Christ on 116th Street in Harlem less than three years after the bomb, he addressed the congregation:

> I stand before you as a sign of what apartheid has done, of the physical ruptures it has caused. . . . But I also stand before you as a sign of the power of God to heal, the power of love, of gentleness, of compassion. The power of light is stronger than the power of darkness, and in the power of God we shall be victorious.

SACRED WOUNDS

The wounded body often becomes a template of individual and collective memory, both a map and a moral charter. In the St. James Church tea room, Mrs. K, one of the wounded, rolled back her turtleneck to reveal a large and inflamed wound covering her neck and shoulder where shrapnel had been removed: "Do you know what this means? she asked me. I shook my head dumbly. "This means I belong to Jesus. I am His. This wound is precious to me. It has removed all my fears. Nothing can ever hurt me again. Let them return. I am ready for them for His mark is upon me. He owns me and what is left of my life is in His hands." The woman's intensity frightened me. Suddenly I wanted to change the subject, even though, presumably, this *was* my subject.

The quest to make sense of suffering and premature, chaotic death is as old as Job, and as fraught with moral ambiguity. This quest is as important to the anthropologist/witness as to the companions of Job. It is so for whoever demands a reason, an explanation, for suffering—usually one that is compatible with one's religious or political convictions. Just as the companions of Job taunt him to elicit an explanation for his suffering ("You must have sinned against God"), the friends and relatives of the blameless people kidnapped and tortured during the Argentine "dirty war" insisted, "You must have been into *something*." Similarly, at the memorial service at the University of the Western Cape the day after the stoning of Amy Biehl, her grieving friends and colleagues whispered conspiratorially among themselves, "We don't want to blame her, but Amy of all people should have known better!" What was she doing driving her comrades home to Guguletu, a no-go zone, a war zone, during those tense days?
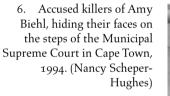
But Job righteously and steadfastly refuses the temptation to self-blame, insisting that he is a just man. Albie Sachs, who lost an arm to the anti-apartheid struggle, insists that he and his ANC comrades suffered and died "because we were good, not because we were bad." So, too, Amy Biehl re-

fused the judgment of her attackers. She approached their raised arms (smiling, even, I was told) saying, "No, stop. You are mistaken. I am not a settler. I'm Amy, a comrade." Amy's naive and possibly even presumptuous claim—her large, white smiling face—may have enraged the angry young men further. But, later, her words came back to haunt the young men who were ultimately convicted of her death. (Indeed, at his TRC amnesty hearing, Ntbeko Peni ended his painful testimony with the following ambivalent statement of remorse: "I feel sorry and very downhearted, especially today [when I see that] I took part in a killing of someone who was on our side, someone we could have used to achieve our aims. Amy was one of those people who, in an international sense, could have worked for the country." Thus, Ntobeko came to accept that Amy was a comrade, as she had said.)

The danger, Immanuel Levinas notes, of all theodicies, of all attempts to make meaningful the suffering of others, is the risk of normalizing and accepting the suffering and death of the other. In all theodicies—theological, philosophical, psychological, political, and anthropological—the arbitrary nature of suffering and death is hidden. The companions of Job return to goad the hurt, the disappeared, the maimed, the dying: "You must have been into something"; "You must have neglected your religious [or political] obligations"; "You yourself must have really wanted to suffer or die"; "Your death will serve as a lesson for the living"; "Your wounds will serve as a sign, a beacon." Levinas says that the endless search for meaning, the attempt to make sense of suffering, has allowed people to blame sufferers for their own pain and to value suffering as penance for past sins or as a means to an end or as the price of sensitivity and consciousness or, especially within the Christian tradition, as the path of saints and martyrs.

The grieving mother of Amy Biehl, for example, whispered to me during a break in the trial of Amy's alleged killers in Cape Town: "Don't you think there was something *destined* about Amy's death? Don't you think that for some reason, perhaps not known to us here and now, Amy *had* to die?" Later during a break in the trial, I asked Linda Biehl to elaborate on her comment. She replied over a cup of Roibos tea,

> There is something you need to know about Amy. She was so dedicated, an incredible high achiever, but in the end something always happened to check her, to trip her up. Perhaps she was ambivalent about her success. So I wasn't really surprised when I heard that she was murdered on the day before she was to leave South Africa. . . . In a way I was even prepared for it. . . . Amy was very competitive, a high diver and a marathon runner. The very last photo I have of her is a newspaper clip-

6.   Accused killers of Amy Biehl, hiding their faces on the steps of the Municipal Supreme Court in Cape Town, 1994. (Nancy Scheper-Hughes)

7.   Linda Biehl, courageous mother of Amy Biehl, at the trial of her daughter's killers, Municipal Court House, Cape Town, 1994. (Nancy Scheper-Hughes)

ping showing Amy just as she came through the finish line in a [Cape Town] marathon. Her face is full of ecstasy, pain, exhaustion, and relief. I like to think that this is how Amy looked when she died in Guguletu—as if she was just breaking through another, her most difficult, finish line.

Mrs. Jeannette Fourie, who lost her daughter in the Heidelberg Pub massacre, said that she thought—though her husband, Johan (she cautioned me) must never know her thoughts—that Lindy-Anne would have been proud and even willing to have given her life for the new South Africa. "Even," I asked, "in such an absurd and meaningless attack?" Yes, she replied calmly. "I really do believe this."

One can readily sympathize with Linda Biehl's desire to substitute an image of beauty and light for the brutal photos in Amy's autopsy reports. And she must have had to summon all her faith to refer to Amy as a "martyr" in the tradition of Saint Stephen, whose life was also taken in a battery of stones. This painful sort of accommodationist "maternal thinking" allows a mother—Linda Biehl or Jeanette Fourie—to accept the suffering and death of her child as meaningful and even necessary.[13] But these sentiments are redeemed, as it were, by the mothers' lifesaving refusal to condemn their children's youthful killers, opting to see them, as one survivor said, "as children just like our own, children who under normal circumstances would have led ordinary lives."

Linda Biehl's faith in the idea of meaningful suffering allowed her to approach and to embrace the mother of one of her daughter's killers and at the TRC hearings, to publicly forgive the young men who murdered her daughter and to refuse to stand in the way of their receiving political amnesty. Linda Biehl—along with a multitude of mothers, sisters, and wives in South Africa who are being called on to do the same—summoned her family's tragedy to serve the larger cause of national reconciliation and healing. Of course, these individuals are exemplary figures.

The majority of whites in South Africa have yet to acknowledge their passive complicity with the apartheid state. Most have failed to get the point of the TRC. A great many ordinary South African whites I spoke with in malls and shopping centers, in tearooms and in public gardens, in office buildings and in hospitals, in private homes and large farm estates throughout the Western Cape described the TRC as witch-hunting, scapegoating, and a persecution of whites. If General Malan ordered massacres and if Eugene de Kock (Gobodo-Madikizela 2002) administered barbaric tortures on dissidents, they *had* to do so for the sake of national security. Those who were detained, "disappeared," and killed were "terrorists" and "commu-

nists" who were part of an international conspiracy to take over all of Southern Africa. Such statements were heard through the end of the 1990s.

SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

From the start, the TRC had to grapple with how to define truth during its work. Justice Albie Sachs (personal communication, 1999 and 2000) identified four levels of truth: *legal truth*, which can be verified only through hypothesis testing and hard evidence; *logical truth*, which is deduced from logical propositions; *experiential truth*, which is phenomenologically, subjectively, and personally experienced as "true" while not necessarily being historically or verifiably true; and *dialogical truth*, which is "negotiated" out of a vibrant cacophony of voices contesting, combating, sharing, and sometimes drowning each other out." Sachs concluded that the TRC was most able to produce the fourth form, dialogical truth.

Although these heuristic distinctions are useful, many ordinary people who came to the TRC seeking "truth" or some version of redemption left disappointed. Instead of finding the single, objective, sweet truth of the moralist, they had to make do with, as Sachs suggests, a compromise, settling for a crazy quilt of competing narratives, losses, sorrows, halting and incomplete confessions, and contested truths. The victims of gross human-rights abuses, in particular, did not want to be served anything resembling the partial, fragmented, indeterminate, shifting "truths" of the postmodernist, which so resembled the dissembling political realities circulated by the old apartheid state. Victims came to the TRC looking for an objective truth and with it, a partially restored sense of wholeness and a taste of justice. They had to settle, instead, for a "good enough" truth—an agreed-upon negotiated national narrative, but one that will at least place Black and White South Africans; Afrikaners and English speakers; Xhosas and Zulus; ANC and PAC members on the same map rather than in different "countries" across the road from each other.

FAILURES OF REMORSE

> Reconciliation does not come cheaply.
> —Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Archbishop Tutu, the administrative and moral leader of the TRC, was constantly challenged and disappointed by the refusal of so many white South African apartheid operatives to come to terms with their perverse ac-

tions. Justice Albie Sachs confided (personal communication) that he, too, wished t that the perpetrators of political violence had offered more expressions of remorse. For Sachs, the expression of remorse was essential not because of a sentimental fantasy of individual rebirth or psychological conversion but for the sake of the nation. An expression of remorse represented a public and personal *acknowledgment* of what had actually transpired during apartheid. Failing such expressions, the narratives of suffering so painfully wrought from the victims of the political terror could be easily dissembled by future historical revisionists of the era.

Justice Sachs's disappointment centered on people like PW Botha, Winnie Mandela, death-squad commander Dirk Coetzee, and F. W. de Klerk, who refused to acknowledge their roles in the pointless suffering of innocent victims and who thereby rejected the new history and remained frozen in the past. Indeed, few of those who played a central role in apartheid's dirty wars have acknowledged the evil actions, let alone accepted responsibility for them or expressed remorse for their actions using the TRC's idealized script for national reconciliation. To the contrary, the chief architects of and operatives behind the kidnapping, torture, and extrajudicial executions of political suspects defended their innocence to the bitter end, leaving the amnesty commissioners frustrated and the victims and survivors deeply disappointed.

The security police who kidnapped, tortured, and murdered the Black Consciousness leader Steven Biko told the TRC that they were not responsible for Steven's death in their custody. If so, why did they bother appearing at the amnesty hearings? If they had *no* gross human-rights violations to confess, then they had no crimes to be pardoned. At times, the "petitioners" seemed to be manipulating the amnesty hearings to affirm before TV cameras their unreconstituted political positions and to further humiliate the victims of their crimes, normally by asserting how "quickly" ANC activists could be turned into police informers.

"We discovered in the course of the [Amnesty] Commissions investigations," Archbishop Tutu sadly observed "that the supporters of apartheid were willing to lie at the drop of a hat. . . . They lied as if it were going out of fashion, brazenly, and with considerable conviction."

To what extent did perpetrators' lack of cooperation cast doubt on the entire TRC mission and process?

F. W. de Klerk, for example, refused to cooperate with the TRC. He refused to acknowledge his role in the operation of Vlakplas, the state-supported death-squad camp outside Pretoria, the state capital. When confronted with accusations by former National Party security police that they

8.   Archbishop Tutu, on election day, April 1994 (Courtesy of *The Argus* newspaper)

were acting on orders from above, de Klerk angrily replied, "My hands are clean."

In March 1996, I was granted an hour-long, open-ended interview with then Deputy President F. W. de Klerk at his parliamentary offices in Cape Town . The interview took place a few days before de Klerk stepped down from the Government of National Unity. Toward the end of the taped interview (Nancy Scheper-Hughes 1996), I broached the delicate question of the TRC and the role of the National Party (and of the former state president himself) in gross human-rights violations. Ex-President de Klerk replied:

"Political violence from the side of government forces is wrong. But political violence from the side of the so-called "liberation forces" where innocent civilians have been killed is equally wrong. There must be even-handed treatment of this violence by the TRC. I fought for that essential principle."

In response to my objections that *revolutionary* and *state-level* violence could not be morally equated, "F. W." replied:

"It is a fallacy that the National Party state behaved as it did just to suppress people. It is also a fallacy that everything was done just to promote apartheid. . . . I'm not saying that when security force people went beyond

9.   Frederik Willem de Klerk, former President of
South Africa; vice president under Nelson Man-
dela at the time this photo was taken, in his cham-
ber a few days before he resigned from office,
April 1996. (Nancy Scheper-Hughes)

what is internationally acceptable in fighting terrorism in our country that
it was right. I don't want to whitewash it at all. . . . There are international
norms. But what do you do when you are fighting revolutionary forces aim-
ing to overthrow the state in an unlawful manner when that state is inter-
nationally recognized, as ours was?"

"Do you have regrets about *anything?*" I asked.

"If I with all the advantage of hindsight, had to do everything all over
again, *none* of my major decisions would have been taken any differ-
ently."

"How would you like to be remembered?"

"As someone who made a positive difference, who had the guts to take
very fundamental decisions when the time was ripe."

When during the TRC hearings de Klerk was confronted with evidence that he personally and his National Party government had ordered death-squad killings, de Klerk, the Nobel Peace Prize winner, responded by slapping a lawsuit against the TRC and having his testimony (and the testimony against him and the National Party) deleted from the published transactions of the TRC hearings.

Two years later, in 1998, I interviewed Wynand Breytenbach, a former deputy defense minister who served in the Ministry of Defense under both Presidents Botha and de Klerk. Today, Breytanbach is comfortably retired on a government pension and living out the remainder of his days as a recovering heart-transplant patient in a luxurious and securely "gated" community in Sun Valley, outside Cape Town. I asked him his opinion of the TRC and of the amnesty hearings in particular. Like most of his colleagues in the Defense Forces, Breytanbach had not applied for amnesty. He explained to me:

"I just don't think this TRC is the right thing to do. Instead of reconciling us, it is making the divisions even larger. It is becoming a witch-hunt. What we must be doing now is to join people together. Most people—even I, as an official in the Secretary of Defense—were completely unaware of what was going on. I was shocked out of my mind to hear of the . . . Well, lets just call them atrocities and that sort of thing. It positively gives me goose bumps. I just can't believe it. Some of those people standing up there before the TRC, I know them well. You would never have thought that such things were going on. What is coming out there, well, it just shakes me out of my mind."

"Do you watch the weekly televised summaries of the TRC?"

"Yah, I watch it, I watch it with disgust. But I can tell you that I sat in at all the top executive meetings where all these decisions were taken. There was [General] Magnus Malan, myself, the whole Defense Council, all the generals and so on and I swear to you *never* were these sorts of things discussed. O.K., we said that we must experiment with some things in this area [i.e., torture; dirty tricks] to try to get stability for the country. But some of these characters went out and slaughtered people like cattle. . . It was like . . . well, if you ever read the *Sword and the Swastika* you can see what the Germans did to the Jews in the past war. It was sickening, I walked around the house for days after I read it. It left such an impression. You just can't believe it. Even there in Germany, in Europe, you can find the same things as happened here. It all boils down to a few bad individuals, a few rotten apples, small people sitting in big jobs who think that they can play God.

Chaps thinking that they can just 'remove' certain people. But nowhere and at no time were these things ever discussed during our executive meetings."

"So communication had broken down and de Klerk and Botha had no idea of what was happening within their own forces?" (I asked incredulously).

"No, they must have known *something* because when I was a member of the Security Committee we kept asking for money for arms and such to take care of the problems. It was a case of people looking you in the eye and saying one thing while doing another. Now some of these chaps are in for the high jump, and as far as I am concerned, let them go. I don't care."

"You are opposed to amnesty then?"

"No, amnesty is a good thing. If a man has something on his chest, he should come out and confess it and get amnesty for it."

"Has anything really shocked you coming out of the TRC hearings?"

[Deep sigh!] "Ach! So many things. That [Eugene] de Kock fellow . . . .now *he's* a real monster.[14] That shocked me. And the Biko thing. And this Kondile case that is going on now [at the Cape Town TRC amnesty hearings]. The burnings of the bodies and all that. It is just terrible. But, again, I go back to the Nazi era when pretty much the same thing happened. People lost all sense of humanity. If you really want to talk about atrocities, when I was stationed in Kenya during the Mau Mau massacres I used to fly and do observations from the air. I saw farmers, cattle, and small babies— all of them slaughtered. You can't sleep for months after seeing something like that. And, even today into KwaZulu–Natal you will find massacres still going on. Blacks killing the Blacks. So, this whole business is not so clearcut. *All* the races are to blame, and there is a lot more to this than just apartheid politics."

"What else is at stake?"

"What really concerns me now is that there is no more law and order in the country. When my four grown sons see these so-called disadvantaged people marching in the streets, breaking things, and stealing whatever they want, they become very negative and cynical. They think that there is no good policing any more. And they think that if *these people* can get away with this, whites can too. But I tell them never to lower their standards, not to become like the bad eggs who are destroying what is left of our poor country."

In this extraordinary interview, the former deputy minister of defense managed to both deny and assert his role in police atrocities, to attribute

blame to those both above and below him, to reassure himself that the atrocities committed by the apartheid state were not unique to his country and that similar events had taken place in a "civilized" place like Germany, not to mention in Kenya during the Mau Mau era. In the end, Breytanbach identified those responsible as a "few bad apples," the almost laughable defense used by most of the former National Party leaders. And he identified the present-day "spoilers" as poor and black South Africans who have "no respect" for law and order and who are corrupting the morals of good young white people, including his own sons.

Like a great many South African whites I have met and interviewed since 1993, General Breytanbach failed to see the enormous grace by which he, his sons, and all white South Africans have been miraculously spared. Breytenbach never gave serious thought to applying for amnesty under the TRC for any human-rights violations in which his own ministry had a role. Most amnesty petitions came not from the higher ranks of apartheid leadership but from their small-fry operatives, including many black police collaborators whose public admissions of guilt and complicity with the white state often provoked rage and hate among their victims and former neighbors and kin.[15] Amnesty petitions also came from PAC militants, like the Biehl killers and those convicted in the tavern and church massacres, who were already in jail and had the most to gain (and nothing to lose) from a public confession.

One spectacular amnesty plea from a leading white police security officer and particularly hated interrogator, police Sergeant Jeffrey Benzien, captured international attention. During his halting testimony at the TRC, Sergeant Benzien, a large beefy white man with a blunt nose and bulging eyes, got out of his seat and bent down before live TV cameras to demonstrate on the floor his special "wet-bag" torture. This technique took police detainees to the edge of death and back, and it usually got them to talk. In all the apartheid state trials of Black activists from the Eastern Cape who were sentenced to long prison terms, most were convicted solely on "confessions" and other information that Benzien extracted during his infamous torture sessions.

While observing Benzien expertly pin a man's arms behind his back and putting the wet sack over his head, one of his former victims present at the amnesty hearing could not refrain from asking Benzien the question "Tell me, what kind of man uses a method like that on other human beings?" Benzien replied that he had actually asked himself the same question. This question was why he decided to come before the TRC: "It is something I have to sort out with myself." When asked by Tony Yengeni, an ANC mil-

itant and youth leader, how it felt to put the bag around Yengeni's head, causing him to suffocate and wish that he were dead, Benzien briefly lost his composure. But all he would concede was that the methods he used followed a "Draconian law instituted by the Nationalist Government."

Pressed for details on his various rampages, Benzien, like many of his colleagues in the security forces, claimed to be confused, anxious, sleepless, and forgetful, amnesiac even. When confronted with his victims' accusations, Benzien would say only that he "might" have done something like that: "If I said that I put electrodes in his nose I could be wrong. If I said that I attached electrodes to his genitals, I may be wrong. If I said that I put a probe into his rectum, I might be wrong. The specific methods . . . I can't say. I could have used any of those."

When Benzien's victims expressed their profound skepticism that he could "forget the beatings, tortures, and humiliations he had visited upon them in detention, Benzien pointed out that, naturally, these memories would matter much more to the survivor than to the security officer: "I am willing to concede that your memory will be better than mine on these details." Like Adolf Eichmann (Arendt 1963), Jeffrey Benzien appeared to be a shallow and hollow human being, a career police officer who followed orders and was proud of the trust his superiors put in him. He expressed no (and was perhaps incapable of) remorse. His only regret was that his former superiors were not present at the TRC to back him up: "What I find in the absence of those in the Security Branch who could possibly help this [TRC] commission is that I have been left out on a limb." He implied, too, that he was being scapegoated and publicly humiliated (before his wife and children) for actions that were thoroughly acceptable to the state and to his superiors.

Ashly Forbes, another of Benzien's victims who was present for his testimony, expressed empathy for the murderer: "At first I felt a bit sorry for him when I heard him speak because he had a lot on his shoulders, a lot of things to get off his chest . . . and he seemed like such a lonely figure up there." But then a glimmer of the evil one reappeared. When Forbes's turn came, he asked Benzien this question: "Why do you think that after three months in your hands I had tried to commit suicide. Could you perhaps from your perspective try to explain to the Commission how I could have come to that point? That I tried to escape you by trying to commit suicide?"

Benzien resisted Forbes's description of their relationship, and he reminded him that on the day after he assaulted Forbes, they went out to eat together: "To refresh your memory—and I'm not saying it flippantly— didn't you say that it was the most Kentucky Fry [sic] Chicken you had ever

eaten? And on the way to the Eastern Transvaal where you were going to do some 'pointing out' [playing the role of police informer] can you remember that you saw snow for the first time? Do you remember that a husband and wife and their two children took pictures of you playing in the snow?"

In this wily counterattack, Benzien stripped his victim of his honor and his credibility, showing how easily the famous ANC militant was turned into an informer. All he needed to turn on his compatriots were a short reprieve from torture, a bucket of "Kentucky Fry Chicken," and a frolic in the snow. Yet, though Benzien could recall these details, he could not remember throwing Forbes on the ground and inserting an electric rod into his anus. "I deny!" he said. "And if I deny this, than one of the two of us is lying." In the end, the absent-minded torturer was rescued by the clinical defense by Benzien's personal therapist, Ria Kotze, a young Afrikaner psychologist who said that her patient had suffered a nervous breakdown and showed classic symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (Herman 1994). Benzien, she said, suffered from auditory hallucinations, was insomniac, and was emotionally labile, having on at least one occasion burst into tears, without explanation, in front of his wife. In short, Benzien, too, Ria Kotze argued, was also a victim of apartheid.

Benzien ultimately received political amnesty, and he is still working for the South African police, though he has been reduced to a low-profile job at the Cape Town airport. Benzien's torture victim, Ashly Forbes, did not contest the amnesty, and he (for one) accepted Benzien's medicalized dispensation.

> After he had put electrodes on me and knock me out and after that he would change his clothes and he would come over all fresh like and say, "Everything is OK. You have done very well, lets go out shopping or something." Then afterwards he would take you back to the cell again and he would start the torture all over again. And so, I tried to block it out of my memory. I didn't want to think about it. And I guess the same goes for him, maybe a defense mechanism takes over so that he forgets what it was he did to us. I can believe that.

Still, as Allan Young (1997) has noted about the American soldiers who participated in the My Lai massacre, the ability to apply a medical diagnosis and exemption just as easily to the perpetrator as to the victim is deeply morally troubling.

An attempt to interview Benzien led me to a rundown, working-class bungalow in a white suburb of Cape Town. Weeds had overtaken an area

that was once a garden. The drapes were tightly drawn. Several loud raps brought a timid, pale-faced little girl of perhaps nine or ten years to the front door. On encountering a stranger with a foreign accent, she shook her head and quickly closed the door, bolting it from inside. Her distress and shame were palpable. "Daddy, is it true what they say about you at my school?"

Forgiveness and the Madness of the Possible

> Must one not maintain that an act of forgiveness, if there is such a thing, must forgive the unforgivable, and without condition? . . . Even if this radical purity can seem excessive, hyperbolic? Because if I say (as I think) forgiveness is mad, and that it must remain a madness of the impossible, this is certainly not to exclude or disqualify it. It is even, perhaps, the only thing that arrives, that surprises, like a revolution, the ordinary course of history, politics, and law.
> —Jacques Derrida

Of all the mandates of the South African TRC, the strong institutional support (via the presence of "briefers" and "comforters") to encourage—though not demand—victims to "forgive" those who maimed, tortured, and humiliated them or murdered their loved ones has been the most widely criticized and contested aspect of the Commission, both within and outside South Africa (see especially Wilson 2000, 2001; Hamber and Wilson 2002) . Sally Engle Merry (2001) notes that the strongly Christian conception of forgiveness that infuses TRC proceedings is oddly lacking in the equally Christian obligation to repent and to do penance for evil acts.[16] Nader (1995) worries, with reason, about the fusing of the globalization of Western Christian morality with a transnational human-rights discourse that produces unstable truces that are vulnerable to outbreaks of collective retaliatory rage toward unpunished aggressors, as the history of the Balkans and Central Africa indicate.

Father Michael Lapsley, an Anglican priest, criticized the TRC on these grounds, accusing it of imposing a "cheap theology" of forgiveness. Although he accepted the conditional amnesty process of the TRC "on principle and for the sake of the greater good of South Africa," Lapsley expressed resentment toward those who expected him to show a spirit of uncomplicated, unconditional, "Christian" forgiveness. Father Lapsley said that his speeches and homilies were often misheard by white South Africans

and by Americans, who would come up to thank him for being "so forgiving" toward the apartheid operatives who had tried to kill him, when he never once mentioned forgiveness.

Albie Sachs (personal communication, 1998; see also Sachs 2000) told me about a situation in which he refused to embrace the national ethos of unconditional forgiveness, which had become a kind of civic duty. Soon after returning from exile in Mozambique, Albie was enjoying an evening out at a jazz bar, Rosie's and all that Jazz, on Cape Town's beautiful waterfront. He was approached by a heavyset white man, who asked in thickly Afrikaner-accented English: "Are you Albie Sachs?" "I am," Albie replied brusquely, and tried to move past him. But the large man blocked his way in the crowded room. "*Verskoon my*" ("Forgive me"), he said huskily in Afrikaans, staring at Albie's empty sleeve. His voice was almost drowned out by the drummers. Sachs said nothing. The man repeated more loudly, "Forgive me." Albie brushed him aside, saying in a broken Afrikaans mixed with English and Portuguese, "This lovely club is your forgiveness." And they parted company, both dissatisfied. Later, Albie thought of the things he might have said: "Don't ask *me* for forgiveness. I was a volunteer in the struggle. I chose my fate. What about the millions of Black South Africans who had no choice but to suffer and die under apartheid? Why not ask *them* for forgiveness?" Still later, when I met with Albie in 1998, he conceded : "What I probably *should* have done was to put my one good arm around the man, give him a half bear hug, and accept his forgiveness. But I just wasn't ready to do that."

Failures to forgive are easy to understand. The remorselessness of so many deeply implicated perpetrators is more difficult to accept. In observing the amnesty proceedings in Cape Town between January – and March in 1998, I was struck by the dry, banal, legalistic questioning and the emotionally and morally stunted testimonies given by tanned, relaxed, legally protected South African security police officers, such as the four officers who were implicated in the kidnapping, torture, murder, and burning of comrade Sizwe Kondile in 1981. Kondile's case involved some of the top brass of the old Police Security Forces.

The four former Eastern Security Cape security police who applied for amnesty for crimes, including thirteen counts of murder, admitted that they had met to compare notes and refresh each others' memories. Still, their recitations of the "facts" diverged in many ways. Kondile had been severely tortured at Jeffreys Bay police station, where he was held incommunicado under the state's Terrorism Act. Police officer Raath had bragged to another operative that they had really taught Kondile a lesson: "his brain was splat-

tered." When the policemen were done with him, they carried Kondile's semiconscious body to a secluded spot in the country where the officers held a *braii*—an Afrikaner family-style picnic. They purchased *vous* (sausages) and other meats, cold beer, brandy, and sodas. They built a bonfire and cooked the meats, offering some to Kondile, who was tied up nearby. At some point during the *braii*, the police shot and dragged Kondile's body to the fire, where he was burned, while the picnickers passed around drinks (and jokes).

The amnesty applications disagreed on many details, such as who was present at the *braii* murder of comrade Kondile. Police officer Raath startled the commissioners at one point by saying, "I don't know these other people, but Dirk Coetzee and I were clearly at the same *party*." Asked to repeat his answer, an uncomfortable and embarrassed Raath tried to recover: "I mean, we were not at the same *place*." However, all four amnesty petitioners agreed on the motive for the execution: Kondile was a dangerous and untrustworthy double agent. After the police discovered a letter revealing that Kondile was clearly double-crossing them by passing on privileged information to ANC comrades across the border, they decided that they had to execute him. They faked his release from jail and abducted him to the border town of Kmonatipoort, where they murdered him and burned his body to hide the evidence. Adding insult to injury, the four colluding police officers described the victim in the presence of Kondile's grieving family members, as a despicable *askary,* a police informer: "At first he resisted, but then Kondile gave us a lot of useful information."

At some moments during these painful amnesty hearings, the bloodless recitation of the tortures and defamation of character seemed only to rub salt in the wounds of the survivors who sat in front-row seats marked "Family Members." As the police began to describe the *braii* burning of her son, Charity Kondile had to be borne up on either side by her surviving adult children. As she walked unsteadily out of the room, she stated, "I will *never* forgive them."

BYSTANDERS: APATHY AND INDIFFERENCE

An intriguing moment took place during the TRC process when an unnamed Indian–South African woman applied for amnesty for "apathy." She noted that all individuals "should be held accountable by history for our lack of necessary action in times of crisis . . . . In exercising apathy rather than commitment we allowed others to sacrifice their lives for the sake of our freedom and an increase in our standard of living." Unfortunately,

though perhaps necessarily, the petition was rejected by the TRC as falling outside its brief. Apathy was not a punishable crime and had no clear political intent. Therefore, it could not be considered for official pardon. As Jackie Rose (2002) noted in her discussion of this case, the TRC lost a crucial opportunity to explore the real extent of social and self-transformation in the new South Africa.

The TRC will apparently stand or fall on the extent to which it has been able to touch the lives of ordinary South Africans, forcing them to reconsider their roles during the apartheid years. Obviously, apartheid could not have survived without the consent of a large number of ordinary bystanders: English-speaking whites, as well as Afrikaners, Jews, Hindus, Moslems, and Christians—all those who were enriched and enabled by the systematic violence against the majority population of black South Africans. Daniel Goldhagen (1996) called these ordinary South African beneficiaries of apartheid the necessary passive executioners: they were good enough within the context of their contained and constricted lives.

Among these bystanders was Jack Swart, the rather soft-spoken, gentle Afrikaner man who was Nelson Mandela's guard, personal assistant, cook, and bottle washer at Victor Verster in Paarl, Mr. Madiba's (the Mandela clan name) last prison, where he was kept under a kind of house arrest. A career prison police officer who enjoyed cooking, Swart's duties included preparing the future president of South Africa for his anticipated release. Swart instructed Mandela in how to dress, how to swim a dog paddle in the small private pool attached to the ranch house in a secluded part of the prison grounds, and how to use such innovations as the computer, the remote control, and the microwave oven. During my two visits with him, the stiff but amiable prison guard reminisced about Victor Verster's most celebrated prisoner and about Nelson Mandela's enjoyment of brown rice and lasagna, which were novelties to him.

Swart said he was amazed to find that Mandela was such an easy inmate and that the prisoner didn't have the look or demeanor of a terrorist. But the guard never once questioned the absolute right of the apartheid state to deny Mandela his freedom for twenty-seven years. Life had its little ironies, he seemed to suggest. Moreover, Jack Swart clearly had an agenda in meeting with me. Toward the end of my first visit to his neat little stucco home on the grounds of Victor Verster prison, during which I had jotted down a few of Madiba's favorite recipes, including one for a creamy chicken and mushroom pasta, Jack asked if I might want to work as his literary agent. He hoped that a market might exist—and some royalties—in peddling a

10.   Captain Jack Swart, Nelson Mandela's cook, at his
home on the grounds of Victor Verster Prison, 1996.
(Nancy Scheper-Hughes)

collection of recipes under the title, proposed without a hit of irony: *The Nelson Mandela Prison Cook Book.*

When I confronted Albie Sachs with this story, his reply was "even Jack Swart, in his own little way, is part of the transformation of South Africa. Can't you see that he is recognizing that the tables have been changed and he is hoping that he can benefit from his 'accidental' proximity to his former prisoner? That strikes me as quite wonderful!"

Similarly, when Larry King (*Larry King Live*, CNN, May 16, 2000) asked Mandela whether he hated his former prison captors, the president answered, "No, because you must take into account that all promotions were dependent on pretending a show of support for apartheid, and many times this was a false front. I know from my own experiences with prison wardens

that many good people put on a false attitude to get a promotion, not because they believed in it. Some of the wardens became our friends, and they would never make us do anything that was beneath our dignity."

In their statements, both Albie Sachs and Nelson Mandela (who suffered atrociously under apartheid) come close to exonerating the complicit bystander or the obedient civil servant who was "just" carrying out state's orders (*Eichmann in Jerusalem*, for example) on the same grounds that Hannah Arendt (and others) have used to condemn them—that the operatives were small and limited human beings, lacking moral vision, who were concerned only with their own and their family's well-being. Mandela accepts this argument as reason enough for his prison warders to follow state's orders, an amazing position for him to take. His position is a dramatic embodiment of the African value of *umbuntu* (we are who we are by virtue of a shared humanity, with all the limitations as well as the transcendent capabilities). In other words, Mandela was able to empathize with his jailers.

THE SPIRIT MOVES

I once reminded Albie Sachs of his own "failure" to accept the remorse of the Afrikaner stranger who appeared unbidden at Rosie's café. Sachs smiled ruefully. But Albie's own day of final reckoning, brought about by the machinations of the TRC, did finally come about. He told me the following story:

> In February 1999 I received a call in my chambers in Johannesburg. "Judge Sachs, a man named Henry is here to see you. He says he was involved in an assassination attempt and would you be willing to see him?" So, I went out to the reception area and standing next to my secretary was Henry, a little man, shorter than myself. Younger, leaner. I looked at him; he looked at me. We walked together down the hall to my chambers—he with a tight, military gait, me with my looser judicial ambulatory style. Henry told me that he had come from a very decent family, God-fearing. He joined the army at a young age and had advanced thorough the ranks rapidly. He was quite proud of that. He was chosen for an elite corps involved with planning the logistics for commando-like attacks on enemy targets, of which I had been one. He had photographed my car, planned where the bomb should be placed. Then the plan was postponed and he had a falling out with his superior about it. Finally, he read about the attack on my life he had planned in the newspapers. By then he was involved in many other "operations" in Mozambique that were designed to create mayhem. President Botha fi-

nally called it off. I was curious to know more, but on the other hand I wanted to leave all the detailed questioning to the TRC.

We talked and talked. Henry told me about his life since leaving the army. He was full of grievances and complaints. He had been asked to leave the army and was given a "golden handshake" of 150,000 rand (then about $30,000) which he considered grossly inadequate and which he had invested in some murky arms importation deal that had gone bankrupt. He said that he, too, had been injured during duty in his foot (suggesting, perhaps, that we were both victims of physical injury). Finally, Henry remarked at how unfair the world was. Here I was now ["the terrorist"] sitting in [the high] Court, honored and respected, paid a handsome salary, and here was he, after being so faithful to the old government, he who had fought so hard to preserve what he was told was justice and civilized values, now discarded, unemployed, and out in the cold. He was now angry at the generals and the other higher ups who had used him. Unbelievably, he was looking to *me* for sympathy and validation of his view that life was terribly unfair. Meanwhile, I looked at him wondering just who this man was who had tried to kill me. He didn't know me. He didn't seem to hate me, then or now. At the time of the bombing the one thing I could not stand was the idea that someone who did not know me at all was willing to extinguish me. And here it was confirmed. There was no personal connection, no relation. I was simply in the way of the old state. Perhaps he was thinking along similar lines about me.

We were both reluctant to end the conversation. But when the time came I took the initiative. "Henry," I said. "Normally when people leave my chambers I shake hands with them." I resisted making a cheap joke [waving his empty shirt sleeve]: "But you *know* why I can't shake hands with you." Instead I said: "I can't shake hands with you *now,* but if you go to the TRC and tell them everything that you know, then afterwards I will shake your hand." Henry walked away, but this time, he didn't have that smart soldier stride, instead he looked like a soldier in retreat, his shoulders were hunched over, he had a defeated, downhearted, disconsolate air.

About a year later, at a party given by the producer of a new South African soap opera, Sachs heard his name being called: "Albie!" Then louder: "Albie." Sachs said that he turned to see a familiar face: "Henry! It's you!" "Yes." So the two men went to a corner of the room, where Henry started talking very rapidly. "I wrote to the TRC and I told them everything I knew. And then Bobby, Sue, and Farouk came to question me." "These were *my* ANC friends," said Albie. "I was in exile with them, and now sud-

denly Henry was their friend, on a first-name basis with them. I could tell that he had told the truth. So I repeated to him my promise, and I shook his hand, and Henry went away bouncy and elated. But I nearly fainted."

Like Albie Sachs, Dawie Ackerman also had to confront the people who had done him harm. Ackerman faced the young men who killed his wife in the St James Church massacre when he appeared at the TRC, intending initially to contest their petition for amnesty. But toward the end of the amnesty proceedings Dawie was transformed. In making a final statement before the amnesty panel, Dawie directly confronted the young men who killed his wife. He told the four young men how he had had to step over dead bodies to get to Marita, his wife of more than twenty years, who was still sitting upright in her front-row pew. He told them that he was hoping against hope that Marita might just be shell-shocked but still alive, until he finally crossed that endless expanse of space and reached for her, but just as he touched her back, her body rolled over and fell with a dull thud to the floor, her special Sunday clothes splattered with blood. Dawie continued, his composure broken, his voice cracking with the tears that, he said, had been a very long time—five years—in coming:

> I never cried since I lost my wife other than to have silent cries. I've never had an emotional outburst till now. When . . . when Mr. Makoma here [the young man who was seventeen at the time he took part in the church attack] was testifying, he talked about his own tortures in prison, and that he was suicidal at times, but that he never once cried. I thought to myself—and I passed you [a TRC counselor] a note, asking you to please bring your cross-examination to an end. Because . . . what are we doing here? The truth . . . the truth . . . yes. But when I looked at the way Mr. Makoma answered and saw all his anger . . . I thought, what on earth are we doing? *He* cannot be reconciled.

At this point in his statement, weeping and emotionally overwrought, Dawie Ackerman asked the three young amnesty applicants to turn their heads and face him directly. Amazingly. their heads (which had been bowed to the floor) snapped up to attention, and they looked directly at Dawie, who said, "This is the first opportunity we have had to look each other in the eye while talking. I want to ask Mr. Makoma, who actually entered the Church, a question. . . . My . . . my wife was sitting at the door when you came in. [Dawie weeps, and the words seem to be dragged from the roots of his shaking body]. She was wearing a long blue coat. *Please, can you remember if you shot her?*"

Makoma looked up at Dawie terrified, as though seeing Hamlet's father's ghost. He bit his lower lip and slowly shook his head. No, he could not re-
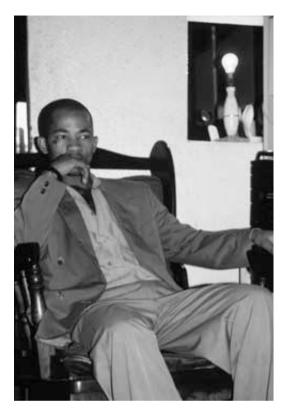
member—not Marita nor her long, blue coat. But all three young men apologized to Dawie. Makoma, the most affected, said, "We are truly sorry for what we have done. But it was not intentional. Although people died we did not do that out of our own will. It was the situation in South Africa we were living under. And now we are asking you please, do forgive us."

Dawie Ackerman did so by withdrawing his carefully prepared legal objections to the amnesty process. Immediately after the hearing, Dawie and several other survivors, including Bishop Reteif, withdrew to a smaller room that the TRC arranged for them, where, in private, they met with the young militants, each of whom walked around the table addressing each survivor in turn, shaking hands, and expressing messages of condolence. Brian Smart, a survivor of St. James, was impressed by the ages of the young militants: "They were only seventeen years old, and I could relate to that. When I was eighteen I was in the South Africa Air Force and sent out in defense of the realm, if you like. The only difference between myself and them was that I was operating under controlled military orders. So a massacre like this one would not have happened. In their case the command structure was very weak and, unfortunately, they had the normal soldier's ability to kill, just as I had."

Bishop Reteif, who was not in the church until moments after the massacre took place, and who suffered a great deal of pastoral survivor guilt, originally opposed amnesty for the PAC "terrorists." His initial response to the massacre was to heroize the South African police and to demonize the PAC youth as the "instruments" of evil forces. After the TRC hearings, the bishop was contrite and conscious of the "blindness" of his evangelical church to the suffering caused by apartheid and to the ways that his congregation had benefited from the suffering of the majority population. He told me, "Finally, I understood why it [the TRC] was necessary.

As for Linda and Peter Biehl, their extraordinary faith in their daughter's "meaningful death" allowed them to "move forward," as Peter said in his down-to-earth Midwestern style. For them, moving forward meant not only facing, but embracing, their daughter's killers and devoting the remainder of their lives to human-rights and community-development work in the townships surrounding Cape Town, especially Guguletu, where Amy was killed and where three of the young men convicted in her death—Easy Nofemla, Mangesi, and Ntbeko Peni—have returned to live since they were granted amnesty by the TRC.

In accepting amnesty for the killers of their loved ones, Albie Sachs, the Biehls, Ginn Fourie, and Dawie Ackerman—along with a multitude of black South Africans who have done the same—have allowed their own personal

11.   "Easy" Nofemela, one of the killers of Amy Biehl, at home in Guguletu township, Cape Town, 1999, after release from prison following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. (Nancy Scheper-Hughes)

tragedies to serve the process of national healing and reconciliation. This transcendent goal has allowed them to find some meaning, some peace, some beauty even, in the original tragedy and the mayhem it created. To be sure, however, some, like young Makoma, remain bitter and unreconciled, feeling abandoned by their command structure and humiliated before their comrades or peers. The very structure of the TRC pathologized and individualized the political struggle, turning all those who participated in the proceedings into either victims or perpetrators. Political resistance was a residual category.

After his TRC amnesty hearing, Makoma, then serving a twenty-year sentence for his part in the St James Church massacre, returned to Polsmor

prison to await the result of his amnesty petition, which was eventually accepted. But though Dawie Ackerman, Bishop Reteif, and other church members seem to have experienced a personal and collective catharsis through the TRC process, Makoma did not find any such relief. During a prison visit that was arranged between Makoma and Dawie Ackerman's daughter, Leisel asked Makoma how he *felt* during his amnesty hearings when he was shown the graphic police photos "of all the bodies of the people and all the blood" of those he had killed. Makoma replied to the young woman whose mother he had killed:

> Yah, I remember seeing that and I had bad feelings then. It *was* bad. But, no matter how I feel now, at this time, or at this moment, about what I did then was bad, there is nothing which I can do. Those people are dead. Why ask me how I feel about that? How I feel cannot change anything, cannot bring them back to life.

As a disciplined revolutionary, Makoma felt that these questions (about his "feelings") were unseemly and beside the point. Dead is dead; what happened cannot be undone.

But Ntbeko Peni and Easy Nofemela, who petitioned for and received amnesty for their role in the killing of Amy Biehl, felt differently about the TRC. With great difficulty, I arranged to meet with the young men in their shacks in a muddy section of Guguletu in July 1999.

At first, I faced a wall of seething silence. Finally, Ntbeko explained that he did not believe in or trust the TRC, which he described as "an arm of the ANC" and no friend of their organization, the PAC. But, he said, he decided to "confess" anyway because of the "heaviness" in his heart. Yet, the confession had not helped, and since he had received amnesty and returned home to live in Guguletu, his days had been very dark. Ntbeko said that he could not sleep. He could not romance his girl friend. He could not work. He could not study. He hid from people. He was angry and full of shame. Then he said, "I thought to myself that there might be one thing that could make me better. I wanted to tell that Mr. Biehl one to his face that I did not take the death of his daughter lightly. That this thing has weighed heavily on me. And I wanted him to know that he is a hero father to me. So I thought that I would ask you to help me, to get that Peter Biehl to listen to me and to really forgive me . That would be good, as good as bread."
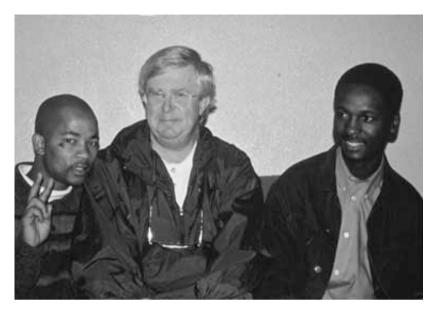
I arranged for Peter Biehl to come to the home of Ntbeko Peni and accompanied him to the meeting. Initially, Peter responded with anger at my

12.   Ntbeko Peni, one of Amy Biehl's killers, in his shack in Guguletu township, Cape Town, 1999. (Nancy Scheper-Hughes)

suggestion. Hadn't he suffered enough? Then he called Linda Biehl, who was back at their home in Southern California, and she urged Peter to meet with the boys because maybe (she said) Amy was wanting this meeting to happen. After an initially painful standoff between Peter Biehl and Ntbeko, Easy Nofemela, and several of their comrades, the boys tried to explain their political position to Peter along with their sense of sadness over a death, they now said, should never have happened. They told Peter about the youth group they had started in Gugs, and they showed us photos of the hikes they took with the young people up and around Table Mountain. Peter began to listen attentively, and before the meeting had ended, he had invited the two boys to work for the Amy Biehl Foundation. After shaking their heads in disbelief, they accepted.

The boys were apprenticed as welders and helped Peter Biehl (who died in 2001) organize the distribution and sale of "Amy's Bread" out of the large communal bakery the Biehls helped establish in the community. Linda Biehl told me that she is proud that Easy and Ntbeko shyly call her "Mama," a term of respect that Xhosa youth use for all mature women. "It may sound strange," she once said, "but I feel so close to Amy when I am holding the hand of the young man who killed her." Not only Ntbeko, but

13.   Hope and optimism despite present difficulties: the late Peter Biehl with "Easy" Nofemela and Ntbeko Peni, two of his daughter's killers, Guguletu township, Cape Town, 1999. (Nancy Scheper-Hughes)

Linda, too, refers to the "great weight" that has been lifted from her, even if her forgiveness will never fill her permanent void and sadness.

HOPE AND OPTIMISM DESPITE PRESENT DIFFICULTIES

The TRC process opened up new social spaces in which conversations and interactions that were once unthinkable could take place. The unlikely encounters between perpetrators and victims who find that they are able to empathize with each other's situation are one wholly unanticipated effect of the TRC, and they appear to be unique in the history of such formal approaches to reconciliation. Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (2003), whom I interviewed at her TRC office in downtown Cape Town in 2001, was surprised by the empathy she was able to feel (and express) toward Eugene de Kock, the merciless apartheid killer known to South Africans as "Prime Evil." Once she addressed de Kock by his Christian name, Eugene, she realized that even this serial killer was a human being who suffered and repented and who accepted his life sentence in prison, asking only that he be transferred to a cell closer to "common" Black prisoners, because he could no

longer tolerate the inane racist talk of the die-hard Afrikaners with whom he was imprisoned.

LESSONS AND LEGACY OF THE TRC

The South African TRC was a hybrid institution; it was neither a court of law nor guerrilla theater but shared aspects of both. It was like no other truth commission. It was videotaped and televised, and its proceedings had almost complete transparency. The TRC tried experiments and innovations. For example, the Commission offered witnesses and survivors of human-rights atrocities the support of "comforters," people who were comparable to the traditional "doulas" who serve laboring mothers. Unlike regular court hearings, the TRC hearings encouraged the expression of strong emotions, led by Archbishop Tutu, who set an example to a country that thought it had lost the ability to feel anything. The TRC provided a national theater on a large stage where dialogue, difference, and dignity were displayed and celebrated. Consequently, the moral as well as the political climate of South Africa has changed. The transformation of knowledge into personal acknowledgment has reintegrated the aberrant actions inside a moral universe.

The idea of a truth commission provoked a national soul-searching that sometimes turned up in the oddest places. For example, an elderly Afrikaner couple with concerned looks on their faces approached me one day on the steps of St. George's Cathedral in Cape Town (the Anglican church of Archbishop Tutu). Where could they find "the Bishop," they asked me. When I said he was away, they looked crestfallen. I asked why they wanted to see him. "To confess to the Truth Commission," they said. "You see, we realize now that we did not treat Black people very well, and now we want to make a fresh start." I explained that the TRC was a very formal process "with lawyers and official documents" and that it was meant for murderers and torturers, not for ordinary people like them who could have behaved better.

The real effects of the TRC are and will continue to be felt in such small ripples, in community and church meetings where people can now talk about what happened to them, how they behaved, and how they might begin to set the record straight. Long after the formal TRC has disbanded and all the grief counselors have returned to business as usual, a multitude of little TRCs will still be needed to help ordinary people deal with the many perversions and horrors of apartheid.

I will end with the story of Hennie's redemption. Hennie was, at the time I first knew him, an Afrikaner security guard for the University of Cape

Town. He frequently dropped by our home in 1993 and 1994 and I feared at the time that either he was a spy or he had a special fondness for one of our adult daughters. But he seemed genuinely curious and well-intentioned. I ran into Hennie again in Cape Town in 1996 during the spontaneous celebration of South Africa's winning the All-Africa Soccer Cup that year. Hennie was simply beside himself with excitement. He tried to whirl me around in the street as he struggled in his limited English to find just the right words to express the magnitude of the moment. "Did you see the game?" he asked. I did, I said, and on a big screen at the new and decidedly integrated Manneberg Pub in downtown Cape Town . "*Both* goals?" he probed. "I did," I replied.

"And did you see our President [Mandela] right there out on the field? Do you know what this means for us?" And without waiting for an answer, Hennie continued: "It means we white people are not all, one hundred percent bad. And God is willing to forgive us. Imagine—that He would give *us*, of all people, such great heroes! It is a sign that we are going in a good way now. We are not hated any more. Before, in the old South Africa, it was like we were Fat Elvis—sick, disgusting, bloated, ugly. And now, in the new, we are like skinny Elvis—young, handsome, strong. In the new South Africa, we have all been reborn."

In his awkward way, Hennie invoked the "miracle of rebirth that saves the world," to which Hannah Arendt referred in *The Human Condition*. Even in Hennie the Boer, we can see the emergence of new men and women made possible through hope and optimism. Collectively, the narratives of TRC participants and others illustrate history's working itself out as grace, not divine grace but the human grace of those white South Africans who have not turned their backs and those millions of black South Africans who have not raised their hands in righteous anger and vengeance and who are both willing to take a chance on the birth of a new nation, a new covenant.

NOTES

1. Despite the absence of an anthropological theory of remorse, a large and substantial literature is available on the theology (see, for example, Thomas Aquinas [1932] on conscietia), the psychology/psychoanalysis (see Freud's "Mourning and

Melancholia" [1917] and "Ego and the Id" [1923]), and the moral philosophy (see Kierkegaard 1980a and 1980b) of remorse. *Remorse and Reparation,* edited by Murray Cox (1999), is a good place to begin.

2. Remorse is a concept that is part of a larger semantic network that includes guilt, shame, regret, repentance, reparation, and more distantly, (self-)accusation, culpability, punishment, and justice. Collectively, the terms refer to the aftermaths of one human being's intentional (or not) grievous harm to another. The etymology of *remorse* (Latin, *re-* and *morde*) includes the meanings "to bite," "to sting," "to attack again." Perhaps a good vernacular translation is "what goes around comes around." One is attacked, bitten by the sting of one's own aggression. In this context, I think of the story of Eugene deKock, South Africa's notorious organizer of death squads at Vlakplas, the apartheid government's killing farm. In a private interview in his prison, deKock told Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (2003), a member of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, that following one killing spree in particular. he could not remove the stink from his body despite several showers. The taint of death also remained on his laundered clothing. All he could do was discard his clothing and try to mask the stench of his own flesh. DeKock was suffering from unconscious *re-morde,* stung by as-yet-unacknowledged remorse.

3. In his anthropological study of serial killers, *Hunting Humans,* the Canadian anthropologist Elliot Leyton describes a complex of psychopathological emotions that are not far from those in Renato Rosaldo's depiction of Ilongot headhunters. This observation returns psychological anthropology to a very uncomfortable space, the early anthropological notion that behavior that may be considered mentally deranged behavior in one society (our own, say) may be expected and rewarded behavior in another (the Ilongot, say).

4. At the closed conference "Dealing with the Past" in the Western Cape in early 1994, which I was privileged to attend and from which emerged the shape that the South African truth commission would take, attendees expressed concern about the problem of white South African "denial" and the need to make explicit, transparent, and public the atrocities committed by apartheid in their name.

5. Satire was once described as tragedy plus time. In an interview with the South African playwright and humorist Pieter-Dirk Uys, he said that apartheid's culture of death didn't allow South Africans the luxury of satire: "We just had to show the way it was, the blood still fresh and slippery on our hands. . . . For so many years I was blessed with a government that had absolutely no sense of humor. . . . It didn't take much to make them madder. All one had to do was to repeat what they had said. The South African government wrote my script and that is why I resented paying taxes; I called it royalties. . . . How can you take seriously a person who won't sit next to another person because of their race, creed, or color? Racism is absurd. Absurdity can kill when it loses its label and becomes a way of life. Laughter controls the madness of humans and makes them human again."

6. This degree of social alienation did not exist between white and mixed-race ("Colored") Capetonians, insofar as this part of Africa, especially the Boland (farm) region, was a special labor reserve for colored workers during the apartheid years. I treat the special dilemma of the mixed-race population elsewhere (Scheper-Hughes 2006).

7. In the fertile valley of Franschhoek, the small population of white farmers had forced Colored residents out of the spectacularly beautiful central village under the Group Areas Act in the late 1960s. More than a hundred Colored farmers and home-

owners were forced to sell their sturdy Cape Dutch homes and some of the country's most valuable real estate to white Afrikaners for a pittance. The Group Areas Act was nothing more than a huge real-estate swindle. To date, only seventeen of these households have been able to locate clear titles to their original properties, and even for these people, restitution is uncertain. Achieving restitution is certain to take a very long time and will entail protracted legal struggles, for which most white families in central Franschhoek are preparing themselves.

8. Any social scientist working in South Africa has to confront the ambiguities and legacies of European colonial and Afrikaner apartheid classifications of race and culture. Under apartheid (1948–94), racial classifications were used to separate people into absolute categories of difference. The apartheid state constructed and enforced—with violence—a cockamamie system of group identities. Over time, the state revised its official categories and modernized its arguments to marshal national and international support for its racist policies. The Population Registration Act of 1950, which was the backbone of the apartheid system, was amended fifteen times between 1956 and 1986 (West 1988: 102). Section 1 of the act established three basic racial classifications: Black, Colored, and White. A Black (previously "Native" or Bantu) was defined as a person "who is, or who is generally accepted as, a member of any aboriginal race or tribe of Africa." A White person was defined (in extremely hedged-in language) as "a person who is (a) in appearance obviously a White person, and who is *not* generally accepted as a Coloured person; or (b) is generally accepted as a White person and is not in appearance obviously not a White person" (101). Later clauses deleted those formerly classified as White who by their "habits, education, speech, deportment, and demeanor" or by their residence or their employment or by virtue of their social mixing were recognized and accepted by another racial group. This clause referred to "race traitors" who married into another racial group and therefore had to live in non-White communities. It also covered South African entertainers like Johnny Clegg, the "White Zulu," who used Zulu dress, language, dance, and affect in his stage performances. Finally, the White category excluded "those who were once classified as White but who voluntarily confess that they are by descent a Black or a Coloured person, unless it is proven that this admission is patently false." Coloreds were defined under apartheid as the racial population formed by historical mixing of the indigenous Khoi-San peoples and the early European settlers: the Dutch, but also the English, Portuguese, and Germans. Later, Coloreds mixed with African Bantu groups and Malay peoples who were brought to the Cape Colony as slaves. But the official legal category of "Coloured" in the Population Registration Act was simply a residual one. A Colored person was a "person who is *not* a White person or a *Black.*" These racial classifications, reinforced by neighborhood and residential apartheid, have not been destroyed by political democratization or by the new political ideology of the rainbow nation. Thus, the observer is left with the everyday reality of simultaneously contested and claimed deeply racialized social self-identities. Political correctness in South Africa demands that scare quotes be used to destabilize the races—so that "Black," "Bantu," "Colored," and "White" convey the social reality within the unfinished revolution.

9. By way of comparison with views of race in South Africa, see V. S. Naipaul (1989) for a seering and disturbing portrait of whites and white racism in the "new" American South.

10. South Africa today is something of a terminological land mine. One must be painfully conscious of the contested nature of almost every social category—from

Xhosa to gay to Zionist Christian to Cape Colored to Boer. One refers politely, for example, to "so-called" Coloreds or even more awkwardly to "those people who were formerly classified as Colored." Sometimes one offers a double qualifier, simultaneously making the sign for quotation marks and using "so-called"; for example, one might refer to an "Indian [supply air quotes] so-called Colored person." The indeterminacy of racial labels signifies both language and identity in motion and represents a fierce reaction against the ways that ethnicity and race has been frozen in an essentialist discourse. Still, some South African social identities are understood as "more real" (or less questionable) than others. Rarely does one hear reference to "so-called whites," for example. "White" remains an unmarked and uncontested category.

11. Raised in an immigrant Eastern European section of New York City, I never thought much about being "white" at all until, when I was a civil-rights worker in Selma, Alabama, in the late l960s, several black Student Nonviolent Coordination Committee (SNCC) freedom workers "kidnapped" me and another "white" field worker for a night of interrogation and "clarification of thought." Our "captors" repeatedly asked us to look at our pale white faces in a hand mirror and to repeat "White is ugly, white is deadly." One black SNCC worker taunted, "Girl, you are so white you are whiter than the underbelly of a dead fish. Your white flesh makes my black skin crawl . . . " and so on. Although I later tried to politicize the trauma, I will probably, like a great many other white Euro-Americans, die a premature death from skin cancer due to the interminable quest for an acceptable degree of brownness. Today in the United States, "white" is an amorphous identity peg that allows for multiple exceptions: white but lesbian, white but Marxist, white but feminist; white but Latino, white but Jewish, and so on. Clearly, the way to soften and destigmatize "whiteness" in America is by way of disqualification and the addition of a mediating (and previously stigmatized) counteridentity. This approach allows a great many whites to join the more socially acceptable ranks of the formerly despised, victimized, and oppressed, "communities of suffering" (Williams l994) that include women, gays, and the disabled as well as the older racial/ethnic categories. Years after my SNCC experience, I had another reminder of my whiteness, this time in South Africa. While walking down a sun-splashed street in the mixed university student community of Mowbray on a brilliant Saturday morning in 1993, I smiled up at the pleasant face of a tall young black student. "Die, settler!" the young man whispered conspiratorially in my ear as he passed by. Crushed, I had to see myself as the young African must have: as a modern day Madam Von Trapp in a blowzy, flowered pink dress with a big "settler" lace collar, a style then in fashion among whites. I added coiled braids around my ears, reminiscent of Woody Allen's unforgettable film sequence in which he is transformed in his mind's eye into an orthodox Jew complete with earlocks at the dinner table of his WASP girlfriend's family.

12. This view of "irreversible" deeds calls to mind a personal anecdote. As a small girl in training for my first confession before Holy Communion, I was impressed by the following story a nun told to our catechism class: An old woman went to her priest to ask for forgiveness for a sin of gossip that had harmed the reputation of a neighbor. The priest accepted the woman's sincere expression of remorse, gave her conditional absolution, told her to mend her ways, and gave her the following penance. He ordered the old woman to climb the belfry of the parish church, where she was to cut a small hole in a pillow and shake the feathers loose onto the streets below. Then she was to go about the village collecting the feathers until she had enough to sew back into the pillow. "But Father," the woman protested, "that would

be impossible!" "And, so too," the good priest replied sadly, "is it impossible to undo the damage caused by malicious acts."

13. Perhaps my obvious anxiety about the all-too-human capacity for "making meaning" out of untold suffering has its origins in my long-term immersion in the sugar-plantation zone of Northeast Brazil, where mothers struggle daily to make sense of the useless suffering and unnecessary deaths of a multitude of angel babies, sacrificed to hunger and thirst, which medical people fancily call protein-calorie malnutrition and dehydration. I have long maintained that these deaths, too, are political deaths: brave little unknown Brazilian soldiers lying in their unmarked graves. The women of the hillside shantytown appropriately named O Cruzeiro, Crucifix Hill, explained their infants' deaths not only as meaningful but in many cases as necessary. "Why do so many infants die on the Alto do Cruzeiro?" Sister Juliana asked at a liberation-theology "base community" meeting, to which the women had a ready supply of answers: "God takes them to save their mothers from much pain and suffering"; "There is always a reason. If they lived, who knows, they might have grown up into thieves or murderers"; "They die because they themselves want to die"; "God takes them to punish us for the sins of the world"; "They fly up to heaven to decorate the throne of God and to entertain the Virgin Mother." I began to think of the little sacrificed angel babies, some of whom were said to have died "so that others—but especially their mothers—could live," in terms of Rene Giraud's notion of the ritual scapegoat, the one who dies (like Jesus) to relieve the community of unbearable tension and guilt.

14. See Jeremy Gordin, 1998. *A Long Night's Damage: Working for the Apartheid State.* Saxonwold: Contra Press.

15. The painful testimony of a Xhosa-speaking police collaborator, Ginotry Danaster, was a case in point. Danaster told the amnesty committee that he had helped interrogate and torture Sizwe Kondile, an ANC militant, during the period that Kondile was held in police cells at Jeffreys Bay. Although Danaster retired from the security police, he testified that on three occasions, he was picked up and taken, against his will, to the security-police offices to help with interrogations. Danaster gave the most graphic of all the descriptions of the torture and *braii* burning of Kondile, to the hisses and anger of the victim's family and neighbors.

16. Elsewhere (Scheper-Hughes 1995a, 1998), I have argued that the institutions of popular justice that the urban townships invented during the apartheid struggle as an alternative to the state relied heavily on public rituals of confession, repentance, formal apologies, and forgiveness (in addition to the rough justice of the lash and in extreme cases, the necklace. Whether these institutions were Christian, postcolonial, or indigenous, or, most likely, a blend of the three (see Jeffreys 1952; Ngubane 1977; Berglund 1989) is beside the point. They are certainly recognized, embraced, and "owned" by the black South African population. Confessions, apologies, and public acts of forgiveness are not alien, externally imposed, or in any sense "strange" behaviors to Xhosas and other recent arrivals to the city and the Western Cape from the so-called rural homelands.

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PART III

Madness and Social Suffering

. . . . .

Madness or psychotic illness fundamentally challenges local understandings of human nature, as well as the theorization of subjectivity. Societies and individuals understand madness in various ways: as possession by haunting spirits, a flight from reason, a regression to childlike or primitive states, an essential mode of being in the world and a distinctive form of human subjectivity, the entry into an alternative world, or a mode of deeply disturbed and pathological subjectivity reflecting disordered brain chemistry. Whatever the interpretation, the chaotic and disturbing qualities of psychosis are deeply threatening to those undergoing the experience as well as to their families and communities; these qualities are often seen as threatening to cosmological and moral orders as well.

Those in the social environment of persons who are psychotic often feel threatened, fearing physical violence; feeling uneasy and anxious about the uncanny qualities or shocking behaviors of those who are psychotic, as well as their disregard for propriety and morally sanctioned order; or harboring a broader sense that madness represents a fundamental cosmological threat. These feelings lead to powerful social responses, often in the name of healing, restoration of order, or the protection of those who are ill. These responses in turn can redouble suffering, constituting madness as a social threat and redirecting violence to the vulnerable individual.

At the same time, the language of madness is widely used to represent and respond to everyday forms of impropriety—are you crazy?!—or to articulate and analyze larger modes of social action that suspend ordinary social or moral rules, or permit forms of mass consciousness or "mob behavior" to overtake everyday forms of rationality. These actions include the orgiastic or pleasurable, present in the liminal moments of ritual or celebration, but also mass violence, in which participants may commit un-

speakable horrors. Such irruptions of violence or urges to act out the forbidden evoke questions about the part of subjectivity that is normally repressed, the "primitive" qualities of human nature, and ultimately the essence of human nature. The fluid movement of references to madness across these terrains—the disordered experience of individuals in psychotic states or with major mental illnesses and the forms of violence (or pleasure) that dislocate ordinary assumptions about the rational or moral bases of human nature—make theorizing about madness or psychoses important to our thinking about subjectivity. And the illusive, disorienting quality of psychotic experience and utterances–at once fragmented and incoherent but subject to moments of brilliant insight that reveal normally hidden aspects of the psyche and the social world—challenges theories of subjectivity that rest on everyday assumptions about normal psychology.

We should not be surprised that fundamental assumptions about human nature, social order, and human diversity permeate, often surreptitiously, medical theorizing about psychosis or psychotic experience. Emil Kraepelin, who is often considered the founder of descriptive psychiatry, developed a mode of psychiatric theorizing that he claimed was theoretically neutral. However, Kraepelin's assumptions about the genetic and physiological bases for mental diseases (plural) produced a deeply biological vision of the subject and subjective experience—casting the mentally ill as a medicalized subject—that remains powerful in much of psychiatry today. Hidden in Kraepelin's work are assumptions about disorders of the will and basic assumptions about degeneracy that are less obvious (Barrett 1996; Good 2003; Pick 1989). Kraepelin came to believe that dementia praecox, or schizophrenia, is a permanent, deteriorating condition, leaving the sufferer little or no chance for recovery. This view, which turns out to be empirically wrong, is rooted in an old understanding of schizophrenia as a disease of degeneracy, the end of a genetic decline causing "degenerate" families, ethnic groups, and whole societies to have clusters of alcoholics, criminals, mentally retarded people—and persons with schizophrenia. This view, based in colonial theorizing about human evolution, provided the rationale for notorious laws permitting sterilization of persons with schizophrenia or mental retardation and led to deep pessimism about schizophrenia among psychiatrists and the public alike, a view that persists to this day.

But not only among biological psychiatrists, of course, have social ideologies and medical theories commingled in the analysis of psychotic disorders. Psychoanalysis and neurobiology share a language of primitivism, pointing on the one hand to forms of "regression" and the emergence of "primitive" impulses or affects and, on the other, to "primitive" aspects of

the human brain (Lucas and Barrett 1995). Although offering data on human biological evolution, on the one hand, and clinical observations, on the other, such theories also grow out of a colonial language of social evolution, in which images of "primitive" social organization and forms of psychological experience appear with little comment. Studies of psychosis are thus key sites for a continual reworking of assumptions about subjectivity and human nature.

In this section, chapters by Byron Good, Subandi, and Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good; by Ellen Corin; and by Anne Lovell explore issues of subjectivity through ethnographic investigations of psychotic experience in contemporary Indonesia, North America, and India. These papers consistently interpret the experience of psychosis as social experience, at once psychological, interpersonal, and institutional. Experiences of psychosis are mediated by life history and psychological development, by family complexes, by systems of power and institutional structures, by patterns of cultural interpretation, and by medical translations of and affective responses to persons suffering psychotic episodes (Corin and Lauzon 1992, 1994; Fabrega 1989; Jenkins 1997, 2004).

In "The Subject of Mental Illness," Good and his colleagues explore the relationship between the subjective experience of psychotic illness and political subjectivity, and between the madness of the psychotic and the madness of violent crowds in contemporary Indonesia. Their ethnographic approach to psychotic experience reveals profound fractures in the symbolic ordering of sufferers' relation to families, as well as to the world of commodity capitalism and the medicoscientific order of reality, both presented as the sites of desire. Here, the richness of the phenomenology of psychosis lies not just in language but in the sufferers' struggles to find a place in the world. In the story of Yani, for example, Good and his colleagues show that family complexes are the contexts for the experiences of psychosis: as the mother attempts to give medication to the young woman, the sufferer rejects the offer and focuses instead on prayers and on cleansing herself. As global pharmaceuticals find their way into households, medical and religious forms of subjectivity come into conflict, and efforts at integration meet with resistance, as people like Yani reject the biologized subject for a religious or spiritual one with a deeper grounding in experience.

While showing us how experiences of acute psychoses are entangled with Indonesia's current political and economic turmoil (a nation "run *amuk*"), the ghostliness of its postcolonial history, and an expanding global psychiatry, Good, Subandi, and M-J Good also emphasize the ambiguities, dissonances, and limitations of representing subjectivity in mental illness.

They point out the incompleteness of representation: observations "out of the corner of our eye"; stories as part of the action; the interplay of imaginaries and experiences; narratives and practices as personal experience and as political, economic, and social commentary and consequences. The chapter sketches an anthropological sensibility that keeps at least three analytic moves simultaneously in focus: the first works inward through cultural phenomenology and cultural psychology to get at how a person's experience and construction of meaning is implicated in the domestic space and the forceful coherence of that space; the second is a critical reading of the political significance of representations of mental illness and subjectivity, both in the medicalization of psychopathology and in use of the figure of "madness" to pathologize social protest; and the third leads outward to reflections on the importance of sociality as a basic element in creating subjectivity. Good and his colleagues refuse easy juxtaposition or integration of these gazes and relentlessly pursue analysis that refuses closure, thus challenging anthropology to maintain an unfinished quality in any analysis of subjectivity and psychosis.

Psychotic illness produces dramatic episodes of strange, disorienting experiences that occur in the midst of everyday worlds and often lead to distinctive forms of withdrawal. The psychotic person's isolation is not merely a flight from reality, argues Ellen Corin in "The Other of Culture in Psychosis," but a tinkering with the cultural and social frameworks that make possible a sense of exclusion. Over the years, she and her colleagues have focused on distinctive modes of *w*ithdrawal among persons suffering psychotic illness—in Montreal and more recently, in India (Corin 1990, 1998; Corin and Lauzon 1992; Corin, Thara, and Padmavati 2004)—working to demystify the irrationality and sheer craziness of psychotic behavior. People with psychotic illness can use social isolation as a rational method to negotiate reality, explains Corin, a mode of "positive withdrawal." In some cases, they maintain such an attitude of withdrawal to help construct and protect frontiers and boundaries, to defend an inner space from the intrusion of the others as well as to limit their own tendency to become "diffuse" and lose themselves in the world.

In this sense, withdrawal seems to provide a kind of psychic skin that parallels the social skin: "I've never confided in anybody. You have to keep a secret side. You can't tell everything. You don't have to tell everything," a sufferer states. This protection of otherness is achieved by reworking and appropriating cultural signifiers, particularly religious and spiritual language, to tame the confusion while maintaining the strangeness. It also links directly with larger social and religious modes of withdrawal that are typi-

cal of particular societies or religious systems. Psychotic withdrawal in the context of Hinduism or North American sociality thus necessarily assumes different forms. Subjectivity itself is constructed in relation to this tinkering, a practice that dominant biopsychiatric categories and interventions ignore. Corin suggests that these relationships to withdrawal and to otherness, to that which is outside of language and symbols, expands the borders of psychology and anthropology as we attempt to understand personal and public experiences of meaning. While escaping coherence and meaning in the matrix of cultural signifiers, psychosis raises the ethical question of intelligibility within a given culture, and while exposing the plasticity of cultural signifiers, psychosis opens the possibility of rethinking reality from this lacuna. We are thus challenged to enlarge the possibilities of social intelligibility that psychotic patients struggle to resolve.

In "Hoarders and Scrappers," Anne Lovell inquires into how mentally ill homeless people in New York City rework psychiatric personhood and patienthood. . In their position outside the psychiatric network of meanings of the clinic, the homeless move between home, work, or other public spaces. The uncertainty and interstitiality of their existence requires constant negotiation of interpersonal identity as they endure a generalized lack of empathy. As if their conditions had been self-generated, the people around them see them as beyond remedy and associate them with the disposability of garbage. Homeless subjectivities are constructed through identification and play with values of medicine and society (for example, through the use of discarded food to fulfill a social role or self-identification as an entrepreneur through collecting cans). This process produces affects (shame, pride), ethics (social hierarchies within homeless communities), and self-perceptions that constitute moral agency, as mentally ill and homeless men and women interact conceptually, physically, and interpersonally with mechanisms of exclusion.

The ethnographic studies in this section do not suggest that mental disorders are basically a matter of social construction, free of biological constraints, or that psychosis is a cultural judgment or an essential mode of human experience. Instead, these papers show that psychotic experience and subjectivity take form at the most personal juncture between the subject, his/her biology, and local regimes of normalcy and power. And they suggest why psychosis and its mysterious qualities will continue to challenge our understandings of subjectivity well into the future.

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