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EDITORIAL NOTE

It is with great pleasure that I take on the role of General Editor of the Irish Journal of Anthropology. Fiona Larkan has brought the journal to an ever higher standard and I will endeavour to continue her legacy.

The journal has consistently developed under each editor’s tutelage from early, promising beginnings, with Abdullahi Osman El-Tom’s first issue in 1996. The third issue saw the full peer-review process bearing out and development of international recognition of the journal with the efforts of Jamie Saris and Steve Coleman. In 1998 the AAI’s first website appeared and do check out our new and revamped website at www.anthropologyireland.org. Great thanks goes to NUI Maynooth too for the supporting institutional role played throughout. Séamas Ó’Síocháin’s charge widened the submissions base, not to mention subscriptions, and, regular guest editorships, something that is valuable and will be seen again. There are many more persons that are integral to the continued existence of this journal who warrant more than a mere name-drop can satisfy. So, my apologies to Emma Heffernan (UCD), Fiona Magowan (QUB), Mark Maguire (NUIM) and Fiona Murphy (QUB) to mention only a few of those individuals whose free time was (and no doubt will be) consumed by this journal.

There are some new elements to the journal such as a regular interview section. A new comment section will solicit thoughts on recent pertinent topics from expert scholars. This section is to allow for more timely pieces on issues of concern in a shorter format than that which academic articles are built upon. As always the aim will be to expand the readership and increase the visibility of the work anthropologists do in Ireland and abroad and of course publicise the value of anthropological work carried out in a variety of settings. During periods of transition we are afforded an opportunity to try new things while maintaining what works. I am happy to hear of hopes and suggestions for the journal as we continue to develop. The Department of Sociology at University College Cork becomes the new institutional address and we thank them accordingly.

I would like to express my gratitude to Fiona Larkan for guiding me in taking on this issue of the journal and to the previous editorial team for their support. Also I will take this opportunity to welcome new members to the team: From NUI Maynooth I am pleased to welcome Ela Drążkiewicz-Grodzicka into the fold. Her previous editorial experience at Cambridge will prove invaluable as we move forward. Sitara Thobani (Oxford) joins us as the new Book Review Editor and provides a sense of calm to proceedings with Eoin Gorman (UCC) joining her as a counter-active measure. Séan O’Dubhghaill officially joins the team although he is no stranger to the journal as winner of the 2013 AAI essay competition. Steve Coleman (NUIM), Ioannis Tsioulakis (QUB) and Kathleen Openshaw (UW Sydney) stay with us providing experience and enthusiasm that the rest of us must strive to match.
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Cover Photo: HIV BODY-MAPPING MURAL taken by FIONA LARKAN
Location: Bus stop in Cape Town, South Africa.

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Dr. Kieran Keohane is senior lecturer and Head of Department in Sociology at the National University of Ireland, Cork (UCC). He has taught at the universities of York, Toronto; Carleton, Ottawa and Trent. He is author of Symptoms of Canada: An Essay on the Canadian Identity (University of Toronto Press), with Carmen Kuhling he authored Collision Cultures (The Liffey Press, 2004), Cosmopolitan Ireland (Pluto, 2007) and Domestic, Moral and Political Economies (Manchester University Press, 2014). With Anders Petersen he is the editor of The Social Pathologies of Contemporary Civilisation (Ashgate, 2013). See www.socialpathologies.com

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COMMENT ON
PIKETTY’S CAPITAL IN THE 21ST CENTURY
BY WILL DENAYER

Introduction
Probably no book in economics ever caused such a stir as Capital in the Twenty-first Century. The book became the number one on the Amazon bestseller’s list (non-fiction). Obviously, many people are worried and interested to know more about inequality and the state of the economy. Piketty claims that the rise of the ‘super-manager’ who obtains historically unprecedented compensation for her or his labour is the primary reason for increased income inequality, both in the US and, less outspoken, in Europe. This explanation is widely accepted. Krugman wrote a glowing review of Capital in the 21st Century in The New York Times, calling the book a milestone contribution. The Nobel Prize laureate (Krugman) left little doubt: much of the increased income and wealth economy in the US is driven by the rise of super-managers and their exorbitant wages (short term) and by the fact that the rate of return of capital is greater than the growth of the economy, leading to the return of patrimonial capitalism (long term). The latter is Piketty’s first ‘fundamental law.’ It seems, however, that Piketty and Krugman are both wrong.

Inequality
Official U.S. government statistics for the 1970–2007 period indicates that, as shares of the Net Domestic Product of the corporate sector and the wider business sector, compensation paid to employees did not trend downward and businesses’ profits did not trend upward. Kliman (2014) explains that increasing compensation of top salaried executives had little effect on inequality for the simple reason that there are way too few super-managers for their rising salaries to make such a significant difference. He estimates that if compensation captured by managers in the top 0.1 percent had not risen at workers’ expense, employees’ compensation in 2005 would have been about $36 billion greater. For managers within the top 1 percent, the same figure amounts to $50 billion more. Spread among more than 100 million workers, $36 billion amounts to $342 per employee, or about 20 cents per hour more and $50 billion amounts to $480 per employee, or about 28 cents per hour more. As for the productivity gap, Kliman estimates that the typical worker’s hourly compensation, $17.70 in 2005, would have been $21.16 if compensation had kept pace with the hourly compensation of the average employee from 1979 onward: a difference of $3.46 per hour. The reduction in pay of 20 or 28 cents per hour due to rising compensation of top managers is only 6 or 8 percent of the $3.46 difference: more than 90 percent of the post-1979 gap in median workers’ compensation remains unaccounted for. The rise of the class of the super-managers therefore does not explain the growth in income inequality in the U.S.
Although Piketty denies that *Capital in the Twenty-first Century* has anything to do with Marx, numerous references in the book where Marx is either cheerfully ridiculed or caustically rejected prove otherwise. Let us therefore confront his work with two Marxist authors: Andrew Kliman and David Harvey. Kliman is the main proponent of the anti-underconsumptionist thesis. It is of great relevance for this discussion. In *The Failure of Capitalist Production*, Kliman (2012) argues that the root of the current crisis lies in a massive build-up of debt during the last decades, that this debt build-up is traceable to a persistent fall in profitability and that this fall was caused by insufficient growth of employment in relation to the rate at which capital was accumulated. What many find impossible to digest is his critique of underconsumptionism. According to underconsumptionists, the crisis found its root in falling pay for workers and/or a fall in their share of income, which led to a lack of consumption (or would have, if consumption had not been propped up by debt). But, Kliman argues that the crisis cannot be traced back to any of this, ‘because neither compensation nor their share of income declined’ (p. 151). How can one make such an outlandish and politically conservative sounding claim?

To Kliman, first, employee compensation includes health and retirement benefits. Since 1970 these none-wage components of compensation increased twice as fast as wage and salary income. Second, social security and Medicare benefits, veterans’ benefits and other benefits have increased as a share of national income. From 1970, net benefits have increased almost four times as fast as wage and salary income (p. 154). So, who is right, Kliman or Piketty? In 2011, Burkhauser et al. confronted Piketty's findings with traditional income figures from 1979 and 2007. The data show that income inequality increased, but the extent is far greater when Piketty's definition is employed and his definition is the only one which leads to the conclusion that the real incomes of low and middle class income Americans fell or stagnated. It is, of course, possible that everyone is wrong and that Piketty is right. Piketty employed data from tax returns, while prior research relied on inferior census data. These data are inferior because the US Census Bureau censors information on those with very high incomes, to protect their anonymity, so researchers need to estimate top incomes. But this argument is invalid. Burkhauser et al. showed that one can obtain results from census data that are very similar to those of Piketty if one employs their definition of income and their income-sharing units. Therefore, as Kliman explains, the reason why Piketty has come up with such shocking conclusions has little to do with the fact that he uses a different data source. This is due to the fact that he uses a different data source. Why would this be? Research on US income inequality defines income as to include cash transfer payments received from government, such as Social Security and welfare benefits. The units most commonly considered are size-adjusted households. Why would this be an inferior unit of measure? Piketty's definition of income excludes transfer payments. His tax units are not adjusted for size. In the U.S., a tax unit is either an unmarried individual or a married couple that files a joint tax return, plus dependent children, which is normal and sensible.

There is no doubt that inequality is rising. The discussion is about why. The common view is that 'recessions' are caused by a lack of
spending that occurs when workers are paid too little. Consumption falls and, with it, production. Therefore, make things more equal and everything will be well again. But everything will not be well, because crises are not caused by a lack of spending. Productive investment is not driven by consumer spending, but by the anticipation of the realisation of profitability. It is not the lack of consumer spending that causes lack of demand, but insufficiency of investment. It is profitability problems that cause the insufficiency of investment spending. Once this is recognised, it is clear what happens: the effect, the lack of demand, is taken for the cause and the cause, insufficient past profitability and anticipated low future profitability is taken for the effect (Kliman, 2012: 156).

Harvey points out that Piketty's 'statistical regularity' (the return on capital is bigger than the growth of the economy) does not constitute an explanation in itself, indeed it begs for one. What explains Piketty's law? Obviously, nothing else but imbalances of power between capital and labour. But Piketty does not go there. According to Harvey, since the rise of neoliberalism (1980s), the penchant of capital for driving wages down has restricted the capacity of the market to absorb capital's products. This explains the subsequent debt explosion. Obviously austerity does not restore demand either; it is, in fact, the contrary that is true. These are fundamental issues, but Piketty does not deal with any of them. Instead, he proposes a definition of capital which is truly unique. Piketty's capital includes land, real estate, housing, art, in one word, wealth, making things conceptually unclear. The crucial point, pace Piketty, is that anything which is not used productively is not capital. As Harvey explains, if the rate of return on capital is high, this is because part of it is withdrawn from circulation: the supply of capital to new investment is restricted, which is exactly what we are witnessing. This 'artificial scarcity' (Harvey) does not occur accidentally, here and there, from time to time (for example oil companies managing supply to ensure high rates of return), it is what all capital does. It is the imbalance of power, leading to insufficient investment and this underpins Piketty's fundamental law. This is, of course, not how Piketty sees it. As Harvey says, if we subtract housing and real estate from the definition of capital then Piketty's explanation for increasing disparities in wealth and income falls flat on its face.

The rate of return of capital versus economic growth
Piketty does not distinguish between capital and wealth, although these are, of course, really two completely different things. Unlike almost anyone else, he includes housing in the stock of capital (see Husson for a critique on this inclusion and how it distorts results for r). Piketty relates the stock of capital (K) to the flow of income (Y). Beta is the ratio between his capital-and-wealth and the total annual income flow. Beta (K/Y) shows a U-shaped curve: before World War I, it was 7, at one point it was less than 4. However, since 1980s, the pendulum swung back and now we are back where we were before WWI. The share of capital income in the total national income (Alpha) is equal to the rate of return of capital (r) multiplied by Beta. This is so by definition. This leads Piketty to diagnose the fundamental problem: if r remains consistently higher than the growth of the economy (g) (r > g), Alpha increases by definition. In combination with an increasing Beta, it drives up the share of capital in national income: the rich get richer, generation after generation. This is because of a positive feedback loop between the two: unless the rich consume everything, ever more will remain for them to invest. Increased savings increase the growth rate of national
income and raises Beta. A higher Beta leads to a higher Alpha. A higher Alpha leads to a higher Beta.

However, is the rate of return on capital always greater than the growth the economy? In other words, if the capital/output ratio increases, is there no point in which the return of capital diminishes? Piketty presents empirical evidence showing that \( r \) remained steady, despite massive changes in \( Y/K \). It had been steadily around 4-5% in Roman times. According to Nobel Prize Laureate Solow, the relation should not be \( r > g \), but \( r_s > g \), where \( r_s \) is the ratio of savings to income. This is true, on the condition that savings equal productive (net) investment: \( r_s \) is then \( (\text{profit/capital}) \times (\text{net investment}/\text{income}) \). If we assume that all of capitalists' income is profit, this becomes \( (\text{profit/capital}) \times (\text{net investment}/\text{profit}) \times (\text{net investment}/\text{capital}) = \text{the rate of accumulation} = \text{the growth rate of capital} \). This means that if savings = investment and if all of capitalists' income = profit, then their capital will grow faster than the economy as a whole if and only if \( r_s > g \). This may be right, but there are still problems: growth of stock (capital) is being compared to growth of flow (national income) and it is not realistic to equal savings with productive net investment. Does Piketty claim that the wealth of the capitalists grows faster than wealth in general or that their income grows faster than income in general?

Piketty has to explain why increases of capital will not drive \( r \) down, instead of ridiculing this notion as antiquated and Marxist. This is dishonest (as Galbraith also explains): many heterodox economists believe that \( r \) falls, not only Marxists. Indeed, many Marxists believe that \( r \) does not fall! The whole argument is based on the assumption that \( r \) is steady. A lot of studies prove otherwise. Perhaps most damming of all, Maito used Piketty's data on the UK and Germany since the 19th Century.

Maito left out residential property. The rate of profit fell, using Piketty's data. Other important studies presenting theory and empirical results showing a falling \( r \) are Kliman, 2012; Roberts, 2009; Mingi et al, 2012; Bakir and Campbell 2010 and Dumenil and Levy (2009).

**Concluding Thoughts**

The view that growing inequality is morally and socially unacceptable and that it makes things (including economic performance) worse is gaining weight. However, inequality is not the root of the problem. It is but a manifestation of it. The root of the problem is lack of profitability and a corresponding lack in investment in the productive economy. As long as this is not recognised, inequality will continue to grow unabated. *Capital in the Twenty-first Century* has very interesting chapters on feudalism, the land nobility, growth during the 19th Century, the Great Depression, World War II, the thirty glorious years (1945-1975). The problem lies in the theory. Piketty's proposal, a tax on wealth, also falls short. Redistribution is off the political agenda (as Galbraith asks, why propose something that cannot be implemented except in order to entice the naïve?) and even if there would be such a tax and significant redistribution, the profitability conundrum would still remained unsolved.

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Notes

1 Kliman and I discussed this. The issue was the definition and the composition of income. To Kliman, all payments count as income. I don’t agree. The point of surrealism was reached with the example of someone who is too poor to buy food and ends up in a hospital where he is being treated because he has health care benefits. Would he not prefer more disposable income in the first place? Is it right to add up wages and all other payments as if there is no difference? I believe that Piketty over-estimates inequality and that Kliman under-estimates it.

2 Piketty uses before-tax income of tax units; transfer payments excluded. This is compared to 1) before-tax income of households adjusted for size, transfer payments included (most common definition) and 2) after-tax income of households, adjusted for size, transfer payments and health benefits included.
ARTICLE

RECALLING THE PAST IN SONG: MANDE HUNTERS’ MUSICAL CEREMONIES

BY THEODORE L. KONKOURIS

Abstract: In Mali, West Africa, hunters form secret societies which hold regular ceremonies that can be either public events or private and sacred ones. Musical performance is central to all hunters’ events and it is where a hunters’ master musician challenges powerful hunters to step out of the audience demanding from them his share of the hunt. In doing so, he moves around the performance site, dancing and singing the praises of hunter-heroes. This article argues that hunters’ music – like any art/object or music – is created to stimulate interpretation and to invite an audience to interact in this way with it. Such interaction is primarily based upon their previous experience with similar activities, that is, upon memory. The paper seeks to answer two questions: How do hunters’ public commemorations and anniversaries engineer the recovery of social memory? And to what extent is this process intentional, consensual, negotiated, or imposed?

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Introduction

In this article, I discuss the way that hunters’ verbal arts recall the past in song using an original composition by Solomane Konate, a master hunters’ musician and a rising star in popularity in Mali, who accepted me as his apprentice in 2009.1 To contextualize such analysis, I discuss aspects of Mande hunters’ identity and contexts of hunters’ performances, followed by a description of a typical public ceremony. I then examine the role of proverbs in this tradition; discuss the functional character of hunters’ music in various formats in the market; briefly consider its appropriation by the state; and theoretically frame hunters’ performances in order to explore the reasons behind the reception and popularity of this musical genre, - the way it ‘speaks’ to its audiences.

During her recent visit to Mali, IMF director Christine Lagarde reportedly used a couple of Bambara proverbs. The Bambara version is quoted in articles from RFI and ORTM, with the latter stating: ‘La patronne du Fonds monétaire international a commencé son adresse au Conseil par un proverbe Bambara’.2

Donsoya la basi ye timinandiya ye
The talisman of the hunter is perseverance

A second proverb was also used:

Bolokonî kelen te se ka bele ta
One finger cannot pick up a pebble/gravle

While both proverbs are popular and somehow relevant to her speech, contextualizing the need for patience, perseverance and effort for a nation to overcome financial, political, and social difficulties and conflict (with a generous forty-six million dollar loan3 from the IMF), it is the first proverb that resonates with my argument, which seeks to answer two questions: How do hunters’ public...
commemorations and anniversaries engineer the recovery of social memory? And to what extent is this process intentional, consensual, negotiated, or imposed?

Although I am not sure of Mm Lagarde’s awareness of the importance of proverbs in Mande societies and the particular importance of the ones that refer to donsyo,

I am sure that her consultants are, and that they advised her wisely to include such proverbs. Proverbs are often used by hunters’ bards (and griots) in songs. The singer will draw from a vast pool of proverbs (Kone 1996) to highlight, educate and communicate a certain idea, view, or aspect of life to the audience. Proverbs relating to hunters and their art are particularly powerful and evoke a keen sense of power, ability and skill characteristic to members of the hunters’ secret societies in Mali and the Mande world in general.

Another pivotal tool hunters’ bards use in praise singing are lineage names. While Mande griots use names of the same blood lineage to trace the ancestry of the praised individual, hunters’ bards use names of hunters related to the praised one by apprenticeship. These ‘lineages of knowledge’ link the hunter to a network of master-hunters and apprentices, bringing together past and present. This term encapsulates the continuity with the past and provides a lens through which we can trace systems of thought, strategies of action and moral behaviour.

Contexts for Hunters’ Performances

Hunters’ identity in Mali goes beyond ethnicity and social structure. For a contemporary Malian in search of roots in the great ancient empire (Maliba), the hunter (and the hunters’ society) provides an important role model. The model allows for individual identity to be promoted within a collective group, defying the prevailing order of inherited social status and clan lineage. The initiated hunter (donso) has acquired a certain mystique (Duran 2000) because of his courage and stamina in the bush, his moral values and his knowledge of the healing properties of plants and trees.

Hunters (donsow) are perceived in a range of ways by Malian peoples. These include: animal hunters; warriors; healers; sorcerers; as well as those who open up new roads, i.e. adventurers, wanderers. Master hunters are called simbon. Hunters have their own worldview and behavioural code, as described by Cashion (1984) and Cisse (1994). They are known as carriers of certain moral values such as courage, integrity, endurance (munya), generosity and loyalty, which are celebrated in hunters’ songs.

In the first two decades of Mali’s independence (1960-80), the music of the Mande jeliw or griots, hereditary professional musicians, was used to promote a national Malian identity (Charry 2000; Duran 1999). During the 1980s, with the withdrawal of government subsidy and disenchantment with the military regime, new forms of music emerged which drew on the model of hunters’ music. Women, excluded from hunters’ societies, also contributed to these new forms of music (Duran 2000).

The music associated with hunters’ rituals is the most accessible manifestation of the hunters’ ethos. Hunters’ music is admired across Malian society for that reason, and is widely listened to on cassette and televised recordings of hunters’ gatherings, reinforcing the central place hunters hold in the Malian psyche. Furthermore, the explosion of private radio stations has also contributed to the widespread circulation of hunters’ music, rituals and ethos. Radio Liberté, for example, has a weekly programme that airs every Sunday.
During the show, they play hunters’ music, interview great hunters and discuss issues of the hunters’ community. Meanwhile, listeners call to make comments and ask questions. These audiences acknowledge the hunter as the one and only person capable of leaving the safety of the village and finding his way to the bush where dark powers and spirits live. He is the one who has both courage and knowledge to penetrate the limits (border) of the village, entering into the unpredictable and the unknown. During these undertakings hunters are known accomplish tasks sometimes important for community safety and survival: for instance, they find new areas for settlement, or they hunt and kill the most dangerous animals such as the buffalo, the lion, the hippopotamus and the elephant using a locally made musket rifle which once loaded produces a blast of fire and a cloud of smoke. These traditional muskets are used extensively in ceremonies to establish the hunters’ presence. Radio Liberté travels to villages throughout Mali, in order to attend and report on hunters’ events such as naming ceremonies, funerals, or the acquisition of a bolë (fetish) by a hunter, as such occasions are accompanied by donsonkoni (the term refers to both the hunters’ harp and hunters’ music) performance (Kone 2006).

Hunters, as a discrete and identifiable social group, date back to the time of Sunjata at the beginning of the 13th century AD. They likely formed his army; Sunjata himself was a hunter. ‘The hunter king is as much a cliché as the blacksmith king: he’s the immigrant stranger, bringing civilisation and new technologies’ (Herbert 1993:165; Duran 2000). Sunjata’s victory over Sumaworo, the blacksmith king, was thanks to his ability as a hunter/warrior (McNaughton 1995).

Hunters’ societies, associations, fraternities or brotherhoods (donsoton) run counter to Mande social structure by including members from different ethnic backgrounds and social and age groups. For example, hunters can be either nobles or blacksmiths, young or old, Mande, Fula etc. They are initiation societies that are formed locally, are widespread all over Mali and are estimated by some writers to include as many as 100,000 members. Every Bamana or Maninka village of 400 or more inhabitants has a hunters’ society (Cisse 1994:52). Societies are hierarchically based on experience and point of entry into the society. If, for example, the son enters the association before the father, the father refers to the son as his master. Members of a hunters’ society meet on special occasions. These include: ceremonial or sacred occasions; and informal or secular ones. The former are occasions such as the initiation of a new member, which happens at the dankunson ceremony (sacrifice at the cross roads) at the end of the harvest season, symbolising rebirth of hunters’ societies (Charry 2000: 68). Other such occasions would be the acquisition of a new power object by an existing member (this happens especially at the end of the dry season, May /June); and the death, funeral and memorial ceremonies for a member of the association. The informal occasions are playful entertainment events, such as weddings, child-naming ceremonies and public holidays; the New Year celebration (sanyelema); the period after the end of lid el Fitr (Ramadan) or lid el Adha (Tabaski), where Muslims and non-Muslims get together; the end of the harvest season; and visits by film crews (including Malian TV) or local pop stars e.g. Oumou Sangare, Salif Keita.

The music performed in these gatherings is played by hunters’ musicians, who may either be hunters themselves or not. These achieved, as opposed to hereditary, musicians are trained through apprenticeship to a master hunters’ musician. They are not griots (jeliw). They call themselves donso donkilidala (hunters’ singer) or donsonkonfolo (hunters’ harp player) or jurufokono (the bird who
makes the strings speak) or kono (bird, songbird, a term to designate achieved rather than ascribed status as musician) (Duran 1995, 2000). In the Segu region, they are called donsojeli though no jeli ethnicity or status is implied (Kone 2005).

**Description of Hunters’ Performances**

A typical public performance site is created the same way. Iron chairs are used to delineate the arena and are reserved for the organiser’s kith and kin and neighbours along with important guests. If chairs are abundant, people will appropriate them and be ready to offer them to late guests. Hunters customarily sit inside the arena on mats provided by the organiser. The ensemble sits on very low wooden stools that are brought from the compound. Solomane always carried his own wonderfully carved stool in the trunk of the car so he did not have to worry about finding one that suited him on site. Chairs, who gets them, and who gets which ones and which types of chairs, are an important indicator of one’s status within the performance hierarchy.

Food is always served before the beginning of performance. This consists of large plastic bowls full of rice and various sauces, or beans with onions, or pasta with tomato sauce. The bowls are accompanied with meat, usually beef or lamb, but sometimes fish. Musicians eat together around the bowl using their right hands. They customarily accommodating to other males in attendance, such as technicians, friends and family members. Master musicians wear their personalised hunters’ gear — tunics and trousers, amulets and protective belts — and use lotions to wash before the concert. These lotions have protective properties, but also increase the effectiveness of performance. They make the voice stronger in volume and the content of speech authoritative, enabling the singer to find and use words and phrases more quickly and address the hunters more boldly and effectively. They bring success to performers.

Hunters’ bards (kono or birds) are admired for their singing. Human song is then compared to bird song very much like in the Kaluli society of Papua – New Guinea (Feld 1990). This symbolism extends to movement. Solomane Konate is regarded by hunters as an excellent performer partly because of his movement on the arena but also for his ability to move, approach and challenge hunters. The kinesis of these musicians resembles the walking of the birds and is also similar to the movement of roosters. The steps and the positioning of the body, all male performative gestures of the musicians, can relate to the performative gesture of the cock, a very important and sacrificial bird.

At the beginning of a performance, the singer and the ensemble sit down and start a song – donkili. Then they stand up and continue the song while they tour the arena. The singer then goes to a hunter and kneels before him. The ensemble kneels too and the singer starts negotiations with the hunter to dance – teremeli. When the hunter stands up and other hunters join him in the dance, the singer starts praising the hunter in the middle of the arena – fasa. When this is over, the bard and the ensemble starts accelerating the rhythm of the song returning to their stools to sit down – donkili teliman. Hunters start to dance one by one, imitating wild animals that run away from the hunters to save their lives. In the process dust rises from the fast movement of their feet. Hunters compete during the quick dance and show off their ability in the dance. As dust rises in the air, the crowd screams and claps their hands. The ensemble accelerates the tempo, forced by the faster dancing of the hunters. This segment can go on for nearly ten minutes. It is exhausting for the hunters, who normally spend only a few seconds to a maximum of one minute dancing in front of the musicians. However, on these occasions hunters perform
as long as there is demand from the dancers to dance.

The intensification of tempo of music can be interpreted as the attack of the hunter that drives animals away. Most spirits in hunters’ cosmology take the form of wild animals and female humans. These transformative processes are key elements of ritual performance as they coalesce to support transformations in experience and echo the sensory palpability of performance that draws on experience and emotions.

Hunters’ Verbal Art
Hunters’ musicians explore a wide range of verbal tools to communicate ideas, values and commentaries to their audiences. Proverbs, like clan and hunters’ names, words, phrases and metaphors used in the performance of Mande hunters’ songs, are keyed to the philosophy of action and cannot be understood without reference to the ideology behind the action described, discredited or glorified (Kone 1996).

Proverbs belonging to specific sub-groups of a culture reflect the images, activities, ideals and beliefs of these sub-groups... (and) will prominently figure in its performance of verbal arts. These ideals and interests are likely to influence the worldview of these people by shaping their language and the way they conceptualize and describe the world around them (ibid: 172-3).

In Mande hunters’ context, the bush represents free energy while the town represents the bound energy of social roles (Jackson 1982: 40-1). Hunting occurs in untamed parts of the bush where violence is the rule (Zahan 1979: 150-2). Hunters are said to engage in war (kele) with the animals (Kone 1996: 173). Socially, hunting is an activity that transcends ethnic, religious and class affiliations of members (Cisse 1994, Cashion 1984, Bird 1972). Hunters’ brotherhoods are “in fact a mechanism for assimilating the diverse peoples of a particular region into a workable social unit” (Bird 1972: 276-7). Hunters’ loyalties are primarily to each other within their association. Additionally, seniority in hunting appears paradoxical since it is determined not by age but on the order of joining the brotherhood.

Originally reserved for the hunter elites, hunters’ music is now offered for public consumption. It can be found and bought in various formats (cassette, CD, DVD, Mp3) in the market. It signals complex social messages, like the need for appropriate behaviour, heroic spirit, patience, endurance, old values and norms. Although now accessible to all, hunters’ music is generally much better understood and appreciated by knowledgeable individuals, connoisseurs of the tradition, than ordinary people. Consistently, its consumption declares a certain attitude, worldview and way of life, as it assumes implicitly or explicitly identification with the hunters’ ethos.

Appadurai (1986: 33) proposes that commodities whose consumption is most intricately tied up with critical social messages are likely to be least responsive to crude shifts in supply or price, but most responsive to political manipulation at the societal level. Hunters’ music and lore has been repeatedly used by the state to promote unity, brotherhood and stability in a world in flux. Hunters’ performative rituals, recordings, and radio shows are seen as an effective promotional tool because they identify hunters’ ethos and practice. Hunters’ associations have promoted a unified body of power and knowledge since the time of Sunjata and the creation of the constitution of Kurukan Fuga, established by hunters in the 13th Century.

Examples of the state’s employment of hunters’ brotherhoods are the International Festival of West African Hunters between 26
January and 01 February 2001, organised by Fode Moussa Sidibe with the support of late minister of culture Pascal Baba Couloubaly, its sequel in 2005, and the participation of hunters in every anniversary of Mali’s independence on the 22 September. For the 50th Anniversary, hunters gathered outside the stadium Omnisport Modibo Keita hours before the beginning of the celebration. They dressed in special uniforms designed and imposed by the state, but carried their own muskets and rifles. In black and brown-red colours, with designs that echoed the military camouflage outfit, the uniform combined associations with state security along with the traditional hunters’ tunic. Many wore their special uniforms as a symbol, perhaps, of state-legitimated ‘extra’ authority in events and ceremonies for the rest of that year and the next. Because of its non-ethnic orientation, a hunters’ brotherhood implies unity and stability; its hierarchy suggests discipline and respect; and its democratic administrative meetings demonstrate equality. All hunters are equal, brothers in a disciplined, powerful and militant ‘family’ serving society. The brotherhood protects and serves, always seeking justice for members and non-members alike.

Furthermore, it is experienced in public performances and has an impact upon people, as explained later in the article. Hunters’ music uses such social networks to reach its audiences.

Diana Taylor (2003: xvi) argues that we learn and transmit knowledge through embodied action, cultural agency and by making choices. She also indicates that performances are essential in transferring and transmitting social knowledge, memory and identity: ‘Embodied performances have always played a central role in conserving memory and consolidating identities in literate, semiliterate, and digital societies’ (ibid). Embodied practice, like other cultural practices, offers a way of knowing. According to Taylor, performances reflect cultural and historical specificity both in their enactment and reception.

To support this, Taylor distinguishes between the written and spoken word, noting that the argument should be between ‘the archive of supposedly enduring materials (i.e., texts, documents, buildings, bones) and the so-called ephemeral repertoire of embodied practice/knowledge (i.e., spoken language, dance, sports, ritual)’ (ibid: 19). In addition, archival memory separates the source of knowledge from the owner. The value, relevance and meaning of the archive changes over time and is open to new, different interpretations and embodiments. I consider Mande hunters’ cassettes as part of Taylor’s notion of archive. Older songs and stories can be re-recorded and re-interpreted, shifting and changing hunters’ musical repertoire. Similarly, the repertoire enacts embodied memory, all those acts that are perceived to hold non-reproducible knowledge. It requires presence inducing participants to produce, reproduce, regenerate and transmit knowledge. Like the archive, the repertoire is mediated. Embodied and performed acts generate, record, and, transmit knowledge,
‘They reconstitute themselves, transmitting communal memories, histories, and values from one group/generation to the next’ (ibid: 21).

Hunters’ performances trigger people’s imagination and memory. Hence they fit appropriately within Taylor’s model. The ideas, morals and notions of bravery carried in songs motivate people, giving them courage to contend with difficulties in life and do well in their professions. Meanwhile, the music and song texts inspire people to achieve high deeds. Hunters’ music does not insult or gossip. Instead, the messages that the music carries are ‘useful, valuable ones that impel the listener to do well in his/her activities’ Issa told me.8 The songs speak to people morally, urging them to give up vices and embark on virtues. Emphasizing the need to do good songs encourages listeners to comply by emulating performers.

Schechner (2003: 22) observes- performances are made of ‘restored’ or ‘twice-behaved behavior’: actions that people are trained to do, practice and rehearse. However, they are also re-actions to these actions: ordinary people react to hunters’ performance - the song, the music, the dance - and thereby interpret and give even more meaning to these life stories and legends. Hunters’ stories emerge in the course of intersubjective life of human interaction and ‘always convey this twofold sense of the human subject as both actor and sufferer’ (Jackson 1998: 23). Jackson also points out: ‘recounting one’s experiences in the presence of others is a way of reimagining one’s situation and regaining mastery over it. Stories enable people to renegotiate retrospectively their relation with others, recovering a sense of self and of voice that was momentarily taken from them… Narrative thereby mediates a reinvention of identity’ (ibid: 23-4). Hunters’ songs and epics are life stories of great hunters, living or dead. Hunters’ musicians are storytellers that mediate hunters’ experience to the public. Hunters who listen to their own stories feel pleasure and contentment as they recover their ‘sense of self’ from everyday life and reinvent their hunting identity. Ordinary people relate to hunters, enjoy the narratives of the songs, and gain strength and valour to overcome personal difficulties.

All reception is deeply involved with memory, because it is memory that supplies the codes and strategies that shape reception, and, as cultural and social memories change, so do the parameters within which reception operates (Carlson 1996: 5).

Carlson, perceives audiences as interpretive communities in which there is ‘a significant overlap of such memory; the reception process itself might be characterized as the selective application of memory to experience’ (ibid). A work of art is framed as an activity or object created to stimulate interpretation and to invite an audience to interact in this way with it. Such interaction will be primarily based upon their previous experience with similar activities or object, that is, upon memory. Maurice Halbwachs On Collective Memory (1992: 38) called it, ‘The social framework of memory.’ In performances, expressive movements function as mnemonic reserves, including ‘patterned movements made and remembered by bodies’ (Roach 1996: 26).

Historical and genealogical information has been repeatedly performed and transmitted through ‘memory paths’ (Abercrombie 1998: 6), the ritualized incantations by men, of names of ancestors and sacred places during which they remember and recite the events associated with them. Through these paths, they access ancestral stories, hearsay, and eyewitness accounts. Similarly in Mande hunters’ performance, donsonkonifolaw (hunters’ musicians) set off the audience’s imagination and memory by reciting hunting
stories and actions of bravery, battles between men and spirits, knowledge and darkness. However, these performances are not the only site for activating this social framework of memory. Public and private radio stations promote this music and invite people to listen to it. Cassette releases of albums containing songs dedicated to great hunters and their achievements attract Malians, hunters and non-hunters alike. People like to listen to these epic stories, because they entertain them, but more importantly they bring back memories of their cultural heritage. ‘It puts people in the right way and motivates them to become good at what they do,’ Issa emphasizes.

Ordinary people are entertained by the stories and identify with famous hunters/heroes mentioned in songs especially through their *jamu*, their surnames or clan names. Through their common surname, they become part of the story. The praised hunter becomes either their deceased relative, or, if the hunters is still alive, their brother or father, a figure to admire and respect; a role model. Hunters also enjoy this music because it makes them want to do extraordinary things. They are pleased by listening to their names and deeds praised by the singers in public as part of a pantheon of great hunters. They desire to be famous for their prowess, patience and competence to endure the hardships a hunter encounters in his hunting parties. They proudly wear their tunics, carry their rifles and attend hunters’ performances. Moreover they seek and buy cassettes in the market to enjoy in their homes, during their hunting expeditions or in informal gatherings with friends.

*Donsonkonî* (hunters’ music), therefore, enjoys reception from both hunters and non-hunters because it triggers cultural and social memories, including blood genealogies of great warriors and heroes, or genealogies of apprenticeship. Sacred and secular performances and also commercial releases (or what Taylor calls ‘the repertoire and the archive’ respectively), and their transmission and dissemination by the media, are central in the process of hunters’ music reception. Sound, movement, and song text act as mnemonic reserves that help audiences interpret and interact with the music.

Proverbs, stories and especially - what I call - ‘lineages of knowledge’ are instrumental in recalling the past in Mande hunters’ music and song. I argue that this process is intentional, consensual, negotiated, and imposed. It is intentional because it is the musicians that compose new songs with specific individuals in mind or choose to adopt existing songs to praise new patrons. It is consensual because it involves the praised and praising, hunters and bards, who interact intersubjectively through lived experience. It is negotiated through challenge in song texts when the singer asks the hunters to perform a deed for him and/or the wider community; and it is imposed when music producers require certain hunters’ names named in songs of a musician (a technique called *togo*fo). Let us now examine a song composed by Solomane Konate, my teacher, which he recorded in the studio in June 2010. It is called:

**Juru 2010**

*The harp rhythm I’ve just started playing*  
*Reminds me of some heroes*  
*It has been played for some famous sorcerers*  
*In Manden and Wasulu*  
*I will dedicate this rhythm to a sorcerer who can ‘buy’ it*

The singer introduces the rhythmic melodic pattern (rhythm or riff) of the song by claiming that he has played it to praise some
famous somaw (sorcerers, healers and diviners) in the areas of Manden and Wasulu in south and south-west Mali. He is willing to dedicate this rhythm to a somaw who can appreciate it but most importantly deserve it.

The world is temporary
The night has reached the heroes’ meeting
The world is temporary

He then uses a Bamana proverb to indicate the temporality of the world in general and life in particular. The night and darkness, a potentially dangerous moment, filled with jinns of the bush, witchcraft, and ancestral spirits, is characterized by uncertainty and fear. This is when, at the early morning hours, the heroes/hunters meet for their ceremonies, away from the eyes of the ordinary men and women.

Here is Juru 2010
It isn’t played for everybody
It is played for Seydou Diarra, the lion from Ngoma
People are different
Well, Kone, Diarra Kone
Native of Sankaran
Kone Konbon Kanban
Kone, drinker of much water (the sea)
A battle no Kone takes part to
A battle no Kone child takes part to
This battle is a mere hunting party
I praise you, Seydou from Ngoma

Solomane announces the title of the song and its new praise names for Seydou. Hunters distinguish between ordinary men (nantanw) and hunters (donsow). Hunters are regarded by everyone as deers (nganaw), whose extraordinary deeds are praised by exemplary individuals such as hunters’ bards (ngaraw). This is what is implied by the proverb People are different. The listener is prepared to listen about this extraordinary individual and hunter from Ngoma whose surname (jamu) is Diarra (or Jara, meaning lion). Diarra is a clan name that is always related to another clan name, Kone. These names are most frequently praised together in song and are interchangeable. Here Seydou becomes a Kone who can drink whole seas, denoting his superhuman powers. The clan name Kone connotes bravery, fearlessness and courage as the absence of a Kone in battle, makes it seem like a mere hunting party. Real hunters engage with war with the animals.

If you are a hero, I’ll befriend you
Hey, have you not heard the rhythm of the owls been played?
Numerous are the sorcerers in Mali
But fewer have become the owl - sorcerer (hunter-sorcerer)
I’m praising you, Seydou, the lion
Well, the ‘nyamatutu’ crows in the world
No one feels fear in the world
The ‘jokala’ sings in the world
No one feels fear in the world
The day an owl crows in the world
The world is temporary
That day, mothers will stand up
They will be looking for their children
Saying, ‘have you not heard the voice of the man-eating sorcerer?
Numerous are the sorcerers
But fewer are the owl - sorcerers (hunter-sorcerer)
Numerous are the sorcerers
But fewer have become the korote-owners

The owl, a nocturnal predator, symbolizes the most skilled and knowledgeable hunter. The singer distinguishes between somaw (sorcerers) and hunter-sorcerers such as Seydou. He is praising him as a lion and an owl-sorcerer whose power is greater than powerful fetishes (power objects) such as nyamatutu or jokala. He compares them with the amount of fear they cause to people of the Mande. A hunter-sorcerer is so much
feared that mothers will seek for their children, hoping that they have not become his victims and eaten by him. Many are the sorcerers but fewer are the hunter-sorcerers and korote owners. Korote is a conceptual, invisible ‘poison’, curse, spell that only great hunters and/or sorcerers possess. There are many different types of korote and always come with their respective antidotes to protect the owner and user from boomerang effects.

Seydou, the lion from Ngoma
I’m calling you from your father’s home
And calling you from your mother’s home
I am calling you early in the morning,
Seydou Diarra
The hunter from Masadugu has lain down
Foussyini Keita, the hunter has calmed down
I’m praising Falan from Welemala
I’m praising Fafune
I’m praising Faraban from Dutiela
I’m praising Nakan Fede
I’m praising Jume, the owner of the ‘soro’ fetish
I’m praising Moro from Masadugu
I’m praising Konjan from Tabakoro
I’m praising Konjan, the owner of ‘kondolon’ fetish
Banajan Sule has passed away
The cutter of young souls has reached his final home
He has rested

Seydou the lion good afternoon, good evening
The reason for being born is to seek fame on earth
I said this to the sorcerers in many places of the world
When the hunter enters the bush
A hunter’s bullet can miss the target
The angel of death misses no target in his daily errands.
Right now, death is turning around in front of someone’s door
He will go to Kiyama tomorrow
The angel of death has no day off
Death can consume a human being
It can never consume his fame.

The singer underlines the hunter’s ultimate goal: to seek fame on earth. The sorcerer’s goal is no different. This is very important because fame never fades away in Mande societies. It lives on through praise singing. Although a hunter may miss his target, death never does and is always at work somewhere in the land. Death might strike here today or someplace else tomorrow. Death consumes men but cannot consume fame. By gaining fame, men of action secure a place in history and their names and deeds are recalled again and again in song.

Seydou, good afternoon, good evening
Do give me a ‘jamu’ and I’ll give you a ‘togo’

Solomane continues by linking Seydou to other accomplished hunters and sorcerers. First he contextualizes ‘lineage’ in hunters’ terms by calling him from his father’s home, the pre-destined future that a man has through his father’s lineage and the clan name he inherits from him. He then calls him from his mother’s home, which refers to ones achievements that are not predestined, such as hunter’s deeds. This is the reason hunters refer to each other with their given names along with the name of their birthplace. In this section, the singer refers to both living and dead hunters and/or sorcerers, holders of power objects such as soro and kondolon. Euphemisms such as ‘lain down’, ‘calmed down’, and ‘rested’ are very important in Mande thought. They are used to avoid the passive verb ‘to die’ as it is shameful for a hunter to be considered as passive. Hunters are men of action and expressions such as the above imply a voluntary action: ‘to lie down’, ‘to calm down’, ‘to cool down’, and ‘to rest’.
I don’t know to praise a man who gained no ‘jamu’.
I’ll talk to you about a very young hunter like you
Have you not heard about the pepper of Hamdallaye?
Have you not heard about Bamba, the hunter from Zambugu?
I’m praising Siaka Diallo from Hamdallaye
I’m praising Issa Sangare from Missiran
I’m praising Amadou the ‘dunun’ from Lafiabugu
I’m praising the ‘dunun’ from Kangaba
People are different
I’m praising Nci from Kangaba
He lives in Kangaba
I’ll talk to you about a hero like you
Hero at home and in the bush

Solomane emphasizes the importance of the personal achievements in life by this line: do give me a surname and I will give you a name. The praised may present himself in front of the singer with a surname but the singer will make him famous by his given name. He does that by linking Seydou to a constellation of hunters from various parts of Mali. These names were spoken to him through headphones in the recording studio during the production of his fourth album called Ntana. His producer employed this technique called togo fo, to increase the commercial potential of the album. Every song has a number of hunters’ names named for this purpose.

I’m calling another Seydou like you
People are different
I’m praising Seydou, the lion from Motigila
I’m praising Yaya Seye
He gave me two plots of land to me, the harp playing bird in Yirimajo
I’m praising hunter Seydou from Balanzan, Dantuman’s son
He gave me the keys of a car to me, the string-playing bird
It is unfair to hide high deeds

In this section, Solomane, makes his own choices and praises hunters and sorcerers who acted as his patrons and benefactors by sponsoring him with coin or material goods. He mentions ‘a huge amount of money’, land and a car. This type of reciprocity among hunters/sorcerers and hunters’ bards is very common in contemporary Bamako (less so in the countryside due to the accumulation of wealth in urban areas). That is also one of the reasons of the flourishing of hunters’ musicians since 2000. He refers to himself as a bird, a commonly used metaphor for singers in the Wasulu region (Duran 1995, 2000), and justifies praise singing: it is unfair to hide high deeds.

Let’s dedicate this to Seydou, the lion
Here’s the rhythm of 2010
Good afternoon Satan
Show me you’re a hero, oh God!
That you are a circumcision knife
Which spares no place

In his closing verse, Solomane, dedicates the song to Seydou Diarra, the horrifying sorcerer, healer and diviner; a bush spirit; a malevolent spirit like Satan; but also a hero who needs to be challenged and prove himself in front of his bard. The mention of the circumcision knife confirms that this hero also belongs to the artisan group of blacksmiths since they are the ones who perform such ceremonies.
As the analysis of Juru 2010 shows, recalling the past in song is a common tool that hunters’ bards employ to generate a wide palette of sentiments. Hunters’ singers use their skills in verbal arts to enrich their songs with proverbs, metaphors, stories and ‘lineages of knowledge’ in a process which is intentional, consensual, negotiated, and imposed. Contemporary Malians identify with hunters’ cultural capital through song and performance, and in the process, increase the symbolic or cultural capital of those songs and performances. They do so by listening to cassettes and participating in public events and ceremonies. They approach donsoya through ‘lived experience’ and project themselves beyond their identities as Malians, whether hunters or not. They embrace the model of donsoya as manifest by mass media and its representations of hunters and let their emotions of belonging, cherishing, and nostalgia11 of a distant moral past, guide them through modernity, globalization and the liminality that governs their changing world. They achieve this through processes of socialization and communication.

By constructing, relating and sharing stories, people contrive to restore viability to their relationship with others, redressing a bias toward autonomy when it has been lost, and affirming collective ideals in the face of disparate experiences. It is not that speech is a replacement for action; rather that it is a supplement, to be exploited when action is impossible or confounded (Jackson 2002: 18)

For those who feel helpless and alienated by the state, corruption, globalization, and poverty in modern Mali, hunters’ stories and songs provide comfort and hope, strength and courage, to rectify their ability to act upon their lives. Song inspires and pushes people to act and gain control of their lives. Contemporary Malians might be intrigued by the mystique of hunters or drawn by their moral code and behaviour. Malian audiences identify with great hunters and model themselves in life after them. Donsonkoni is a musical genre that speaks to the hearts and minds of people, to their very existence. It provides them with a heroic past, gives them courage to surpass present predicaments particularly as these exacerbated by new challenges posed by social and environmental changes associated with urbanization, modernity and global economic processes, and promises an auspicious future.

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Notes

1 My apprenticeship as a hunter and hunters’ musician lasted throughout my fieldwork (July 2009 to May 2011). In Mali, I always performed and hunted with my teacher and fellow apprentices. Up to now, I remain and regarded as Solo Konate’s apprentice. It is expected that I pick up from where I left my apprenticeship every time I return to Mali.

2 This came to my attention through a string of electronic messages between fellow members of the Mande Studies Association (MANSA) in January 2014.

3 Franz Fanon in “The Wretched of the Earth”, observes that when nations achieved independence from European colonizers, frequently there was no system in place to secure their economic future, and they became "manager[s] for Western enterprise... in practice set[ting] up its country as the brothel of Europe" (1961: 154). When "developing" nations are induced to form economic partnerships with global capital, in order to improve their national quality of life, often the only beneficiaries from this partnership are well-placed individuals and not the nation itself.

4 The Bamana term donsoya, refers to ‘the art of hunting’, ‘hunterhood’, ‘all things hunters do’.

5 The griots or jeliw are a hereditary group of musicians but they also perform a number of other roles, such as advisors, historians, cultural brokers, oral traditionalists and public speakers (Conrad 2002). They are part of the larger group of hereditary endogamous artisans (“specialised professionals”) called xamakala that also include the numu (blacksmiths), the fune (religious bards) and the garankq (leatherworkers) (Charry 2000; Conrad 1995; Hoffman 2000; McNaughton 1988). There are some parallels between griots and hunters’ bards but also many differences. Both strands of musicians are praise singers but operate in different contexts. Griots are ascribed (hereditary) musicians whilst hunters’ musicians or donsonkonifolaw (pl.) are achieved ones.

6 Gender transformations also happen in Mande as Kassim Kone has argued in his article “When Male Becomes Female and Female Becomes Mali in Mande” (2004).

7 Dr. Fode Moussa Sidibe is a Malian scholar and researcher specializing in hunters’ song utterances. The late Pascal Baba Coulobaly had a doctorate in Anthropology.

8 Issa Toure is a young educated engineer who hosts a hunters’ radio show in the private station of Moribambougou, a town just outside Bamako. He is not an initiated hunter but at the time of this
research he was thinking of joining the hunters’ brotherhood.

9 For reasons of space, I include here only a sample of the relevant sections of the 248-line song text. For the same reasons, I decided to provide only the translation in English and not to include the text in Bamanankan.

10 Juru is a polysemic term that can mean string, obligation, fine, ransom or debt. Here it refers to the strings of the hunter’s harp and specifically to the melodic rhythmic pattern (or riff) that is repeated throughout the song. The more accurate term is jurusen (the foot of the string) or iritimu (rhythm). Juru 2010 can therefore be translated as Rhythm 2010.

11 Jackson (1998: 96) refers to Noah’s ‘cultural nostalgia’ and alienation that he and other Kuranko felt when they referred to their relationship to the nation-state.
ARTICLE

POSSESSING UTOPIA: A GENEALOGICAL DEMONOLOGY

BY KIERAN KEOHANE

Abstract: The parallels between Erik Olin-Wright’s (2010) Envisioning Real Utopias and Robert Natick’s (1974) Anarchy State and Utopia provide a way in to a genealogy that reveals neoliberalism as a demonic political-economic theology in which the spirit of utopia becomes ‘possessed’, its language appropriated, inverted and turned to the cause of the neo-liberal revolution, so that the spirit of Utopia is now represented in terms of ‘market utopia’ and an all-too-real dystopia: the neo-liberal ‘Utopia of Endless Exploitation’ (Bourdieu, 1998). The ramifications of this demonic possession in terms of a political anthropology of an ideal type of the neo-liberal subject -l’individu qui vient... après le libéralisme- a Sadean isolist libertine (Dufour, 2011) are explored, as well as the need for rituals of exorcism.

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...the early Christians knew full well the world is governed by demons and that he who lets himself in for politics, that is, for power and force as means, contracts with diabolical powers and for his action it is not true that good can follow only from good and evil only from evil, but that often the opposite is true. Anyone who fails to see this is, indeed, a political infant (Weber, 1978: 212).

Introduction
The publication of Erik Olin Wright’s (2010) Envisioning Real Utopias has been an important event for the democratic and socialist Left in North America and internationally. This is a major book by a prominent Marxist scholar from a leading University, representing the mature work of a Professor whose high profile career spans some fifty years, speaking with the authority and legitimacy of having recently held the Presidency of the American Sociological Association. The book emerges from within the immediate context of the crash of 2008 and the unfolding crisis of capitalism in the American heartland and globally. The book’s title promises an active Envisioning of an alternative world, and not just as an aspirational idea, but as realizable, even already Real Utopias. The book has been ambivalently received. On the one hand Envisioning Real Utopias was eagerly awaited and welcomed, for there is no doubt that the democratic socialist Left needs hopeful visionary Utopian horizons and realizable alternatives; but on the other hand the reaction has been largely one of disappointment. What the democratic and socialist Left had hoped would be a visionary book underpinned by a theoretically rigorous critique of prevailing political-economic forms, an elucidation of radical alternatives, and a systematic exposition of methods for their realization, seems to many readers as
Olin Wright having compromised so much as to be almost indistinguishable from mainstream reformist democratic liberalism.

The Spirit of Utopia (Bloch 2000), the ‘utopian imagination’ has been to Demand the Impossible (Moylan 1987). Impossible demands both acknowledge and challenge ‘the Man’, the Big Other, the power that rules, that sets limits. The utopian imagination transgresses the prevailing limits of the symbolic order and demands new space beyond the given horizon. ‘Utopia’ is ‘no place’, literally a place that does not exist- not yet; an ‘impossible’ space without structure, free of limits, and thereby a liminal space fantasized in terms of ‘a good nowhere’ in which an ideal social structure may be imagined. Olin Wright’s Envisioning Real Utopias makes no such transgressive and impossible demands; it humbly asks that we look at concrete examples and listen to voices from within some few small spaces that already exist- that are all quite particular spaces. That is to say, spaces that have spatial and temporal and institutional limits, structural boundaries, specific and explicit rules and procedures: participatory democracy in city budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil; the Basque Country’s Mondragon cooperative; the intellectual commons of Wikipedia. ‘Real’ utopias are historical-materialist ‘actually existing’ utopias that are necessarily defined by limits. The value of envisioning limited instances of real utopias is that they may be epiphanic glimpses of a larger Utopian spirit; they provide visions and parables that speak to us as “real utopias” ...concrete realizations of utopian ideals ... utopian destinations that have accessible way stations ... that sustain the belief in the possibility of radical alternatives to existing institutions” (Olin Wright, 2010; 4). Rather like how Walter Benjamin formulates the Paris arcades as ‘a nave with side alters ... grottoes ... places of pilgrimage to the commodity fetish’ (1999 17: 37) Olin Wright’s Envisioning Real Utopias may be read as a sort of secular ecumenical guide for those of the Left whose faith is waning: ‘real utopias’ are like shrines to lesser saints in an otherwise empty and echoing Socialist cathedral, or way stations – stations of the cross, holy wells- on an old, dry and dusty pilgrimage route where a dwindling number of foot-sore, weary followers are invited to pause and reflect and hopefully have their flagging faith rekindled.

But this short piece is not another review of Olin Wright’s book, its reception by his peers and his responses to his critics. Instead, I am interested in exploring the grounds of the book’s ambivalent production and reception. How has it become so difficult for the democratic socialist Left to articulate an alternative vision; and when such visions are articulated, as in Olin Wright’s Envisioning Real Utopias, why is the democratic and socialist Left disappointed and uncomfortable with it? My argument will be that it has become extremely difficult for the Left to mobilize the language of utopia since the publication of Robert Nozick’s (1974) Anarchy, State and Utopia, a book which explicitly took possession of the spirit of utopia, appropriated its language and turned it to the cause of the neo-liberal revolution, so that the spirit of Utopia has now come to be represented by the language of ‘market utopia’ and the vision of the democratic socialist Left has been transmogrified into a weird, pervasive, and all-too-real dystopia: the neo-liberal brave new worlds of a ‘Utopia of Endless Exploitation’ (Bourdieu 1998) and/or a utopia of limitless consumer choice, which, because it lacks the limits that would authorize any particular choice to be better than any other choice –making the ‘right’ choice always arbitrary and elusive- the freedom to choose becomes an urgent but impossible and anxiety provoking Tyranny of Choice (Salecl 2011).
Demonic Irony

By a strange and in Weber’s terms demonic irony, the democratic and socialist Left find today that key terms of a language that for a long time they had felt to be theirs, a language that had been developed to articulate their ideas of the good life, has been ‘possessed’ so to speak, by evil spirits. When the social democratic Left tries to speak of envisioning real utopias today it is as if their language has been usurped, stolen and replaced by a changeling; that the spirit of core ideas, symbols and watchwords have been corrupted so that as if by demonic trickery they have come to mean something else entirely; even, and perhaps most disturbingly, when they come directly from the mouths of Marxists (like Olin Wright) whose voices have come to bear uncanny resemblances to Liberals.

What I offer rather than a review of Erik Olin Wright’s book is a genealogical demonology of how the utopian language of the democratic and socialist Left has come to be possessed; and I will suggest also what exorcism might entail. By ‘genealogy’ -a method developed by Nietzsche, Weber and Foucault- we mean an investigation into the conditions of the emergence or ‘birth’ of something -in this instance the conditions of the emergence and birth of ideas articulated in a book. Genealogy emphasizes how ‘the manner in which a particular entity comes into being really matters. Political institutions and social practices that come into being at a certain moment are concrete and specific responses to the conditions prevailing at that moment; that the circumstances of the birth of ideas and practices are ‘stamping experiences’ that have lasting effects, so that even once a particular institution has ceased to function its ways of acting and thinking may be carried over for a considerable time’ (Szakolczai 2011). The genealogy of Envisioning Real Utopias is that it was originally conceived and gestated in the same discursive matrix as Robert Nozick’s Anarchy State and Utopia. Conceived under that omen, Olin Wright’s book was born and grew up in the shadow of an evil twin.

In the Preface to Envisioning Real Utopias Olin Wright tells of the context in which his book was first conceived in the early 1970’s. Seeking to evade being conscripted and sent to Vietnam he became a student in a theological seminary. Like so many of his peers in that space and time his vocation was not entirely a sincere calling to Holy Orders, but rather more of a subterfuge by which to dodge the State’s call to arms, and to infiltrate and usurp conventional religious institutions with a secular radical political ideology under the guise of theological discussion. With other students from the various seminaries in the Berkeley Graduate Theological Union Olin Wright organized a seminar

...to discuss the principles and prospects for the revolutionary transformation of American society and the rest of the world. We were young and earnest, animated by the idealism of the civil rights movement and the anti-war movement and by the counter-cultural currents opposed to competitive individualism and consumerism. We discussed the prospects for the revolutionary overthrow of American capitalism and the ramifications of the “dictatorship of the proletariat” as well as the potential for a countercultural subversion of existing structures of power and domination through living alternative ways of life (Olin Wright, 2010, ii).

At exactly the same moment, at the other side of the country, Robert Nozick, (then thirty years old- Christ’s age when he began his moral revolution) was appointed Professor of moral philosophy at Harvard. Nozick, the embodiment of a new generation
of hip, radical, _avant garde_ intellectuals initially identified with the New Left, but his rationalism and libertarianism was powerfully attracted to the influences of Hayek, Friedman and Ayn Rand. Nozick addressed himself to the young and progressive constituencies of the American public: anti-Vietnam war campaigners, critical theory Marcuseans, feminists, hippies, Civil Rights and other radical counter-culture and progressive social movements, exactly the same constituency of Erik Olin Wright and his earnest and idealistic cohort in the California seminary. By the very title of his book Nozick set out to take possession of three key ideas on which the discourse of the American counter-culture / alternative / liberal / social democratic Left had long been relying upon, namely _Anarchy, State and Utopia_: ‘Anarchy’, the key political ideology of American radical individualism, humanism, anarcho-syndicalism, feminism and environmentalism; ‘State’, that is, the institutional project of the welfare state that regulates and ameliorates the worst excesses of capitalism, the institutions and compromises wrought by historical class struggle exemplified by the New Deal and by the progressive enfranchisement of women and civil rights; and ‘Utopia’, the future eschatology of progress towards destiny, a sacred vision encompassing a utopian socialism of prosperity for all in a promised land of civil and personal liberty, gender and racial equality, ecological and social harmony. Nozick’s book took possession of these keywords of ‘anarchism’, ‘statism’, and ‘utopianism’, extrapolated them to the point of inversion and turned their meanings inside-out, and then folded them into a new language game so that they became the central terms of an emerging _zeitgeist_; the discourse of the antichrist: a demonic, deregulated anarcho-capitalism of market utopia.

The Devil, it is said, is a clever fellow who knows how to assume many guises, some of which are pleasing and beguiling. ‘When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies’ (John 8:44). The Greeks are wary of the Sophists for similar reasons, for the Sophist is someone who can deceive others by the use of artful language, thereby making things appear true when they are false and false when they are true (Plato / Socrates, 1892; _The Sophist_). Nozick’s clever move in _Anarchy, State and Utopia_ is to build his argument epistemologically and ontologically on the rock of a utopian Kantian ideal-type subject that stands at the centre of the whole cosmos of Humanism and Enlightenment, the subject of ‘reason’ and ‘dignity’. From Marx through to Habermas, from anarchism through feminism to civil and human rights, radical and progressive movements have all relied on this same ideal of the rational subject: the rock upon which the whole church has been built. The fundamental principle of the discourse of Enlightenment Humanism is that Reason is a universal quality common to all human beings. The person, by virtue of Reason, is simultaneously united with universal humanity and is also a unique and autonomous individual who can freely choose to act. Whereas Christ unites, the antichrist divides and inverts, just as Nozick emphasizes the separateness of persons, the dignity of the individual in Kant’s formulation; that is to say (in the secular Enlightenment equivalent translation from the previous religious metanarrative) in Nozick’s neoliberal language game the individual is sacred: ‘individuals are ends and not merely means; they may not be sacrificed or used for the achieving of other ends without their consent. Individuals are inviolable’ (Nozick 1974, 31). By virtue of this utopian Kantian maxim Nozick performs a sophistic trick of extrapolating and inverting the meaning of key terms of Enlightenment Humanist discourse, arguing that social goals of unity and harmony have an unacceptable
cost, namely, to the sacred idea of individual dignity and personal liberty. By this piece of black magic Nozick makes society vanish, for it was Nozick who first enunciated the neo-liberal principle that ‘there is no such thing as society:’ ‘There is no social entity …there are only individual people, different individual people, with their own individual lives’ (ibid, 33). So strong and far reaching are the rights of the individual, Nozick says, that any entity that acts in a collective capacity (a group of individuals, a state, a society) violates the individual’s dignity. Taxation, Nozick argues on this basis, is tantamount to bonded labour. This beguiled and resonated with an American public of the late 1960’s and early 1970’s, especially with a generation whose taxes were spent to fund the Vietnam war and that was vigorously protesting conscription and the state’s clampdown on civil rights and counter-cultural life.

Insidious Neoliberalism

Economic neoliberalism now is not only value free, objective, and morally neutral, as Friedman (1962) and Hayek (1944) claimed, but, through Nozick, neoliberalism is born again as the evangelical economic-political and moral theology for an anarcho-capitalist utopia: the anarchy of the market, the primacy of individual freedom of choice, enforced by a minimal state stripped down to its authoritarian core:

The minimal state is morally legitimate; ... no more extensive state could be morally justified, that any more extensive state would (will) violate the rights of individuals. ... The minimal state treats us as inviolate individuals, who may not be used in certain ways by others as means or tools or instruments or resources; it treats us as persons having individual rights with the dignity this constitutes. Treating us with respect by respecting our rights, it allows us, individually or with whom we choose, to choose our life and to realize our ends and our conception of ourselves, insofar as we can, aided by the voluntary cooperation of other individuals possessing the same dignity. How dare any state or group of individuals do more. Or less. (Nozick, 1974, 334).

In the genealogy of neoliberalism as political-economic-moral theology we can see a three-fold process of demonic possession of the utopian language of the democratic socialist Left. First, in the metanarrative of modernity, the paradigm shift from religious to secular order entailing the substitution of the former transcendental authority of the divine Father by Natural law as revealed by science and Reason; and of foremost importance in this paradigm shift –which is as much a continuity as a shift- the abstract power of the Market as an ‘invisible hand’ assuming the role of a divine power. Marxist historical materialism is fully subsumed within this paradigm shift. The modern capitalist world market, Marx and Engels say, is an abstract impersonal determining power that sweeps away all other powers and reveals them as illusions – ‘all that is sacred is profaned ... and man at last is forced to face with sober senses his real conditions’ (1985: 83). Second, modernity’s tendencies of disenchantment, alienation and nihilism are redeemed by a theological discourse that re-sacralizes the profane, secular world by identifying spirit in the immanent political-economic order (whether in the people, the nation, the proletarian, the counter-cultural social movement, or the individual) articulated by and embodied in the person of a charismatic messianic leader, first as demagogue, later as tyrant demigod. Third, the appropriation of the discourse of Kantian Enlightenment Humanism, the faculty of Reason by virtue of which people are individuated as the dignified, autonomous citizens of a rational society and thereby enabled to make history with will and consciousness, extrapolated to the point of being inverted and turned inside out to
repudiate society as such. Through this transmogrification the norms of society are eclipsed by the principles of the Market, leaving only the individual monad as the subject of a de-regulated, un-limited anarcho-capitalist utopia.

The neo-liberal taking possession and transfiguration-inversion of the language of Utopia is crucially important anthropologically, because the means by which we are formed as subjects is by our becoming subject to discourse, to language. The subject is formed through discourse, by being made to subject him/herself to the symbolic order. The subject is called to order – interpellated- (Althusser 1971: 11); the subject is subjectivized (Foucault 1982: 1991). The subject is formed by internalizing and actively bringing to bear upon him/herself the disciplinary practices of the prevailing discursive order of truth: subjectification means becoming subject to the authority of the Big Other, that is to ‘language, institutions and culture, everything that collectively makes up the social space in which we live’ (Salecl 2011: 59). Where once there was a subject of Enlightenment and Modernity –a (Kantian) rational subject who ‘dared to think’; a labouring, alienated subject –a new fangled man, as much a product of modern times as the machines to which he is an appendage’ (Marx and Engles 1985); and a guilty, neurotic subject, who sacrifices desire to the social superego (Freud 1961), the neoliberal revolution also ‘sets afoot a new man.’

Neoliberalism and the Self

‘To imagine a language is to imagine a form of life’, Wittgenstein says (1994: 19), and one of the tasks of contemporary political anthropology will be to understand this new form of life gestated in the linguistic matrix of neoliberalism; to ask, after Geertz (1973: 16), ‘What manner of man are these?’ This new form of life -L’individu qui Vient... Après le Libéralisme (Dufour 2011) is no longer the modern Kantian–Marxian–Freudian subject, a critical, historical subject with neurotic tendencies; a thinking subject governed by Reason; a labouring subject who, through experiences of alienation from their product, from their fellow labourers, and from their humanity, becomes conscious of their historical situation; an emotional subject whose ego is formed by suffering the weight of the social super-ego, repressing, sublimating and being limited by feelings of guilt and neurosis. That modern subject is declining, Dufour (2008) argues, precisely as Foucault had predicted in The Order of Things: ‘man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nears its end.’ [The Kantian-Marxian-Freudian subject is being] ‘...erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea’ (1970: 387). The outline of a new face is emerging- is being actively drawn- in the place of the old: the face of a post-modern, (perhaps- at least by the Enlightenment-Modern understanding of Humanism- post-human) neoliberal subject is that of an acritical, ahistorical, amoral individual consumer, ‘liberated’ from the signifying chains of the symbolic order, no longer subject to the Big Other. Neoliberalism’s mission is not to maintain the disciplinary institutions that cultivate docile bodies, rather it is to dismantle those institutions and discourses that have formed the modern subject, encouraging people to break out of confining frames, to exercise freedom of choice, ‘to produce individuals who are supple, insecure, mobile and open to all the market’s modes and variations’ (Dufour 2008: 157). Post-modernity sees the weakening of the grand narratives, reliable authorities and disciplinary discourses that had invented modern subjects. ‘Individualism has reached a new stage in which the subject increasingly perceives him or herself as a self-creator’ (Salecl 2011: 68). As the symbolic order becomes gradually erased, blurred and inconsistent the new utopian horizons and
mirages of pseudo-utopias appear to become visible and materialize everywhere— and thereby nowhere in particular. Without God, Dostoevsky says, nothing is prohibited any longer. But, ironically, Lacan says, the opposite is equally true: nothing is permitted either, for there is no Big Other, no Authority to authorize it. The liberated postmodern subject of neoliberalism is confronted with an proliferation of freedoms and opportunities – of consumer goods, of career opportunities, of lifestyles, but also of higher and deeper existential and ontological choices –how to be, who to love, how to live, what to believe, what to value; cultural-political freedoms, freedoms of gender and sexuality, of identity, of morality, but as isolated individual choices with no strong and clear basis for deciding the value of any one over many other possibilities or of the overall coherence and meaningfulness of any particular sequence of choices and with no outer limits to an infinite regress of choices, but rather imperatives to ‘be authentic’, ‘be autonomous’ and to become ‘yourself’, altogether constituting an anxiety-filled ‘tyranny of choice’ (Salecl 2011) and a depression-laden fatigue from trying-to-become oneself (Ehrenberg 1998).

‘The old is dying and the new has not yet been born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear’ (Gramsci 1971: 276). What is this new subject that has not yet been born? In the de-symbolized discursive matrix of neoliberalism a new type of subject is being formed. This demon child as ideal-type subject associated with the divinity of the market has already long ago been prognosticated by de Sade as the Libertine ‘isolist’ (van den Berg 2012). In the amoral world of the Sadean libertine isolist ‘all boundaries become unfixed and transgression becomes the only law’. The libertine isolist exists in ‘the Beyond’, a place without boundaries, a place of pure transgression, where Nothing exists. The Sadean ‘Nothing’ is the dark side of the Utopian ‘No Place’, and herein lies the hidden danger of Left utopianism: utopia and dystopia are not opposites, but dialectical identical twins: always in the process of becoming one another; all too easily misrecognized for one another. Sadean ‘isolism’ (from ‘isolation’) is based on the amoral, ahistorical notion that humans are not connected but are isolated rational choice actors who think only of themselves and their own desires. Libertine isolists cast off the bonds of human relations. They feel no emotion or compassion for their fellow man, instead caring only for themselves and their own pleasure. The libertine isolist is narcissistic to the point of psychosis.

Kurtz, the protagonist of Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, is an early omen of neoliberalism’s *homo economicus* as Sadean libertine isolist.1 ‘All Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz’, Conrad (2009: 54) says. He is Western civilization in short [‘kurtz’ in German means ‘short’]. Kurtz is purported to be a ‘great man’, a ‘universal genius’ with ‘immense plans’. He eloquently expounds on all the ideals of Enlightenment and Modernity – development, growth, progress – but ‘he had kicked himself loose of the Earth’ (Conrad 2009: 72).

> His intelligence was perfectly clear – concentrated, it is true, upon himself with horrible intensity ... images of wealth and fame revolving obsequiously round his inextinguishable gift of noble and lofty expression. My intended, my station, my career, my ideas (Conrad, 2009: 74).

Kurtz seems a subject of Reason but he is ‘a hollow sham’ his ‘method is unsound’; ‘Mr Kurtz lacked restraint in the gratification of his various lusts, ... there was something wanting in him’ (Conrad 2009: 63). The project of modern civilization that he represents – *laissez faire* economic liberal individualism –
falls short: Kurtz is a creature of the modern jungle, an isolist who has gone Beyond; like man as represented by Yeats’s (1920) falcon that can no longer hear the falconer, transgression as a way of life has brought him back – or forward again – to the savagery of a state of Nature. Kurtz is diseased, his malaria marks him as the walking dead; the post-social living dead, incapable of caring for others, even others of its own kind, the *amoral*, *acritical*, *ahistorical* Sadean isolist libertine. In de Sade’s narrative ‘all creatures struggle only for their own survival and supremacy’ (Hallam 2012: 45). In this de Sade is precisely on the same page as contemporary neoliberalism: ‘survival of the fittest’; ‘you eat what you kill’; the ‘rough beast’ of Yeats’s ‘Second Coming’; ‘the savage god’; ‘a monstrous ideal of abstract animal power’ (Ransom 1939: 318).

This is the heart of darkness in modern civilization.

**Figure 1: Pazuzu**

**Pazuzu – the dog-face demon**

More recently, in the 1970’s, in Washington DC, the ‘rough beast’ of the *spiritus mundi* of emerging global neo-liberalism and its ideal-type subject in was represented by one of the oldest demonologies, the Assyrian demon of the desert storm, Pazuzu. A canine, insect, serpent, raptor, humanoid-animal hybrid, Pazuzu is the dog-faced demon of the cold wind, destroyer of crops and cultivated lands, bearer of disease and plagues. Pazuzu represents the demonic powers that destroy the orders and social institutions of civilization; he stands for de-regulation and liminality; erasing boundaries, transgression and scrambling of all limits. When Pazuzu comes around there is no room for equivocation and prevarication; you must decide: succumb to chaos, barbarism and death, or defend the limits and boundaries of social institutions, civilization and life. Because of the terror and horror that he confronts us with Pazuzu can have the paradoxical effect of strengthening civilization, and for this reason Pazuzu is a threshold demon, a figure used to drive off other demons: women in labour wore amulets of Pazuzu to protect themselves from Lamashtu, a lion headed, donkey eared, child killing demon; a demon of ferocity and stupidity that steals the future (Guiley 2009: 197).

Pazuzu is the demon from the iconic 1973 film *The Exorcist*. Set in Washington DC, *The Exorcist* is a metaphor for the era of ‘tricky Dick’ Nixon; the child’s possession by Pazuzu representing the generation lost to the Vietnam war, political innocence lost through Watergate, and also in that same year the legalization of abortion and the subsequent fundamentalist polarization in American moral economy. Nozick’s *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, the bible of neoliberalism not merely as economics but as a moral and political
theology was written in 1973, and in that context Pazuzu represents the CIA engineered coup in Chile in that same year, and the Chicago boys’ laboratory of authoritarian neoliberalism and the ‘shock doctrine’ in Pinochet’s dictatorship, the stolen child of Allende’s democratic socialism and the dog-eat-dog morality of the enforced free market there (Klein 2008: 91-121). As a canine demon Pazuzu is a two-faced friend who turns on those who thought they were his masters and savages them, just as global neo-liberalism that was thought would give us unlimited prosperity now turns on us and tears us apart. Pazuzu is the zeitgeist of de-regulated global neoliberalism, a demonic spirit of liminality that governs the contemporary world, wreaking destruction and terror. A scrambler of limits, he must be exorcised, bound and limited. And to do that it seems as if we need a sacred vision, a gospel proclaimed in a strong and clear evangelical language, anchored on the rock of a strong, faithful subject. The urgency of the task and the sense of the epic scale of what is needed is the source of the disappointment amongst a faithful that were hoping for a prophetic, messianic, apocalyptic, and redemptive Envisioning Real Utopias. One of the uncanny and disturbing moments in The Exorcist is when the possessed child begins to speak in a strange new language, which in fact turns out to be her own ordinary speech (English), but inverted, spoken backwards, just as reasonable and progressive leftists now find it uncanny when neoliberals mimic and invert what they had believed to be their own vernacular language of democratic socialist utopianism. Later, when the demon Pazuzu has fully taken possession of the child the two priests performing the exorcism—one elderly, experienced, deeply committed to the Faith; the second uncertain and insecure in his vocation, together pronounce the traditional ritual incantation to bind the demon: ‘The power of Christ compels you!’ The demon seems momentarily quieted by this authorititative voice, but he breaks his bonds and kills the exorcist, and in the end it is not the voice of the priest who speaks with the authority and certainty of his Church who can counteract the demon. Rather, demonic hubris is subdued by the power of Christ represented by the weaker priest, specifically the humility of ‘gentle Jesus, meek & mild.’ (Perhaps this is where the quiet value of Olin Wright’s doubtful Marxism and his modest envisioning of real utopias may lie?)

Orion the hunter

Exorcism, from ex (to cast out) and horkos (oath —to bind by oath) means to free a person enthralled, and to bind by oath that demon which is cast out. Horkos (Gr) is Orcus (Rm), is represented as a demon of the underworld that punishes those who break oaths. Horkos / Orcus is a primordial monster that devours men whole— meaning that without oaths that bind, regulate and set limits on our actions we descend into chaos and barbarism (Vico 1999: 688). Exorcism means imposing limits, derived from horos, meaning boundaries of regions and territories. In mythology we find it in Horion / Orion (from which we have ‘horizon’, limit): Orion is a mortal hero boundary crosser and breaker of limits. Orion is a great hunter, but respecting no limits he threatens killing all the animals on Earth. A hedonist, passionate and free, drunken Orion has sex with his own mother; and then with the goddess Artemis and next with her brother Apollo, having first befriended them. Refusing to be bound by any regulation Orion violates all taboos, transgresses all human and divine limits, scrambling boundaries, causing trouble and strife because of his vanity and his ungoverned desire (Kerenyi 1980: 204-5). Orion is an embodiment of hubris. By erasing limits, de-regulating all boundaries, and by being killed by Apollo and Artemis together
for doing so, Orion stands also for the need to establish new limits in contexts where limits have been transgressed and regulations erased. The gods hung out Orion’s body in the sky as a constellation, so that by gazing to the heavens we may remember the moral lesson that the story of Orion teaches us.

In the mythology of Orion and the demonology of Pazuzu we have two exemplary instances in the genealogies of the Big Other in the Classical civilizations of Greece and Mesopotamia, and in these sources we can also see how high the stakes are when the symbolic order is shaken and scrambled, which is nothing less than a crisis of civilization of world-historical consequence. In the processes of deregulation and de-symbolization wrought by the global neoliberal revolution we can see a repetition of these mythic themes, especially at the level of political anthropology, namely in the mutation of the post-modern subject. Are we approaching the event horizon of a new Dark Age –perhaps it is already upon us? Maybe not...

**Conclusion**

‘The oldest of the old follows behind us in our thinking, and yet it comes to meet us’ Heidegger (1971: 10). Under the auspices of the neoliberal revolution individualism has reached a new stage, where a post-social subject increasingly sees him/herself as a self-creator. The ‘individual who is coming ...after liberalism’ is the return of Orion again, one who is subject to no authority, one who acknowledges no limits. How will the new Orion [that is to say, how will we] find ways of limiting ourselves lest we be killed by the Gods and they scatter our ashes to the universe as stardust? For all of his hubris and excess Orion is a mortal human being. He is talented and beautiful, powerful and heroic, a magnificent, self-realizing, autonomous *ubermensch*. Artemis and Apollo both love him, before his insatiability and his vanity become the death of him. As much as he is a transgressive monster Orion is a tragic and a sympathetic figure. The essence of his problem is that he has not agreed to give anything up so as he can be part of society, which is, precisely, the psychoanalytic formulation of psychosis (Salecl: 2011: 68). Because Orion cannot sacrifice his desire, subject himself, confine himself within the horizons of normal social limits he suffers: he is megalomaniacal, out of control, a wild man; even his own mother cannot trust him not to rape her. Suffering psychosis, Orion is alone, vulnerable and anxious; he needs his mother’s love, he needs the friendship of the Gods, and he experiences if not remorse than at least confusion and bewilderment when he has set Artemis and Apollo against one another and they contrive to kill him. Pazuzu takes possession of the child only temporarily, ‘to give you a small demonstration of power’, he says to the exorcists. As a threshold demon Pazuzu’s role is to show the limit, the horizon of danger and evil, i.e. to show where limits are lacking; to show where limits are needed. When Pazuzu is fully acknowledged and taken seriously –when the child’s mother comes to see that what she is facing is not merely some individual psychological or behavioural issue or a medical condition that doctors and science can fix, but is in fact a manifestation of evil erupting through a spiritual-temporal rift in the moral fabric of the cosmos, and when she engages the exorcists to bind and contain that evil, Pazuzu departs (though at the cost of the lives of both the exorcists) and restores the child to her mother again. The rite of exorcism is a classic example of a rite de passage (van Gennep 1964) and the state of demonic possession is a quintessential and extreme example of the dangers associated with the liminal stage of the rite de passage (Turner, 1967). The exorcist is the Master of Ceremonies who confronts Trickster (Pazuzu in this manifestation), who compels him to
depart, who binds him, who inscribes new limits and restores safety and order to the cosmos.

Conrad’s modern novel *Heart of Darkness*, the Classical myth of Orion, and *The Exorcist*, a Hollywood film from the dawn of postmodernity and the neo-liberal revolution are ways by which we may, as Bion (after Freud) recommends, ‘cast a beam of intense darkness,’ so that things that have been hiding in the light can glitter all the more brightly. Such socio-psychoanalysis can aid in our contemporary rites of exorcism, enabling us to perceive the many and subtle contemporary guises of Lucifer (‘the bright / shining one’) and seeing him we may be able to impose limits on him. Today, Lucifer beguiles us with the fruits of individual liberty, freedom of choice, self-creation and authentic self-realization in a new de-regulated, unlimited Eden of the Free Market. It will be the task of contemporary exorcists to expose the ways in which these may be false promises and glamorous lies masking a hell of permanent liminality, and to re-inscribe the sacred limits necessary for a healthy human society.

If we take seriously Weber’s insight that the world is governed by demons, in that it is and remains irrational, ambivalent and paradoxical, so that normatively oriented historical-materialist critical reflexivity, knowing the naivety of claims to value neutrality and scientific detachment and aspiring to be politically influential, however rational it may believe itself to be, it is still vocationally akin to demonology and exorcism. We are always grappling with spirits that possess and animate social and bodies politic, spirits that are sometimes benign but are as often malevolent, as the dominant spirit is now; and that the work of exorcism is accomplished only by virtue of the power of a radiant, sacred, idea. It is only by invoking the name of God (or whatever sacred symbol we use as its placeholder) that the Beast can be called to identify itself, and, when named, that it can be subdued and controlled by the divine power of *Agape*, that is, by the authority of a political community. And as Weber warns social scientists and those who would let themselves in for politics (himself included) we necessarily and unavoidably make a pact with diabolical powers. Dealing with the Devil means acknowledging from the outset the uncertainty of outcomes and the unintended consequences of courses of action pursued with good intentions, for ‘it is not true that good can follow only from good and evil only from evil, but that often the opposite is true.’ And one grave risk is also known from the beginning, that would-be exorcists run the risk of becoming possessed themselves, for Weber knew very well what Nietzsche (1989, 89) had already said: that ‘those who stare into the abyss should beware because the abyss begins to stare back; and those who fight with monsters should beware lest they become monsters themselves.’

References


Notes

1 Joseph Conrad’s meeting with Roger Casement, a man motivated by empathy for the suffering of fellow human beings rather than by the prevailing conceits of abstract reason; an emotional man who was erotically attracted to Native men and who was appalled by the excesses of predatory imperialism and laissez faire capitalism in Africa as in Ireland, was his inspiration for Heart of Darkness.
2 The Exorcist (1973) Dir. William Friedkin, produced & distributed by Warner Brothers; adapted from a novel of the same name by William Peter Blatty.


4 Pazuzu the king of the demons of the wind in Assyrian and Babylonian mythology (Creative Commons Licence). Inscription on the back of the statuette reads: ‘I am Pazuzu, son of Hanpa, king of the evil spirits of the air which issues violently from mountains, causing much havoc’.
ARTICLE

THE BATTLE OF THE CLARENCE HOTEL: CONSTRUCTING COLLECTIVE IDENTITY IN CULTURAL QUARTERS

BY JOHN O’BRIEN

Abstract: This essay is a case study of a group of property developers, including U2’s Bono and the Edge who sought to redevelop the Clarence Hotel, located in Temple Bar, but has thus far failed in their endeavour after a prolonged struggle through the planning permission process. The motive of these actors is as much about reshaping the collective identity of the city and nation, as it is about acquisitiveness. The power of elite individuals to influence how identity is enshrined in the built environment is examined, as is the clash between visions of collective identity rooted in modernism and the local versus postmodernism, futurity and the global.

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Introduction

The focus of this paper is on struggles over planning decisions between different factions who have different visions of how the city should be shaped in order to express collective identity. Over the past 20 years city centres have been transformed by the emergence of a night-time economy (Chatterton and Hollands 2003) and cultural quarters (Florida 2002), through which downtowns have been revitalised. The paradigmatic example of this in Ireland is Temple Bar. Structural factors that lie behind them are liquid modernity (Bauman 2000), which has led to the gentrification of downtown areas due to the rise of single occupancy households, the expansion of third level education and female employment that has led to a more individualised populace, less encumbered by traditional bonds, seeking new forms of (imagined?) community and sociability (Roberts and Eldridge 2009). Intellectually they are grounded in the work of writers such as Jane Jacobs (1965) who argued for density and mixed use in cities and Richard Florida (2002) who noted the importance of the ‘creative class’, who desire ‘cool’, anti-corporate, vibrant nightlife in architecturally rich environments. Such areas now contribute around 3% of national GDP (Hobbs, Winlow, Hadfield and Lister 2005). These areas are not simply economic engines for the postmodern economies of cities, but symbolic spaces that act as collective representations of the community and the stage of its process of development.

Planners, developers, architects, financiers, politicians and senior civil servants form a power elite, constituting the key players refashioning urban centres within the social context discussed above. This paper will examine the cases of the consortium led by Bono and the Edge and their proposals for the redevelopment of the Clarence Hotel, located in Temple Bar, on the Liffey Quays. In one sense these property developers are guided by the capitalist motive of profit. However,
this paper argues that motives of meaning and self and collective identity are at least as important as acquisitiveness is to them. A broader point that comes from this issue is the power of elites in shaping collective identity, as it is enshrined in the built environment. The struggle over the collective identity that Temple Bar communicated occurred largely over the heads of the great majority of the populace. The struggle consisted of a contest between the section of the upper class that is rich in cultural capital, represented by those with a moral and emotional investment in heritage, that was successful (in blocking the development for the moment) over the section of the upper class that is rich in economic capital, with a moral and emotional investment in development. This supports Bourdieu’s (2000: 137) point that the most intense competition over legitimate taste and identity is between groups with high capital volumes, but of different types, rather than between the masses and the elite. What is at stake however is not simply a game of distinction – with each side valuing forms of capital – because they are what their competitors do not have (in the tournament of symbolic violence). The struggle is also between an elitist, individualistic and rootless postmodernism as the ethic that shapes the civic realm, versus a more paternalistic, collectivist and local modernism.

Temple Bar and a new vision for Dublin and Irishness

Temple Bar emerged in the context of the transformation of Dublin from its decaying state in the 1980s, in a process driven by a politician, developer, financier axis, with the primary outcome being sprawling suburbs and commuter settlements, an edge city of shopping malls and the plants of Multi-National Corporations [MNCs], and a frenetic pace of development that was often not well planned. While the city centre successfully avoided the ‘doughnut effect’ of hollowed out main streets, there were questionable policy decisions, such as the partial destruction of Georgian Dublin and the development of characterless office blocs and a tendency for ad-hoc development (McDonald 2000), that expressed a carelessness rooted in a postcolonial disdain for the architectural heritage of the city and an anti-urban ethic latent within Irish culture (Horgan: 2004). As a result there is a sense of the questionable success of the urban development of this era. For example, while it has been shown that many of the new suburbs have developed communities (Corcoran, Gray and Peillon 2010) on the other hand, the phenomenon of the commuter belt has been associated with a reduction in quality of life and that what occurred in historic city centre areas was a type of gnostic, ideologically driven vandalism. In contrast, Temple Bar has been widely seen as a major success, with Richard Florida (2002) amongst other writers on urban design [see Roodhouse (2006)] commenting admiringly on it, and a domestic commentator such as McDonald (2000: 287) labelling it ‘an extraordinary achievement’.

On one hand the source of this achievement lay in luck as CIE had planned to build a bus station on the site. In the interim period they charged low rents in the area allowing an unintended emergence of a bohemian scene thereby creating a vibrant milieu that could be built upon. On the other hand a bold and imaginative plan for a cultural quarter was also a financially feasible proposal because of the low pre-Celtic Tiger property values. Even further there was good fortune in having the right people in the right positions. However what was crucial in a Weberian sense was the role of ideas in history that allowed the possibility of implementing a different vision of what the city could be. Unlike the majority of development in the city, Temple Bar was...
state-led rather than market-led, with the government driving its redevelopment; with Temple Bar Properties administering the area; Temple Bar Renewal allocating tax incentives and Dublin Corporation exercising planning control. The composition of this group who were empowered to devise and implement the redevelopment was very significant and in stark contrast to the Irish political class where revolutionary elite maintained power for an extended period preventing the emergence of more youthful leadership (Garvin 2004). The number of women occupying significant positions is striking, as is the role of youth in distinction to the ‘matey’, competitive, and, testosterone fuelled culture of the developers and their political supporters. Laura Magahy who became the managing director of Temple Bar Properties exemplified this. When she took up her position she was thirty-one and controlled a budget of several millions (McDonald 2000: 281-5, 291) and as McDonald observes,

The company’s headquarters ... was always a hive of activity throughout the intensive planning and development phases, with young, creative people ... and pragmatic surveyors ... engaged in a seemingly endless round of meetings with architects and other consultants, [and that] For everyone involved in the project, many of them still in their twenties when it started, there was a sense of being at the cutting edge of urban development (McDonald 2000: 290).

As a result Temple Bar came to represent something markedly different to previous developments. For Bonner (2010) and Keohane (2002) it signified a casting off of the shackles of the nationalist and insular collective identity of the past, and the projection of a new cosmopolitan collective identity in its stead. McDonald (2000: 285) notes that it seemed to express that Dublin was a ‘modern, forward-looking European city’. It represented the cultural twin to the IFSC, cultural globalisation alongside economic globalisation. These were the two major brownfield developments before the Celtic Tiger and they both represented the emergence of spaces of flows rather than boundaries, with Temple Bar dealing in flows of tourists and consumers, and the IFSC with flows of finance. Through these developments there was a shift from the local which is rooted in a time and place, to breaking these binds and Dublin like other cities sought a survival strategy based on its accessibility and facilitation of these flows (Abbas 1997). This transition was a source of considerable pride for the move from the closed, censorious, self-sufficient model and cultural identity of the past that it represented.

Moving on from the future

This is the context within which the battle over the future of the Clarence Hotel – and by extension Temple Bar and Dublin city centre as a whole – took place. The struggle centred on conflicting perspectives on the city's identity, with the proposed redevelopment seeking to initiate a new, postmodern departure. To break with the cosmopolitan modernist form that had been enshrined with the districts redevelopment. A redevelopment to signify a break from the previous ethic of nationalist modernism, which itself had broken with the ethic embodied in the original modern Georgian city.

Figure 2: Octagon Bar in the Clarence Hotel
Bono and the Edge of U2 fame are the owners of the Clarence Hotel. In 2007 they announced their plan to invest €150 million into developing the hotel along with the property developer Paddy McKillen (The Irish Times 2007a), with the shareholders in the project listed as Bono, the Edge, Ali Hewson, the financier Derek Quinlan, and Paddy McKillen (The Irish Times 2013a). The plan involves incorporating the adjoining buildings to the Clarence, the former Dollard Printing Works and four Georgian buildings, retaining only the quayside facade of these (all being protected structures), replacing the rear facade with a glazed front and placing an illuminated, spaceship-like structure called ‘the Skycatcher’ on the roof, with the wood-paneling of the Octagon Bar the only element retained from the interior. The designer of the project is the internationally famous architect Norman Foster (The Irish Times 2007a). Key to the decision over whether to approve the development or not was the question of whether there were ‘exceptional circumstances’. Dublin City Council approved the planning application in November 2007, and in 2008 An Bord Pleanála approved the development with a stipulation that prior to the demolition a record be made of the structure. In deciding to act against advice to not permit the development the Board cited that exceptional circumstances had been met through the quality of the design and the continuation of the use of the historic hotel on the site (Young 2008). The plan was deferred in the context of the recession, being revived in 2013. Planning permission had to be applied for again (as this is required following five years) but this time it was refused by Dublin City Council with the reason being the height of the proposed structure (The Irish Times 2013a).

The architects argued that the buildings are ‘unremarkable examples of urban vernacular architecture with no outstanding examples of design detail or any other feature of value, other than the contribution made by the group to the streetscape of the south quays’. As the architecture and environment correspondent for The Irish Times Frank McDonald (2007) noted: ‘maybe that is the point’, as being the style of the local, it is inevitably ‘ordinary’, with its grandness derived from the relatively homogenous style of the area.

The struggle over the proposed redevelopment of the Clarence does not simply represent an economic investment but is about collective values and collective identity. This possibly unfinished struggle is about a vision of collective identity and how the city should embody this.

The proposed changes represented a statement in favour of development over preservation as they would dramatically alter the Clarence which, with its adjoining buildings, are protected structures and a good example of an Art Deco building. Consequently, the plans for the Clarence provoked great anger amongst people concerned with heritage. Negative or outright hostile reactions were expressed formally by the Irish Georgian Society, Ireland’s national
trust An Taisce that works to protect Ireland’s heritage. An Taisce note that ‘It undermines national legislation on architectural heritage’ (NME 2008) and with Dublin City Council’s conservation architect Clare Hogan advising that planning permission be refused (Irish Independent 2007a).

Ciarán Cuffe, (TD for the Green Party from 2002-11) is an architect and lecturer in planning and was more extreme saying that ‘It is not dissimilar to practicing taxidermy on a beautiful old friend while their heart is still beating’ (Cuffe 2008). Archiseek, an architecture website canvassed architects and found that three quarters felt that planning permission should not be granted (The Irish Times 2007b). Former chairman of An Taisce Michael Smith, who lives in the vicinity of Temple Bar, was however the person to issue the most severe commentary calling the proposals ‘execrable’, that ‘first-rate historic environments’ such as Wellington Quay was ‘not Cape Canaveral [and] should not be subsumed into one spaceship’ (McDonald: 2007), describing its Skycatcher atrium as ‘a Fosteresque 21st century rockstar bubble’ (Irish Independent 2007b), pronouncing the development a ‘cannibalistic behemoth’ (Kelly 2008).

Against the faction seeking to protect ‘heritage’ another faction led by the protagonists behind the proposal argued on favour of development. Where the new hotel is to be situated is an area of major historical significance, with Temple Bar being one of the few areas of Dublin that retains a medieval street plan and much history is preserved in the area. Since its redevelopment from 1991, one of its strengths has been that it has balanced preservation with development. Temple Bar Properties won the crucial battle of gaining the power to stamp the character of the area, meaning that ‘contemporary architecture’ became a significant feature of the district, led by the architecture consortium Group 91, rather than the plan of Dublin Corporation that was based on conservation and imposing a ‘period’ style on the area (McDonald 2000: 294). Thus the proposal was in the spirit of the ethos that guided the redevelopment of Temple Bar, though the scale is very different.

James Howley, an architect who was involved in the redevelopment of Temple Bar and who argued for the development, drew on this context saying that ‘It is important to understand the meaning and essence of the term conservation, which is often mistakenly confused with those of preservation’ and that ‘None of the six buildings on the site is of high architectural merit, neither in external appearance nor interior design’ (Irish Independent 2008). The Edge seconded this opinion calling the listed buildings around the hotel ‘ordinary’ and explained that ‘We feel that while it’s very important to preserve the fabric of the period parts of the city, you’ve got to weigh up the benefits of what would be an incredible coup for Dublin City, a Norman Foster building … I feel that that outweighs the sacrifice of parts of what are relatively ordinary period buildings’ (Land 2008).

The proposals are not simply for development, but for the construction of a futuristic city that conveys a postmodern ethos, over the modernisms of the past. It is this that makes the development significant, as it is not a development by a crass plutocrat, seeking a simple return on their investment but a moral statement about identity and what a city is. A proposal led by members of the global pop-cultural elite- literally the ‘Edge’, who sought to position themselves as being at the cusp of ethical, technological and cultural change. What is this edge that is being proposed?
Foster’s approach to the Clarence as well as other buildings he has worked on firstly represents a very different way of relating to heritage. Rather than knocking old structures down and replacing them with ‘modern’ structures and rather than preserving a city in formaldehyde; he has made additions to historic buildings as with the dome on the Reichstag, the Great Court of the British Museum and the Royal Academy of Arts Sackler Galleries. It is a very secular, post-sacred approach that sees heritage as a resource to build upon rather than something to revere and isolate from the profane, demonstrating central postmodern features of bricolage, hybridity and play.

Following Jameson (1991), the second and most significant point is what unified the previous architectural modernisms was their utopian visions, which they sought to communicate to the broader city fabric. The Georgian city was built at the point of the emergence of industrial and political modernity with (albeit restricted) democratization and a nation state, and, was informed by antiquity and the Enlightenment providing a utopian vision of order, proportionality, beauty, public health and an orderly public realm expressed in the city’s parks, squares and other public institutions. This became the debased ‘colonial’ city fabric that insular, nationalist modernism sought to tear down which in turn became the target for the cosmopolitan ideal that Temple Bar’s current iteration represents.

Postmodern architecture represents something entirely different from what exists in Temple Bar at present, breaking a continuity lying within the different forms of the previous iterations of the area. In contrast to these, it has no utopian project or aspirations to be a vanguard or ideal, but rather largely rejects the surrounding city, offering only minor concessions to be a part of it. Despite its transgressiveness it is conservative, unlike the various instances of modernist architecture that were oppositional, critical, negative, subverting the established order. Postmodern architecture rather affirms and reflects exactly the logic of consumer capitalism with its elements of nomadic elites, mobile capital, global celebrity, spectacle, intense cycles of imitation and fashion, and standardization that are all so apparent in the Clarence project. Thus, it is the aesthetic analogue to a privatized and individualized society rather than a critical, public and social statement against it. Just like the Hotel Bonaventure that Jameson takes as an exemplar, the Clarence would be enclosed, offering a haven to the mobile globalised elite, not integrated into the indigenous community and its life and rituals, would be sufficient in itself. It would be placeless- at home in any hyper globalised city such as Dubai or Shanghai and would be auto-referential rather than being informed by a style (for this contrast see Simmel’s [1997] essay on ‘Adornment’) with its central aesthetic features being its own functional aspects, such as its vaunted ventilation system.

In contrast to the proportionality and sharing of common limits in the current building stock of Temple Bar, or the thrusting aesthetic of modernising, nationalist Ireland – which the buildings of Sam Stephenson that bracket the district seek to impose – the almost Promethean individualism of the project flew in the face of notions of the binding power of society over the individual person. Nonetheless, this is not how the project was presented, but rather as its exact opposite: as social, altruistic, and nourishing the ecosystem of the city.

**Individualistic collectivism and post-capitalist capitalists**

Dublin’s skyline as seen from the quays, through its architectural heritage, expresses a
community orientation in its common humble scale and style. The consortium's plans for the Clarence represent a stark detour from this, with it possible to label it Ozymandian in its egoism. In 1974 the Architectural Review published a special edition on Dublin. It noted that:

Without question it is the quays which give topographical coherence to Dublin. They are the frontispiece to the city and the nation. These riverside buildings are the essential Dublin . . . grand, yet human in scale, varied yet orderly, they present a picture of a satisfactory city community; it is as though two ranks of people were lined up, mildly varying in their gifts, appearance and fortune, but happily agreed on basic values. Individually unremarkable as works of architecture, collectively they are superb, and form a perfect foil to the special buildings such as the Four Courts and the Custom House. If they are allowed to disintegrate, to be replaced by unsympathetic new buildings, the most memorable aspect of the city will be lost. (Cited in McDonald 2007)

The Dublin City Development plan has listed the quays as a conservation area, and the policy is to ‘protect and reinforce [their] important civic design character’, and to ensure that new developments ‘complement the character of the quays in terms of context, scale and design’ (McDonald 2007).

The scale of the area though had already been broken by the Clarence in the early 90s when it was allowed to add two additional floors, which may have contributed to the initial decision to allow the development (Cuffe 2008). Interestingly, the applicants argued that the redevelopment would in fact help to provide a more coherent scheme in terms of scale for the quays, with Andy Bow of the architects Foster and Partners contending that it would ‘soften the impact’ of buildings like the Central Bank and Civic Offices on the Quays (Kelly 2008). These controversial creations of the architect Sam Stephenson were the original monumental structures in a severe brutalist style that broke the tone and scale of the area. The argument being made then is to make stylistically dramatic structures the norm rather than outliers so that transgression will become the new normal.

However, what was expressed was a peculiarly collective form of individualism, which on the one hand may be interpreted as cynical justification, but on the other may seem as fully sincere, where the modern subject has been set free to shape and reshape the world on the basis of their vision. The Edge (who was the most vocal of the applicants) can be seen as being in the lineage of post-capitalists capitalists, in the line of the Gates, Fords, Cadburys and Guinnesses, people no longer motivated by profit, but seeking social, moral and aesthetic outcomes from their investments. He stated that his concern was the city’s interests, with a self-concept as a custodian of this part of the city, overseeing a benign reengineering of it. He said, ‘If it goes ahead, it will be the ninth different version of a hotel on that site. We want to keep the infrastructure in the city – we don't want it to turn into apartments. We don't want it to be lost’ (O’Connor 2013). Presenting his consortium as having a commitment beyond the purely acquisitive, being based on identity and a vision of the future, saying ‘I'm down here today almost symbolically to say we're serious about this, we're serious about our city and we're serious about the future of The Clarence’ (Land 2008).

It is undeniable though that the development was motivated by a dream of global significance and respect. A vision of winning, of prominence and of note locally, albeit one that is presented as an honour held collectively by the city and not just by the
individuals involved. Bono argued that the new hotel would be one of the greatest in the world and the architects Foster + Partners explained that the 'exceptional circumstances' that justified the demolition was 'a world hotel that fits into the highest echelon of this genre to be mentioned in the same breath as the Burj Al Arab in Dubai or the Raffles Hotel in Singapore (The Irish Times 2007c)'.

Thus, rather than egoistic and anomic subjects, the self-presentation is more as charismatic leaders, responding to the troubled circumstances of the site, and pointing to a shining future, as a divine gift that can be offered to the city (Weber 2005), albeit that it is more likely that this is a form of artificial charisma, that is the essence of celebrity.

The choice is yours: cheap flights and stags and hens, or top-end tourism

Lurking beneath the shining vision was weakly repressed fears based on contrasting classist visions of on the one hand, Dublin gaining some of the glow of the global elite who could be attracted through this venture but on the other, an image of riotous plebeian culture. Alternative prospects for the city were presented to sway opinion in favour of the granting planning permission. A prophecy or threat made by the applicants was if permission were refused the most likely outcome would be the sale of the hotel and its replacement by a down-market budget hotel (The Irish Times 2007c). Fáilte Ireland were enthusiastic about the development for this reason, seeing it as something that would attract ‘well-educated’ and ‘affluent’ visitors to Dublin city centre (Kelly 2008).

This carried particular weight in the context of what occurred in Temple Bar following its redevelopment. Alcohol control policies were liberalised over the course of Temple Bar's existence facilitating higher levels of alcohol consumption (Butler 2002). Alongside this, Temple Bar became a nightlife quarter more than a cultural quarter. This was an unintended outcome as drinking establishments were hardly mentioned in TBPs 1992 Development Programme, with it resulting from the combination of a questionable use of tax incentives that did not discriminate against drinking establishments despite the fact that they were beginning to proliferate and dominate the area. This was a result of administrative failures and manipulation of the licensing system, for example, through acquiring licenses by opening 'hotels' businesses were entitled to open pubs and a nightclub on the ground floor. It was also driven by the imperative of revenue as EU funding required evidence that pedestrian movement in the area was increasing and alcohol-based entertainment facilitated the achievement of this (McDonald 2000: 282, 285). The above combined with the broader trend of cheap flights and city-break holidays. As a result, Temple Bar became integrated into a circuit of alcohol tourism that has become a cornerstone of many tourists experience of the city involving in addition to this visits to the Guinness Storehouse, Jameson Distillery, and the Dublin Literary Pub Tour.

As the use of the area shifted towards alcohol based tourism, the 'stage Irishman', an image of Irish people as comedic drunks (Stivers 2000), began to be drawn on to brand the area. Thus the area began to be convey stereotypes of Irishness by that were deeply unappealing to the domestic cultural cognoscenti- whom the area was originally meant to serve. Temple Bar had been a source of pride for the administrative and political class as it showed that they were capable of implementing something of merit. For consumers of culture it seemed to articulate Ireland as progressive and cosmopolitan,
articulating a sense of a change in national identity from colonial stereotypes of an administratively inept and backward, with a not wholly civilised culture. The redevelopment of the Clarence was presented as a means by which this unappealing trend in the construction of collective identity could be countered.

Boosterism

National politicians and the administrators of the city were quite happy to receive this gift, with a boosterist discourse proffered as a justification. The Edge drew on this, arguing that ‘If it is something that is not being used, if it’s something that is lying dormant that’s basically a dead building, a missing tooth if you want in the smile of the Liffey frontage, we want to bring that back’ (Land 2008). In the planning application, the exceptional circumstances that were put forward were ‘the need to retain or enhance the special interest value of the structures (i.e. the hotel use), the excellence of the proposed development in terms of architecture and uses, the contribution to the city on a strategic level, including the quays, and at a local level in terms of Temple Bar’ (Kelly 2008). This was presented as a pressing reality as the hotel had been making significant losses (O’Connor 2013), despite the fact that the capital value of the hotel had risen considerably over the group’s period of ownership. East Essex Street, where the hotel is located, while in Temple Bar also suffers from a lack of vitality and the redevelopment would act as an anchor that would bring life and business to that area. A boosterist attitude was certainly held by the Minister for the Environment Dick Roche, who was strongly against the heritage officers in his department objecting to the proposals, commenting in a handwritten note that ‘As a layman, the architectural proposals seem to me to have great merit’ and that ‘Surely what the dept is suggesting is a formula for stasis’ (The Irish Times 2008b). U2 also represent a connection for the city to the world of global celebrity which is important for branding the city. On the night that planning permission was granted, Bill Clinton stayed at the hotel (Irish Independent 2007c) with celebrities such as Rihanna staying on other occasions. While, it seemed to the political class that U2 were offering the city a gift it could hardly refuse the relationship goes both ways as the city is as important to U2 as U2 are to the city. The connection to place is important to maintain authenticity, both real and in image, for their presentation of self.

Beyond the economic activity that the hotel would generate, the project was presented as being of more significance as a symbol, seen by many as a method of city branding through the creation of striking architectural statements in the tradition of Bilbao and the Guggenheim. The strategy is somewhat dubious however as the star architects sit atop a winner takes all market, with the result of a proliferation of their ‘unique’ style and a banalisation of it, and in the end a sameness to the landmarks of cities that pursue this route. Ciarán Cuffe for example bemoaned the design going the ‘starchitect’ route, as with the Samuel Beckett Bridge, designed by Santiago Calatrava, rather than rising stars (Cuffe 2008).

Conclusion

While the struggle over the future and form of this site has been won by the faction favouring modernism, cosmopolitanism, a belief in authority regarding good taste and good order, common limits, shared norms, heritage and the local; but the struggle between it and the faction favouring postmodern, futuristic, transgressive, individualistic expressions of identity through the built environment of the city will go on.
The struggle is one between two factions of the elite: one rich in economic capital and power, another in cultural capital, with them bearing antithetical visions. The content of these visions is not an arbitrary stake in a game however. In this moment the leadership of civic institutions and the municipal bureaucracy and the domestic cultural cognoscenti interpellated the consortium’s plans and blocked them, thereby slowing the ascent of a postmodern ethos. Despite the loss of a major development and the stifling of the dynamism of the consortium, this perhaps was the better outcome, as the precedence of this class is based on being stakeholders in the city, committed to and rooted in a place and collective identity, in contrast to the rootless capriciousness of capital in a postmodern political economy.

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ARTICLE

OVERLAPPING NOTIONS OF SELF AND OTHER: THE CASE OF THE ANABAPTIST BODY

BY KAYLA RUSH

Abstract: This paper examines the complex interrelations between notions of ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ with regards to human bodies, taking as a case study the bodily experiences of Anabaptist Christians, both historically and in the present day. It first examines body practices and discourses through the lens of Anabaptist approaches to baptism and conscience and it relates these to the Foucauldian notion of care of the Self. It then looks at biopolitical relations between individuals and the state through an examination of oath-taking and anti-war protests. Finally, it discusses the roles of bodies and bodiliness in contemporary Anabaptist commemorative practices.

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Introduction

In a discussion of the work of Hannah Arendt, Michael Jackson writes that individuals are simultaneously ‘who’ and ‘what’ – that is, they are both active subjects and subjected to the actions of others. Both aspects, Jackson notes, are present to greater or lesser extents in every human encounter, and therein lies the inherent ‘intersubjectivity’ of human relationships (Jackson 2002: 11-13). In this paper, I intentionally eschew the use of the terms ‘subject’ and ‘object,’ ‘subjectivity’ and ‘objectivity’ (except where used by other authors in direct quotations), not because they are poor tools with which to think, but because of the multiplicity of meanings each term connotes and the difficulty of disentangling those meanings. Instead, I take my definitions from the work of Steve Pile. Pile (1996: 131), drawing on Freud’s and Lacan’s works on child development, writes, ‘Adult subjectivity is formed in relation to Others (“I am (not) like that”, and/or “I (don’t) want to be like that” and so on) …’ Following his analysis, I employ the simpler, more visceral, ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ – which I take to connote ‘me’/‘like me’ and ‘not me’/’not like me’, respectively – in order to study the ways in which these concepts overlap, combine, and integrate with one another with regards to human interactions and human bodies.

This paper is an exercise in thinking about the anthropology of the body, using the case of Anabaptism as its primary example. Anabaptists – a name meaning ‘re-baptizers’ (Jones 1918: 229) – are a group of religious denominations sharing a common origin in the so-called ‘Radical Reformation’ that began in Germany and Switzerland in the early 1520s (Horst 1972: 38-39). While they differed in several key ways from the Protestant Reformers of the time, Anabaptists were most notable for and gained their name from, their practice of baptizing adherents as adults rather than as infants. Anabaptists were
persecuted throughout Europe for the first one hundred years of their existence (Clasen 1972: 371). Estimates for the number of Anabaptists executed during this century range from fewer than 3,000 (Kirchner 1974: 13) to more than 30,000 (Jones 1918: 234, note 6); still more were disenfranchised or forced into exile, and many more migrated of their own volition (Kirchner 1974: 16-20).

The largest and most visible representatives of Anabaptism today are the many branches of the Amish and Mennonite churches. I choose these as my case study because, quite simply, they are a group with which I am quite familiar: I spent my adolescent and teenage years in rural Northern Indiana, which boasts a large Amish and Mennonite population. As such, some of the examples herein are drawn from personal knowledge and experience. I do this in order to provide a more contemporary, anecdotal set of data to counterbalance the historical accounts referenced here.

In this paper, I examine three aspects of Anabaptist practice and the ways in which each exhibits overlapping conceptualizations of Self and Other with regard to human bodies and human relationships. First, I address Anabaptist body practice and discourse, which offers an opportunity to examine notions of Self and Other from the perspective of the individual. Second, I turn to a discussion of body politics and the relationship of the body to the state, and of the state to the body, drawing on both historical and present-day examples. Third, I look at contemporary Anabaptist commemorative practices, which allows for a more complex analysis of the overlaps between ideas of Self and Other, particularly as they interact across time and space.

Body Practice and Discourse: Baptism and Conscience

Baptism in water is one of the key body practices of Christian churches. The practice has its roots in the biblical account of Jesus’ baptism (Matthew 3:13-17) and in Jesus’ command to his disciples, commonly known as the Great Commission:

*Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned* (Mark 16:15-16).

The order of words in the latter verse is key to the Anabaptist resistance to infant baptism: the Christian *first* believes and only *then* is baptized (Clasen 1972: 96-97; Hut 1991: 156-162).

Rufus Jones (1918: 229) writes that the early Anabaptists ‘believed that the primitive Christians practiced baptism as an outward sign of an inward experience and as a testimony of fellowship in a visible Church’ and endeavoured to follow that model (emphasis added). Hans Hut (1991: 161-162), an Anabaptist preacher in the early sixteenth century, writes similarly, describing the outward, bodily practice as a symbol of the ‘true baptism’ that occurs inwardly; baptism of the body may only occur once the mind has ‘consented.’ Hut understands the ‘true baptism’ as indicating a triumph of ‘spirit’ over ‘flesh’ in the perpetual conflict between the two (*ibid.*: 167).

This perceived conflict between ‘flesh’ and ‘spirit’ presents an interesting case for examining the interplay between Self and Other with regards to the individual’s own body. The language used mirrors that of Cartesian mind-body dualism:

*Enlightenment philosophy assumes that the rational Self has an “inner” relationship with*
the mind and an “outer” relationship with the body. Therefore, the body is conceived not as a part of “who we are” but part of nature, hence an object to be controlled and mechanised’ (Ajana 2005).

Pile’s (1996: 131) description of subjectivity as differentiating between ‘I want to be like that’ and ‘I don’t want to be like that’ is particularly apt here.

And yet, the reality is far more nuanced than the language would suggest: spirit and flesh are both intimately involved in the baptism rite of passage, so that the two are interwoven rather than opposed. This is not a clear-cut case of the mind/spirit as Self versus the body as Other; rather, these relationships are complex and integrated, as an ‘old self,’ both mind and body, dies and re-emerges as something Other than it was before – a new Self, one that strives to become more ‘like’ the divine. (The rite of baptism symbolizes the individual joining in the bodily death and resurrection of Jesus; see Romans 6.) Both the spirit and the flesh remain present and intact, but they are simultaneously transformed. The body is thus, complexly and paradoxically, simultaneously Self and Other, and its actions are vital to the transformation of the Self, both mind and body.

Baptism also indicates the adherent’s entrée into a larger ‘structure of little selves’ (Cohen 1994: 26), a community comprised of individual Selves who are ‘like’ one another and ‘unlike’ the rest of the world. Anabaptist theologian John Howard Yoder (1992: 28) writes, ‘Baptism introduces or initiates persons into a new people. The distinguishing mark of this people is that all prior given or chosen identity definitions are transcended.’ Thus, after baptism, those who are most ‘like’ oneself – or rather, those who are also Self, using Pile’s definitions – are fellow Anabaptists whose bodies have also participated in this practice.

Integrated notions of Self and Other are also apparent in discussions of conscience among early Anabaptists. Jones (1918: 231) remarks on the ‘authority of conscience’ in directing Anabaptist life, writing, ‘They arrived at the conviction that conscience is an inner sanctuary or shechinah of God Himself, and here as nowhere else they believed the voice of the living God is heard.’ This idea presents another complex situation for analyzing aspects of Self and Other with regards to Anabaptist bodies. The conscience, in this understanding, is both Self, in that it is perceived as a truer expression of Self and its dictates are characterized as ‘that which I want to be like’; and Other, in that God is present there, a being who they certainly wish their Selves to be like, but one who, being divine, is also entirely Other, the epitome of ‘not me’. And in all of this, we must not forget that the body remains, simultaneously the ‘sinful flesh’ against which...
the conscience wages war, the transformed post-baptism body, and the instrument for carrying out the dictates of the conscience.

Foucault addresses this rather problematic relationship when he says, ‘The situation is much more complex because, in Christianity, achieving salvation is also a caring for self. But in Christianity, salvation is obtained by renunciation of self. There is a paradox of care for self in Christianity’ (quoted in Fornet-Betancourt et al. 1987: 116). Care of Self appears as an important function of Anabaptist practice in numerous accounts. Claus-Peter Clasen (1972: 94) describes early Anabaptist religious meetings as follows:

The differences were striking ... Dressed in his best clothes, the Lutheran or Catholic attended church on Sunday morning together with the other villagers because it was both customary and ordered by the government. The Anabaptist slid away furtively into the forest, disobeying the orders of the government, because he needed spiritual help.

I will return later to the issue of government-required church attendance; for now, I focus on this final phrase: ‘because he needed spiritual help.’ There is a parallel here with Barbara Myerhoff’s writings on peyote pilgrimages. In the course of the pilgrimage, practitioners ‘transform’ themselves ‘from [their] lowly position to one of sacredness, even of deification. In the process, they should be seen not as trying to escape the reality of their condition, but as positing an alternative reality, one which was much closer to their own senses of themselves’ (Cohen 1994: 38). The seeking of spiritual help, as described by Clasen, and the process of spiritual transformation (which, for Anabaptists, is signalled by the body practice of baptism), may both be analyzed as techniques for care of Self.

Thus, we begin to see how the ideas of Self and Other integrate and overlap within and with respect to the individual’s own body. These categorizations are not simple, nor do they exist in polar opposition to one another: the body is simultaneously both Self and Other, the mind/soul/spirit is both Self and Other, and even God is both Self and Other. The two aspects are often in tension, as in the perceived conflict between ‘flesh’ and ‘spirit,’ but they also exist, not infrequently, in harmony with one another, as in the notion of the conscience as a ‘sanctuary’ in which the individual converses with God.

**Body Politics: Oaths and Protests**

This section examines notions of Self and Other from the perspective of the individual’s relation to the state, taking an approach rooted in Foucauldian biopolitics. Foucault (2007: 1) defines ‘bio-power’ as ‘the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species become the object of a political strategy,’ and that is the definition I will employ here.

In his *Security, Territory, Population* lectures, Foucault (2007: 42-44) differentiates between ‘population’ – that is, people as a whole unit under a state’s jurisdiction – and ‘people’ – a ‘multiplicity of individuals.’ He notes that states function most efficiently when individuals act ‘as members of the population,’ rather than as a constellation of ‘little selves,’ to return to Cohen’s (1994: 26) terminology. By eschewing infant baptism, along with several other obligations to the state such as military service (Kirchner 1974: 10) and oaths of allegiance (discussed below), historical Anabaptists functioned as what Foucault (2007: 44) calls ‘the people’: ‘those who, refusing to be the population, disrupt the system,’ and thus present a challenge to the state’s authority. As Michael Baylor (1991: xvii) points out, ‘Baptism was a
sacrament with socio-political implications ...
To refuse to have one’s child baptized ... was to repudiate the bonds connecting both parent and child with church and society’ (cf. also Yoder 1992: 30). A 1535 proclamation outlawing Anabaptism in England best summarizes the medieval states’ perception of the threat of religious dissidents: ‘... albeit they were baptized in their infancy ... [they] have of their own presumption and authority rebaptized themselves’ (quoted in Horst 1972: 637; emphasis added). This question of authority is an important one in state approaches to notions of Self and Other, as will be seen in the following discussions, which examine state-required oath-taking and anti-war protests.

Anabaptists take a literal interpretation of Jesus’ command to refrain from swearing oaths (Matthew 5: 33-37); today in the United States, Anabaptists standing as witnesses in court trials will ‘affirm’ rather than ‘swear’ the requisite oath of truthfulness. Robert Kreider (1955: 104) describes the Anabaptists living in sixteenth-century Strasbourg as having ‘qualms of conscience’ about oaths. His use of the term ‘conscience’ is particularly interesting in light of the above discussion on the topic.

Kreider (ibid.: 104-105) presents an account of Anabaptist relations with the city-state of Strasbourg in the 1520s:

At the beginning of each year the citizens of Strasbourg were required to assemble together to take the oath of allegiance to the city constitution. The Anabaptists had qualms of conscience about taking this oath. This prompted [scholar and Reformation preacher Wolfgang] Capito to write a public letter to the city Ammeister explaining that Jesus’ command, ‘swear not at all,’ was directed against the Pharisees and that the oath, given in the fear of God, is the highest form of honor to God. [Martin] Butzer [the ‘acknowledged leader’ of the Reformation ministers in Strasbourg] reports that thereupon all of the Anabaptists took the oath. This disturbed Butzer because heretofore Anabaptists had been publicly identifiable because of their refusal to take the oath. Now he feared the Anabaptists would be going underground ...

I quote Kreider’s account at length because it so effectively illustrates the complicated, overlapping, and at times opposing, relations between Self and Other and their implications for biopolitics. In the case of the Strasbourg oath, the state imposed regulations to make citizens more ‘like’ – not like itself, for the state is not a Self in the sense used here, but more like the population over which the state exerts its biopower. Whether the population is or may be a Self is a thornier question: in the Foucauldian sense, the population appears to be an entity largely without agency, following the directives of the state without resistance; however, the population may certainly be ‘like’ one
another, and in this case it is difficult to distinguish between being like the population and being like its most powerful religious leaders, like Butzer.

Strasbourg Anabaptists’ choice to conform benefited the state by bringing them back into the fold of the population. And yet, as Butzer’s reaction makes clear, this conformity was not considered desirable by all, for it removed the primary bodily method by which the Other could be identified. This bodily Other-ing – and it was indeed bodily, for it required the population to stand together and take the oath before their fellow citizens – is a key way in which biopolitics are played out at the state level: think of the infamous yellow stars of the Nazi regime. Richard Rorty (1993: 112-113) points out that this sort of Other-ing, both discursive and bodily, is used by states to justify violent repression of groups of people. Such overt visible identification of the Other is an important method by which states (and other powerful stakeholders) make distinctions between Self and Other, like and unlike.

Butzer’s argument won out not long after the incident described above, as by 1533 the Strasbourg government began to tighten its restrictions against Anabaptist practice, banishing adherents and encouraging residents to inform on their neighbours (Kreider 1955: 109-111). Bodily punishment of religious dissidents was present in every state of Europe in the sixteenth century: Anabaptists who refused to recant received ‘the traditional punishment for stubborn heretics: death, imprisonment, or expulsion’ (Clasen 1972: 369-370). In feminist geography’s analysis of the body as place, both the mind and the body are perceived as ‘surfaces’ onto which power relations may be ‘inscribed.’ In the case of physical violence, state power is quite literally inscribed onto the bodies of dissenters (Valentine 2001: 24).

As Jackson (2002: 51) writes, ‘violence consist[s] in being reduced to the status of an isolated and insignificant object’; and later, ‘No longer a subject for oneself, one is reduced to being an object – isolated, exposed, fixed, categorised, and judged by the Other’ (ibid.: 68). Thus, the body of the individual Self, in which is contained a complex web of overlapping and integrated notions of Self and Other, and which has often been further inscribed or marked as the Other through the machinations of the state, becomes a site – literally, an ‘object’ – onto which the bio-power of the state may be mapped in violent ways.

Today, Anabaptist groups in the United States continue to ‘disrupt the system’ by functioning as ‘the people’ (Foucault 2007: 44) in certain ways. While many examples could suffice, I look here at several individuals’ responses to the U.S. invasion of and subsequent war in Iraq in 2003. Anabaptists are pacifists, opposing violence on both state and personal levels. In 2003, several groups, including the Mennonite- and Quaker-supported Christian Peacemaker Teams, travelled to Iraq to live alongside Iraqi civilians, in order to advocate for peace and in the hope that the presence (living or dead) of American civilian bodies would draw global attention to the civilian casualties caused by the war. In this way, the teams identified Iraqi civilians as fellow Selves and bodily articulated that shared Self-hood to a global audience.

Christian Peacemaker Teams drew international attention when four of its activists were kidnapped and held hostage in Iraq by the Swords of Righteousness Brigade. One of the team members was executed, and the other three were eventually released. Following the hostage situation, the peace activists continued to assert their position as ‘the people’ – and their Other-ness with
relation to the state – when they refused to give testimony that would warrant the death penalty for their captors. According to an article in *The Guardian*, the surviving former hostages ‘have refused to give evidence in the trial of their captors if there is a risk that they [the captors] will face execution... the hostages said that they all “unconditionally forgive” the men and had no desire for them to be punished in any way’ (Campbell 2006).

Both the historical accounts and these more contemporary examples show a complex, intersubjective negotiation of Self-hood and Other-hood in which individuals and the state are often at odds; Foucault’s language of ‘the population’ and ‘the people’ is particularly useful in this regard, as it points to the modes of resistance, which might also be understood as ‘technologies of the self – ways in which human beings come to understand and act upon themselves ...’ (Rose et al. 2006: 90), and by which individuals and groups place themselves within the Self/Other framework with regards to the state. These designations are complex and overlapping: asserting a Self-hood in which one is ‘like’ other Anabaptists, Iraqi civilians, or even one’s captors, means Other-ing oneself with regard to the state and ‘the population.’

**Bodies in Commemorative Practice: Martyrs Mirror and Menno-Hof**

While many – Clasen (1972: 369) argues ‘most’ – Anabaptists recanted when faced with the threat of physical punishment by the state, many did not, and thousands were killed. Several hundred of their stories are recounted in *The Bloody Theater or Martyrs Mirror of the Defenseless Christians*, [sic] better known simply as *Martyrs Mirror*, which was originally published in 1660 in the Netherlands (van Braght 1886). Despite its age, the book remains a staple of Anabaptist heritage, so that many adherents today still actively read it (Amish America 2007).

In this section, I examine the implications of commemorative bodily practices for overlapping and integrated notions of Self and Other by looking at *Martyrs Mirror*, which I analyze as an example of communal memory, and at the work of Menno-Hof, a museum and information centre founded in 1988 that ‘creatively interprets and presents the history and values of the Anabaptists’ (Menno-Hof 2007). Studying commemorative practices opens up an even more complex web of relationships between Self and Other than has been discussed in the previous sections of this paper.

The anthology of persecution stories presented in *Martyrs Mirror* was collected ‘from various authentic chronicles, memorials, and testimonies,’ as the book’s title page states (van Braght 1886). Francesca Cappelletto’s (2003: 248) ethnography of World War II remembrance in Italian villages provides a useful analytical correlation to *Martyrs Mirror*, which may be understood as an example of ‘communal memory,’ as its contents are ‘a product of interactions between’ individual and group ‘contributions.’ In Cappelletto’s ethnography, social memory is formed primarily through the stories of still-living survivors, as opposed to Anabaptist memories of persecution, which are several centuries removed from the events; however, the comparison is still relevant, as in both cases ‘[t]he sense of witnessing and re-witnessing is central in these micro-narratives, the content of which is highly visual’ (ibid.: 248). Working from Harvey Whitehouse’s theory of ‘flashbulb’ memory, Cappelletto suggests that images and imagery are central to traumatic memories, and in particular to communal remembering of trauma, even when the event itself was not visually witnessed (ibid.: 252-255).
By preserving these images of bodily suffering, both through descriptive language and through the artistic engravings that fill its pages, Martyrs Mirror allows new generations of Anabaptists to become witnesses as well, and thus to join in the communal traumatic memory of persecution. This is an important function because, as Paul Connerton (1989: 3) notes, ‘Concerning social memory in particular, we may note that images of the past commonly legitimate a present social order. It is an implicit rule that participants in any social order must presuppose a shared memory.’ It is important to note that these images are inherently bodily: the book does not shy away from gruesome details, and the engravings can be quite disturbing (see Figures 1 and 2). As Cappelletto (2003: 254) puts it, ‘The visual is explicitly linked to a visceral experience that still upsets the witness.’

A more contemporary commemorative institution, the Menno-Hof centre in Shipshewana, Indiana, fulfils a similar function through the use of both visual and bodily experiences. The centre’s website describes its tours in vivid, sensorial language:

The Dungeon Room shows how their [the early Anabaptists’] following Christ brought persecution. Follow this group from Europe into the New World and modern day Indiana. See and feel the destructive force of nature in the Tornado Theater, followed by the calming experience of the meeting house’ (Menno-Hof 2004).

The Dungeon Room is a particularly disturbing place: though my single visit to the centre occurred more than a decade ago, I still retain vivid memories of viewing centuries’-old torture devices there.

Jim Smith, a local minister who led a church group to Menno-Hof about ten years ago, reflected on his own visit: ‘The main things I remember about it are: its “barn” shape (because I like barns and have great memories of childhood experiences in barns) … and the “tornado room” (it was quite a jolt – physically and emotionally) (personal communication). Smith’s memories are instructive, as they are positioned intersubjectively through what Svašek (2010: 80) calls ‘empathy,’ that is, ‘thinking with’ or ‘feeling with’ the Other. Smith bridges the gap between himself and Others removed by time, space, ethnicity, and religious belief (Smith is not a Mennonite) by relating their bodily experiences to his own happy memories of working and playing in barns, and presumably to his own experiences of tornado weather as a long-time Indiana resident. (Note how his assessment of the tornado room as physically and emotionally ‘jolt[ing]’ echoes Cappelletto’s language on the visceral, above.) As he ‘feels with’ the Other bodies presented in the Menno-hof displays, persons long deceased become ‘like’ him, and thus begin to materialize as Selves.

Linda Connor (1995: 544) recalls similar visceral reactions in her essay on a Balinese corpse-washing ceremony. She writes, ‘I felt very anxious and unsettled at being confronted with this physical reality of death in such an immediate fashion …’ Connor notes, however, that throughout the course of the ceremony, she experienced a ‘transformation of [her] own feelings,’ wherein her emotions shifted from ‘horror’ to a more peaceful contemplation of the deceased’s existence ‘in its next life, rather than its immediately apparent status as putrefying human remains’ (ibid.: 544-546). And perhaps this is part of the intention of Menno-Hof: recalling the analysis of Self and Other in the discussion of baptism, perhaps they wish to use these graphic, visceral
experiences of others’ bodies in order to ‘transform’ viewers’ feelings, to focus on the leaving behind of the body that occurs at death, thus simultaneously shedding the body (both Other and Self), and looking to the future of the Self in the presence of the divine Other.

Conclusion
In the cases of both Menno-Hof and Martyrs Mirror, there exists a complex web of interactions between the Self and the Other. The individual readers or visitors, each with their own distinct notions of Self and Other with regard to their own bodies, interact with the bodies of past Others, individuals who are very unlike themselves in many ways, and whose bodies were Other-ed by the practices of the state. Certainly, for some visitors, these past bodies may be no more than a curiosity – completely Other material ‘objects’ to be viewed. Some may read these stories and see these displays and affirm the Self-hood of the Other bodies, situating them within, and perhaps using them to shape, their own beliefs concerning violent repression and freedom of religion. Still more visitors, and in particular those with social and familial links to Anabaptism and its communal traumatic memories, perhaps view or begin to view these past Anabaptist bodies as Self – as ‘like’ them and other members of their families and communities. And so the bodies of past Selves and past Others may become ‘technologies of the self.’ And yet, by being transformed into ‘technologies,’ are these past bodies Selves or Others, or some combination of the two?

I close with this question because, in many ways, I feel that this paper has raised more questions than it has provided answers. One thing, at least, is quite clear from the examples studied: Self and Other are by no means simple categories, particularly as concerns human bodies, nor are they diametrically opposed or mutually exclusive. They exist in intricate overlaps, intersections, and integrations with one another, so that the body is simultaneously Self and Other, and neither and both, all at once.

References


Notes

1 The group known as Mennonites first ‘consolidated’ around founder Menno Simons in the Netherlands between 1530 and 1566 (Francis 1948: 103). The Amish are a splinter group that separated from the Mennonite movement in Switzerland between 1693 and 1697 under the leadership of Jacob Ammann (Hostetler 1964: 11).

2 This reference to ‘flesh’ and ‘spirit’ is based on a handful of New Testament references that differentiate and oppose the two, such as that in Galatians 5:17: ‘For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other …’

3 A Hebrew term, more commonly transliterated ‘shekinah.’ As one scholar puts it, ‘In post-biblical Jewish literature, this term refers to God’s numinous presence in the world’ (Harrelson 2009: 222). Though the word does not appear in the Hebrew-language Scriptures of the Christian Bible, it is closely associated with accounts of God’s visible presence in the Old Testament (ibid.). The word enjoys continued popularity among Christian groups today.

4 Burning of David and Levina, Ghent, 1554. Etching from the 1685 edition of Martyrs Mirror, Book 2, p. 539. These images were downloaded on 18 November 2014 from http://mla.bethelks.edu/holdings/scans/martyrsmirror/. Martyrs Mirror and the illustrations therein are in the public domain.

5 Etching from the 1685 edition of Martyrs Mirror, Book 2, p. 1614. This image was downloaded on 18 November 2014 from http://mla.bethelks.edu/holdings/scans/martyrsmirror/. Martyrs Mirror and the illustrations therein are in the public domain.
ARTICLE

IMPROVING THE CLINICAL ENCOUNTER: THE NEED FOR CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAINING IN MEDICAL SCHOOL

BY BIRUTHVI VIGNARAJAH

Abstract: Every individual has a perception of what constitutes good health and illness that is influenced to a great degree by his or her cultural identity. Oftentimes, these perceptions are at odds with the approach to health and illness shared by physicians trained in the biomedical system, which itself can be considered a socio-cultural system. As a result of these differing perceptions, there is often a clash of cultures in the clinical encounter. To avoid this and to ensure a productive and successful clinical encounter, this article proposes that cultural competency training be implemented at the undergraduate training level and explores the relevance of such training in today’s Ireland as well as discussing the issues that need to be considered while creating a competency training program.

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Introduction

In talking about the social determinants of health, there is much focus placed on education, income, and, the environment of an individual. Another factor that is equally important in determining health practices and understanding of illness, but often not well discussed, is culture. Psychiatrist and medical anthropologist Arthur Kleinman proposes that ‘illness experience is always culturally shaped’ (Kleinman 1988: 5). He explains that an individual’s understanding of health and illness is based on ‘cultural orientations,’ which he defines as the ‘patterned ways that we have learned to think about and act in our life worlds and that replicate the social structure of those worlds’ (Kleinman 1988: 5). Along the same vein, Anderson and colleagues (2010) state that from childhood ‘people learn and assimilate their perspectives regarding health and illness within their cultural and social worlds’ (Anderson et al. 2010: 152S). As such, ‘the experience, expression, course and outcome of [...] health problems, help-seeking and the response to health promotion, prevention or treatment interventions’ (Kirmayer 2012: 149) is influenced to a great deal by an individual’s culture.

In a world that has become increasingly multicultural, it is important to acknowledge that physicians and patients may not share the same cultural worldviews regarding health and illness. Indeed, differing cultural identities can be a potential source of conflict in clinical encounters:

Cultural identity systems of patients may adhere to or conflict with cultural identity systems of providers, affecting rapport, explanation of the problem, satisfaction with the visit, compliance with treatment plan or focus and level of responsibility for problem amelioration. (Hill, Fortenberry and Stein, 1990: Fig 1, 1073)

To provide the best care possible and to avoid doing harm, it is the duty of physicians to become culturally competent and attempt to have an understanding of the cultural affiliations of their patients. However, it is
important not to stereotype and to be cognizant of the fact that culture is not a static, homogenous phenomenon. To say so would be oversimplifying the matter. Culture can be thought of as a ‘potential identity system that changes along predictable lines with changes in social, historical, physical, geographic or technological realms of human life’ (Hill, Fortenberry and Stein 1990: 1072). Hill and colleagues further postulate that there are variants of cultural identity systems, such as ethnicity, nationality, age and gender, that individuals use for ‘group identification, affiliation, and membership’ (Hill, Fortenberry and Stein 1990: 1072). Each person’s identification with a culture and the intensity with which they identify with that culture dictates how much they are influenced by the beliefs and practices of that system (Hill, Fortenberry and Stein 1990). Thus, culture is something that is individually experienced. Each individual has his or her own specific cultural identity to which they align themselves and which shapes their experience and outlook on life.

To ensure that physicians are culturally competent, I believe that training should begin at the undergraduate level. Most medical schools in the West currently do integrate cultural diversity education in their curriculum (Dogra, Reitmanova and Carter-Pokras 2009). In the UK and Ireland, 70% of schools teach cultural diversity in some form or other. However, the ‘education [remains] fragmented, unsystematic and [lacks] clarity’ (Dogra, Reitmanova and Carter-Pokras 2009: S165). In the US, cultural competency training has become a condition for licensure in numerous states; however, the teaching is given in a didactic format and, here also, the teaching is not well integrated into the curriculum (Dogra, Reitmanova and Carter-Pokras 2009). Since 2002, all accredited Canadian medical schools are required to incorporate some form of cultural diversity teaching in their training. Currently, most schools teach this as ‘add-on’ courses during the pre-clinical years, with the focus on impact of culture on health outcomes of minorities (Dogra, Reitmanova and Carter-Pokras 2009). The common theme arising in all three countries is that, while governing bodies dictate the necessity for cultural diversity education, there is very little structure and guidance given to medical schools with regards to what should be taught and how the program should be delivered (Dogra, Reitmanova and Carter-Pokras 2009). As such, there is variance in the information provided to students from different medical schools regarding cultural diversity and health (Dogra, Reitmanova and Carter-Pokras 2009), thus creating a discrepancy in how students and indeed professionals deal with such cases. At a time when such programs have not yet been incorporated into the undergraduate curriculum in Irish medical schools, creating a comprehensive cultural competency program that can be applied across all participating medical schools is essential. This paper will touch on the complexities of culture and cultural competency, examine and explore the need for competency training in Ireland and discuss the issues to be considered while implementing such a training program.

‘The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down’ - An Illustrative Case
Every culture has its own explanatory model for specific illnesses that do not necessarily coincide with the Western biomedical understanding of somatic causation of illness. For instance, family problems, karma, spirits of murdered individuals, black magic, poverty and alcoholism are common explanatory models employed by certain groups in India in understanding psychiatric illness (Shankar, Saravanan and Jacob 2006; Saravanan et al. 2008). Similarly, among Ethiopians, spirit possession, punishment by God for sins and curses and spells laid down by others with supernatural powers are all common
explanatory models used to explain psychiatric illness (Mulatu 1999). It is important to consider these varied explanatory models when providing health care to ensure that appropriate care is given to patients. Failure to do so can cause tremendous harm, as illustrated by Anne Fadiman (1997) in her book *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*.

Fadiman’s book is the true story of Lia Lee, a young Hmong girl diagnosed with epilepsy, who was caught between the biomedical healthcare system of the United States and the traditional Hmong culture of her parents. Her parents, who were new immigrants to the United States at that time, did not read or write English and spoke very little of the language. They did not have the biomedical understanding of disease that many in the West have. They believed Lia’s illness was a spiritual gift and needed to be dealt with in a traditional manner. Lia’s doctors on the other hand did not understand the traditional Hmong worldview regarding epilepsy and seizures and wished to treat her with the appropriate medications. As the story unfolds, the readers begin to see two parties unwilling to compromise and recognize the value of the other’s culture. While there was no question that Lia’s parents loved her and provided the best support and care for her, they did not seem willing to understand the treatment approach of Lia’s doctors. Lia’s doctors, as well, had Lia’s best interests at heart. However, their lack of understanding of the Hmong culture placed them in a situation where they were constantly at conflict with Lia’s parents. Had they been more aware of the Hmong cultural practices, they might have had a better understanding of the cultural context within which they were working and catered their treatment appropriately. Due to this cross-cultural misunderstanding, Lia Lee suffered and endured much more than she needed to, becoming severely brain damaged and living out her days in a persistent vegetative state until her death in 2012 (Fox 2012). As this case illustrates, cultural competency becomes paramount in providing best care for patients from diverse cultural backgrounds.

**The Relevance of Cultural Competency Training in Ireland**

Brach and Fraserirector (2000) discuss that cultural competency is not just about being aware or respectful of or sensitive to another individual’s culture; it is about ‘having skills and being able to use them effectively in cross-cultural situations’ (Brach and Fraserirector 2000: 183). There is very little benefit in just knowing about various practices or beliefs specific to a certain culture if one does not have an understanding of how these beliefs can influence health behaviours (Seeleman, Suurmond and Stronks 2009).

Cultural competency is of great relevance in today’s Ireland. According to recent statistics, approximately 13% of the population is non-Irish (Ireland Central Statistics Office 2013). While this statistic represents individuals from other parts of Europe and the Western world as well, it must be acknowledged that every individual, regardless of country of origin, will have cultural affiliations that will be different from the Irish culture, which will in turn affect clinical presentations and encounters. In fact, even individuals of the same culture will express and experience health and illness differently – a point that will be further discussed below. However, for physicians trained in the West, the more stark differences in cultural identities will be most evident in interactions with individuals from non-Western countries. For example, it has been reported that among some individuals of African background in Ireland, there is an understanding of sickle cell disease as a ‘spiritual attack’ that is often felt not to
require medical attention (Reilly 2014). Furthermore, many parents of children with sickle cell disease feel that disclosure of such a condition to friends and family would cause stigmatization (Reilly 2014). This mindset affects their help seeking behaviour and limits the social support network available for the family and child (Reilly 2014). Physicians who can understand this perception and negotiate around these issues will have greater success at treating the child.

The need to provide culturally sensitive healthcare has been well documented within the field of nursing in Ireland. Studies on nursing care in Ireland report that nurses in general do not provide care that is culturally competent. One study involved administering semi-structured interviews among nurse practitioners in Ireland in order to determine the challenges faced by Irish nurses when caring for patients from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds (Tuohy et al. 2008). They found that apart from language barriers, nurses also felt that they did not have adequate training regarding protocols to access interpreters and that they were not sufficiently aware of rituals and practices that were specific to the patients’ cultures (Tuohy et al. 2008).

While studies of this nature are lacking among physicians in Ireland, one can postulate that similar challenges are faced by nearly all healthcare professionals. As Mr Chinedu Onyejelem, editor of Metro Éireann, is quoted in The Medical Independent, physicians need to ‘understand that some of these patients are coming from countries that do not have names for certain conditions. Some of them are coming from countries or cultures that are in denial of the existence of certain illnesses’ (Reilly 2014). Physicians also have the added task of determining whether patients are using alternative medicine or traditional healing methods, in order to avoid potential drug interactions or treatment non-compliance. To elicit such information, physicians and health care professionals must, at the very least, be able to engage their patients in conversation to learn about their worldviews and attempt to understand their cultural ideologies and practices.

Furthermore, while conversations regarding cultural competency tend to focus mainly on minority cultures, physicians must not ignore the fact that individuals from cultures similar to their own also bring unique interpretations and understandings to the clinical encounter. The medical social sciences is filled with reports that differing viewpoints ‘between patients and physicians [result in] medical conversations [that] are filled with interruptions, misinterpretations, and failures of understanding’ – something that ‘nearly everyone who has visited a physician’ will admit to experiencing (Good 1994: 90). This is because, to paraphrase Arthur Kleinman, every patient, regardless of cultural affiliation, has his or her own illness narrative (Kleinman 1988). This narrative is created within an individual’s ‘lifeworld,’ which sociologist Deborah Lupton explains as

...the everyday sociocultural context in which meaning is generated [...] this term refers to the understandings, concepts and beliefs [that patients] bring to the medical encounter. These are shaped not only by their encounters with doctors and other health-care professionals but also by such factors as personal experiences, interactions with others, information derived from the mass media and the internet, and membership of social class, gender or generational groups as well as racial or ethnic groups (Lupton 2013).

Thus, all individuals, regardless of dominant or minority cultural affiliation, have their own individual cultural framework within which they interpret illness and health, which in turn
will dictate their health behaviours. For example, consider Hill, Fortenberry and Stein’s (1990) proposition that religion is a variant cultural identity. They discuss that ‘persons with strongly held religious beliefs (high religiosity) may adhere to adverse health behaviours, even when they have substantial knowledge about the scientific basis for changing their behaviour’ (Hill, Fortenberry and Stein 1990: 1077). In other words, even individuals with an understanding of the biomedical approach to health will not necessarily adhere to its concepts. Why might this be the case? Reasons for this become clearer if we consider the idea that biomedicine has a culture of its own, one that is not applicable to all individuals.

The Culture of Modern Biomedicine
Fadiman eloquently states the idea that doctors need to understand that ‘our view of reality is only a view, not reality itself’ (Fadiman 1997: 276). The notion that modern biomedicine is itself a socio-cultural system, a product of Western culture, is something that has been discussed by sociologists and anthropologists for many decades (Comaroff: 1978). The proposition, in fact, is that modern science in general is culturally shaped and adapted and is a product of Western culture. Medicine is a subset of this larger scientific system and is subject to the same cultural influences. However, for many who have grown up in the West, this notion is difficult to grasp. This is because for physicians trained in the West, the years of Western schooling and medical training instil the belief that ‘medical practice transcends geographical and cultural borders’ (Martimianakis and Hafferty 2013: 33). Byron Good (1994) elaborates that among physicians in the West, there is

...a strong conviction that our system of knowledge reflects the natural order [...] and that our own biological categories are natural and “descriptive” rather than essentially cultural and “classificatory.”

These deeply felt assumptions authorize our system of medical knowledge... (Good 1994: 3).

However, if physicians in the West consider ‘medicine as a symbolic form through which reality is formulated and organized in a distinctive manner’ (Good 1994: 68), the idea of biomedicine as its own culture becomes more apparent.

Masakata Ogawa (1995) proposes the idea of viewing ‘Western modern science as just one of many sciences’ in what he terms the ‘relativization of Western modern science’ (Ogawa 1995: 584). He explains that Western modern science ‘is a collective rational perceiving of reality which is shared and authorized by the scientific community’ (Ogawa 1995: 589). However, the way in which science is understood by the scientific community is not the same way in which science is understood by the general public. Nor is Western modern science exclusive to the West. As he points out, there are many non-Western scientists who follow the beliefs and attitudes of modern science. At the same time, there are many individuals in the West who do not understand or agree with Western modern science. In this way, science is something that is present at the individual level, which Ogawa terms ‘personal science,’ and is present at a societal or cultural level. Ogawa terms the latter as ‘indigenous science’ and defines it as ‘culturally dependent collective rational perceiving of reality’ (Ogawa 1995: 588). Thus, every individual has a personal science that is unique to that individual that is influenced by personal life experiences and personal perceptions of reality; and every individual has an indigenous science to which he or she belongs. This latter experience of science is instinctual, resulting from years of acculturation from childhood (Ogawa 1995). Ogawa explains that ‘one can be aware of her
or his own indigenous science only when she or he has the chance to meet, or live in, a foreign culture and feel unsettled,' most likely experiencing feelings of disagreement with the foreign culture’s indigenous science (Ogawa 1995: 586). Furthermore, the notion of objectivity in science is a fallacy that must be cleared. While the scientific method of proving and disproving a theory can be argued to be objective, what constitutes scientific knowledge is subjectively determined:

*Vested interests – including those of the pharmaceutical industry and scientific laboratories, and the biomedical status and cultural identities of researchers and their institutions – establish research questions, study design, sampling technique, research instruments, data analyses and interpretation* (Napier et al. 2014: 1628).

With this understanding of science as a cultural concept, we can now turn our attention to the discussion of the culture of biomedicine.

There is no denying the fact that ‘Western medicine has a culture, a recognizable set of beliefs, actions and attitudes’ (McConnel 2003). These beliefs and attitudes are based on ‘Western philosophical traditions emphasizing naturalism and individualism’ (Jenks 2011: 213). Biomedicine ‘includes a scientific view of health, illness and disease’ (McConnel 2003) and embraces the notion that ‘disease is resident in the individual body and the goal of treatment is to understand surface phenomena [...] to link symptoms and signs to physiological structure and functioning and to intervene at that level’ (Good 1994: 83). The presence of and adherence to this set of beliefs and attitudes is what separates professionals and patients with a biomedical approach to health from other groups of individuals within society.

Abímbólá (2007) provides further discourse to the proposition that medicine is a cultural product. He writes that medicine is ‘society’s communal bank of knowledge on the prevention, alleviation and curing of diseases and injuries’ (Abímbólá 2007: 112). Among key characteristics that allow medicine to be viewed in a sociological context are the facts that medicine is ‘learnt, nurtured and transmitted’ and during this process of learning and training, medicine becomes ‘part of a community or society’s general belief structures’ (Abímbólá 2007: 113). Simultaneously, mirroring Ogawa’s proposition of personal science, as medicine becomes a general belief system it also becomes ‘part of the specific beliefs accepted by specific individuals’ (Abímbólá 2007: 113). Thus,

*...medicine as a cultural good is not just about beliefs and values that we uphold; it is also about how we internalize and operationalize these beliefs and values in regulating and controlling the organic, environmental, psychological and biological dimensions of human existence* (Abímbólá 2007: 113).

In other words, medicine is just another worldview – one that brings into focus the biological elements with the psychological and social elements of an individual – by which humans attempt to explain our existence and experiences with health and illness. Just as culture can simultaneously be an overarching phenomenon and an individual experience, so too can medicine be all-encompassing and individually interpreted at the same time (Abímbólá 2007). That is to say, medicine is culturally dependent and its approaches to health and illness are interpreted and integrated in different ways by individuals across cultures and societies based on their unique experiences with medicine.
Sachs (1989) explores this in her paper looking at the use and understanding of modern biomedicine in rural Sri Lanka. In this ethnographic study, Sachs found that Western medications ‘are integrated into [the people’s] particular beliefs and health-seeking behavior’ (Sachs 1989: 336). These medications are ‘interpreted in light of popular theories of health, built on Ayurveda…’ and are appreciated as working in tandem with local healing practices (Sachs 1989: 345). Indeed, even among Western societies, the interpretation and application of medical practice varies in accordance with local needs. For instance, the Americans have a preoccupation with germs and hygiene and believe in employing aggressive methods to combat disease, a practice that is mirrored in their doctors’ approach to treatment (Lupton 2013). The French on the other hand are more concerned with the state of their livers, while the Germans place high emphasis on cardiac conditions (Lupton 2013). As a result, French physicians accordingly focus on hepatic conditions while Germans are seen to be ‘high consumers of heart drugs’ (Lupton 2013).

As this discussion demonstrates, it can be argued that biomedicine is a product of culture and is a socio-cultural system in itself. It carries its own set of beliefs and interpretations regarding health and illness and dictates action towards attaining a pre-defined optimal state of wellbeing that varies among societies. However, as with other forms of culture, it would be wrong to stereotype and say that everyone who adheres to the biomedical understanding of illness interprets it in the same way. There are individual variations in interpretations affected by personal experience with biomedicine that must be acknowledged. Having an understanding of this concept of the culture of modern biomedicine will help physicians accept the fact that there is no one correct way of interpreting illness and health. It will move physicians a step closer in bridging the gap between themselves and patients with differing worldviews during consultations and in becoming more culturally competent.

Implementing Cultural Competency Training: Points of Consideration

There are several key issues that need to be considered to ensure that cultural diversity teaching achieves its maximal benefit. First and foremost, students and physicians must be taught about the influence of culture on epidemiology and clinical presentation of health conditions, as well as about culture’s effects on health beliefs and behaviour (Seeleman, Suurmond and Stronks 2009). However, to do just this would be oversimplifying the matter. There are within group variations in experiences of culture and these must also be emphasized (Seeleman, Suurmond and Stronks 2009). In effect, cultural competency training must present ‘specific examples that highlight the relevance of cultural difference’ while at the same time discourage ‘health providers from assuming that all members of a particular group will be the same’ (Jenks 2011: 217). The social context within which an individual lives also plays an integral role in health behaviours and it is important that physicians are taught not to ignore socioeconomic contexts of their patients when considering cultural influences (Seeleman, Suurmond and Stronks 2009). Indeed, the greatest failure of cultural competency training would result in doctors wrongly assigning ‘cultural reasons to patient issues, rather than recognize that patient difficulties can be equally economic, logistic, circumstantial or related to social inequality’ (Napier et al. 2014).

Additionally – and possibly the most important aspect of cultural competency training – it is important for physicians to be
aware of their own ‘cultural frames of reference’ and their own prejudices (Seeleman, Suurmond and Stronks 2009). It has been suggested that there is an unconscious ideology of ‘racial superiority’ among the Irish when interacting with minority populations (Markey, Tilki and Taylor 2012). Markey and colleagues (2012) suggest this feeling of superiority may stem from being encouraged from a young age to provide monetary aid and to help those from developing nations. While these behaviours are well-intentioned, it gives rise to a socially reinforced idea of privilege that can unconsciously and adversely influence health professionals’ interactions with their minority patients (Markey, Tilki and Taylor 2012). These ideas of privilege and superiority can be often times observed in interactions between physicians and laymen from the dominant culture as well. Failure of physicians to acknowledge and understand their own biases and propensity to stereotype can result in a paternalistic approach in consultations or inaccurate assumptions regarding patients’ symptomatology (Seeleman, Suurmond and Stronks 2009). While beyond the scope of this article, another point of consideration is the cultural diversity of practicing physicians and health professionals and the influence of their cultural backgrounds in clinical encounters. Thus, in addition to educating physicians about cultural frameworks other than their own, cultural competency training must also include sessions targeting reflection of physicians’ own cultural beliefs and behaviours.

Finally, cultural competency training must include sessions on teaching health professionals to not only recognize the cultural diversity of their patients but also how to ‘effectively negotiate these cultural differences’ (Martimianakis and Hafferty 2013: 35). Training should promote the notion that ‘each clinical encounter is a socio-cultural negotiation and that treatment plans should be developed together with the patient’ (Martimianakis and Hafferty 2013: 35). For this to happen, changes need to occur within those of higher ranks in the medical hierarchy, i.e. consultants and registrars. When learning to communicate with patients and obtaining their stories, medical students are taught to gather a complete history, which includes a detailed social history. However, when presenting these patient histories back to supervising physicians, students and interns are instructed to focus only on aspects of the patient’s story that are relevant to the presenting complaint. Good (1994) explores this when he writes that in many teaching hospitals, case histories ‘represent disease as the object of medical practice. The “story” presented is a story of disease processes […] the person, the subject of suffering, is represented as the site of disease rather than as a narrative agent’ (Good 1994: 80). As such, ‘case presentations are designed to exclude all except that which will aid in diagnostic and therapeutic decisions’ (Good 1994: 80). This theme of overlooking the patient’s narrative is reflected in experiences of medical students as well:

...basically what you’re supposed to do is take a walking, talking, confusing disorganized (as we all are) human being, with an array of symptoms that are experienced […] and puree it into this sort of form that everyone can quickly extrapolate from. […] You’re a professional and you’re trained in interpreting phenomenological descriptions of behavior into physiologic and pathophysiologic processes. So there’s the sense of if you try to tell people really the story of someone […] they’d be annoyed at you because you’re missing the point. That’s indulgence, sort of (Taylor 2003: 558).

As expressed by this Harvard University medical student quoted in Taylor (2003), the art of presenting a patient’s history involves editing the information given by the patient into a short, focused version which other
members of the team can use to arrive at a diagnosis and formulate a management plan. Often, creating this edited version means that much of the information gathered in the narrative is left out. However, these ‘narratives are central to the understanding of the experience of illness, to placing pain or epileptic seizures [...] in relation to other events and experiences of life’ (Good 1994: 133). Students, and indeed all physicians, will attest that patients share a wealth of information that provides clues to their worldviews during the process of history taking. As previously discussed in this article, understanding a patient’s worldview will provide physicians with greater leverage in negotiating a management plan and eliciting higher rates of compliance. For students to value such information, the training physicians must be seen to value these pearls as well. Thus, to properly implement cultural competency training and to ensure that future generations of doctors are culturally competent physicians, there must be training of the trainers in this area as well.

Concluding Remarks

Best care practices are an integral part of healthcare today. In order to ensure that patients receive the highest standard of care, it is imperative that healthcare professionals understand the social and cultural contexts of their patients. Cultural competency, in particular, is often lacking among health care professionals and this can lead to misunderstandings between healthcare providers and patients. Training in this area, as well as creating an awareness of physicians’ own biases and cultural affiliations, needs to be incorporated into medical school education to ensure that patient care is not adversely affected. In addition, senior physicians must be encouraged to promote the value of information gathered in the socio-cultural history of a patient and must be trained to lead by example in incorporating cultural information into clinical consultations. Understanding the cultural context within which patients live and comprehend health and illness will allow for catering of appropriate treatment methods, so as to elicit treatment compliance and a successful outcome, thus enhancing and improving the clinical encounter.

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Interview with

Arpad Szakolczai

Renewing social theory through anthropology: Experience, liminality, rites of passage, pilgrimage

By Julian Davis

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J. Davis: You were trained as an economist but you are a professor of sociology and you employ anthropological concepts such as liminality; so what motivates this movement between disciplines?

A. Szakolczai: I was trained as an economist because in Hungary, at the time I went to university, in the late 1970s, studying economics was the only way to combine an interest in history and society. I turned to sociology in my third year at university because I already had more of an interest in sociology than economics. I also read the works of Max Weber, on my own, and I found his works very illuminating for what I was hoping to do. There was a certain degree of interest in Weber's works in the 1970s in Hungary for a number of quite natural reasons. I turned to anthropological concepts much later, from around the mid-1990s, together with Agnes, when we were following up on our earlier work on the collapse of communism and we found that the terminology of contemporary social sciences was somehow defective for a number of reasons. The most important defect was that concepts developed in modern society were used for studying modern society itself, so there was a degree of circularity involved in this undertaking, even with Max Weber. Agnes then discovered, through Károly Kerényi, the concept of the trickster, which is a figure resembling to, but completely different from a charismatic leader. I was interested in transitions, transitions from communism, to democracy and modernity, and eventually, through Roberta Sassatelli who did an MA in anthropology at Manchester I encountered the term liminality. At about the same time I encountered the idea of imitation through Girard and Tarde, and then we started to link these concepts together. It took a lot of time for us to follow up these developments and tie together these various anthropological concepts, also because all these anthropological concepts were, and to some extent still are, even outside mainstream anthropology.

JD: Can you give me a sense of the other concepts that are particularly helpful when using the term liminality?

AS: Concerning liminality, in my reading it attempts to capture and understand a kind of situation or process of development that was previously considered almost like a black box. In this previous mind-set you had one particular structure or stage and then you moved to another kind of stage or system, being connected either by some kind of
ideological evolution or by some kind of dialectical movement or struggle. Focus was on the two end-states, and whatever happened in between them was not considered relevant. However, through liminality, transition and crisis can be connected on a single theoretical framework. What happens during a transition is very similar to what happens during a crisis. Crisis is also an interesting concept, though in a way it came to be purely negative, capturing when a stable and prosperous entity enters a kind of disorder. Another similar concept is problematisation by Foucault. Foucault was very close to describing the same kind of situation: how something is felt as a problem, how the problem is formulated, and how the answer to the problem depends on how the question was formulated. So there are various kinds of concepts that can be brought together through liminality.

There is also the more general and basic concept of ‘experience’, a fundamental term of philosophy since Descartes and Kant. Cartesian thinking was very important in separating experience and experiment, repositioning philosophy on the basis of a concrete experience, a personal experience or a perception of the mind. I became particularly interested in how in his last writings Turner recognised the affinities between liminality and rites of passage and Dilthey’s attempt to conceptualise experience as Erlebnis, as contrasted to the Kantian notion of experience as Erfahrung, being reducible to empirical sense perception. I eventually discovered that Dilthey very much used here Goethe’s ideas, as the word Erlebnis was an invention of Goethe’s, developed through Goethe’s long-term discussions with philosophers like Herder (who was Kant’s top student, but eventually got disillusioned with Kant), Jacoby or the Schlegel brothers. But there are also a number of other anthropological concepts that illuminate what happens in a liminal situation. Apart from imitation, these include schismogenesis (Bateson), or the trickster (Radin).

JD: This draws out my next question: in your work – are you building a theory or does continuous reflection on experience have a prominent role in using a concept like liminality?

AS: It is certainly the latter. I have major problems with theory-building. Here again Foucault always remained a measure for me, through his relentless hostility to theory-building in the manner of Sartre, Kant, Hegel or critical theory; this philosophical tradition, based on the idea that ‘this is my idea and I am building my theory’, which supposedly is applicable to everything and solves everything, ignoring the plain truism that whatever applies to everything says nothing in particular about anything. It is as if you are building yourself into an ivory tower prison, then you close yourself into it and throw away the key. The dominant schools in contemporary social theory function on the basis of this closed theory-building model, the most famous ones can be associated with Anthony Giddens, Jürgen Habermas, Niklas Luhmann, Pierre Bourdieu, Jeffrey Alexander, and their direct and indirect followers. Still, there are major approaches within contemporary social theory, to be traced to Nietzsche, Weber, and include Elias, Borkenau, Voegelin, Koselleck, and Foucault, to mention a few of the most important, that consider this idea deeply mistaken, seeing these buildings as meaningless and fruitless exercises in intellectual hubris and arrogance.

One needs conceptual tools, which help us to reflect on our experiences and lives, the reality in which we live, but we do not need general theories, and especially not theoretical systems. This is the legacy of 25
centuries of Sophistic, misconstrued as the ‘philosophical tradition’ by German idealism, which was identified by Jacoby, life-long friend of Goethe, as a main source of modern nihilism. This is a trick used to seduce the best and most intelligent students, transforming much-needed potential for understanding into a monopoly of smartness, and justifying all this by the supposedly world-saving character of ‘our’ (and only ‘our’) theory. It is still the same thing against which Max Weber so desperately protested. Reflection, on the other hand, is very important— but we have to be clear what it means, as it has two quite different senses. One is reflecting in the sense of a mirror, a kind of automatic replication; but reflection can also refer to a conscious stepping back and revisiting what happened and why, what is really going on; a kind of negotiation between reality and the work of the mind, and this is very fundamental. Of course there is a further question, which is where do our ideas come from, which was touched upon by Plato, and extends to the nature of the transcendent, but that is exactly not a question of theory-building. It touches upon the radical difference between Plato and Kant, and especially neo-Kantianism, but this would lead us into the terrain of philosophical anthropology, and would require another conversation.

JD: What can one expect in terms of scientific precision when using a concept like liminality?

AS: What is the meaning of ‘scientific precision’ and what is the meaning of science? This is again where anthropology is very important; both socio-cultural anthropology and philosophical anthropology, which can be traced from Dilthey back to Plato. Science in that sense is not something like the ‘rigorous study’ of facts, and the formulating of ‘testable’ hypotheses about facts, but a form of knowledge concerned with us human beings as human beings. ‘Rigour’ in this sense is a secondary virtue, rightly singled out as particularly problematic by Eric Voegelin in his lectures on the Germans, and a main source of manifold aspects of inhumanity in recent history and the present. We need knowledge and understanding about our own experiences, what happens with our own lives in the times that we are living, and what kind of sense we can make out of it. This is real wisdom, knowledge and science, while ‘rigorous’ social science is an oxymoron, a scholastic conceit which helps to direct attention systematically away from the genuine issues of our world, and so one must ask the Mannheimian question who is promoting such a research, and whose interests it does serve. We need real science in the sense of wisdom, and not just opinions—not even public opinion; even this is exactly what we do not need, in an age dominated by the electronic media. Beyond political debates or questions of public sphere and journalism, we need in-depth understanding concerning the most important elements of human life, not in this remote, distant, neutral sense of objectivity, which is merely the schismatic counterpart of unlimited opinionating dominating the medias. We live in a world that is bipolar through and through, continuously compensating excesses by opposite excesses, driven by the—vain—conviction that eventually it result in a harmonious synthesis. This obsession with neutrality in the sense of refusing the incorporation of participatory experiences is imitating the natural sciences, when such sciences themselves see problems with this idea; especially with the idea of transforming nature at will, as if we could reshape directly everything from atomic particles and molecules. Back to Goethe again, in one of his most famous poems The Sorcerer’s Apprentice he formulated the metaphor of technology running amok, driven by the vain illusion of playing God. We only need to look around ourselves to realise how much Goethe’s insight, formulated in the
midst of the French Revolution, was prophetic.

JD: You have already mentioned a few people like Goethe and Dilthey. I was wondering whether you could talk a little about the sociological conditions under which the concept liminality emerged? Was this emergence a response to an intellectual climate, which may have conditioned it? And finally, how was the concept received?

AS: Your question touches upon the history of sociology and anthropology; in fact, the point of intersection between those two disciplines, mainly around Durkheim in France, when sociology and anthropology were very closely related disciplines. Durkheim’s shift of interest from sociology to anthropology goes back to the mid-1890s. In fact, Mauss and van Gennep became friends at the university around that time. So it was a foundational moment both in the history of sociology and anthropology. It is also quite difficult to reconstruct the storyline, because the canonical version has strong in-built biases, to put it mildly. On the one hand, Durkheim had no training in anthropology, and had a very closed, authoritarian mind-set, both philosophically and in terms of his personality. He had this sudden illumination in 1895 that somehow anthropological evidence contained in religious rituals, especially of sacrifice, holds the key to understand contemporary society. He was right about that, in a way, but he didn’t have the instruments or the capacity to fully substantiate the point, so he directed Marcel Mauss to help him out, but he also wanted to control how Mauss would interpret the findings, so that it would prove him right. Mauss at first complied, but then was caught in an impossible situation where the logic of his own research and discoveries took him ever further away from Durkheim’s preconceptions, as far as one can reconstruct it, as the evidence is meagre, even evidently suppressed.

Mauss went to university together with van Gennep, they were very close colleagues, even friends; Mauss for e.g. read and commented upon van Gennep’s thesis at its proof stage. Van Gennep then went ahead and wrote *Rites of Passage* (1909), in which he sought to lay the joint foundations of sociology and anthropology. The kind of processes which *Rites of Passage* analysed converge towards the concept liminality. Durkheim found the idea unacceptable because it went against his own mode of perceiving social life through neo-Kantian categories. Here we touch upon a very fundamental philosophical-epistemological issue, which goes into the heart of the concept liminality: this idea captures change and transition right in the middle, just as genealogy did for Nietzsche, according to Deleuze and Foucault, and not by the two end points. It captures social life in the moment of formation, which Durkheim couldn’t do; he simply couldn’t – or did not want to – grasp this. There is some kind of incompatibility between Kantian, Hegelian and Marxian ways of thinking and the concept of liminality which I have bumped into, much to my surprise, and in various kinds of way. There are many people who become nervous and simply explode by the idea of liminality because somehow it overthrows or reverts their mental framework. Based on my experiences now I can understand better what might have happened between van Gennep and Durkheim. At any rate, as a result, for about half a century the concept lay dormant and hardly thought about because van Gennep was simply removed from academic life, although he was one of the most important scholars of the past century. There are some quite revealing further biographical details about this affair; you can find them in Bjørn Thomassen’s work, or my encyclopaedia


article on van Gennep. Van Gennep eventually broke away even from anthropology, and settled within folklore and ethnology, though, to repeat myself, his book was intended to be foundational for sociology and anthropology at the same time, and I think we should reconsider it in that light. There can be no question that Van Gennep’s book is incomparably more valuable and nuanced than Durkheim’s *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*.

**JD:** I suppose the other principal name in the history of the concept liminality is Victor Turner. So will you tell us a little bit about how Turner took up the concept?

**AS:** Yes, sure. Victor Turner encountered the concept in a particular context. He didn’t know about the work at all during his university years, as the book was not translated for about 50 years. It was only published in 1960 through the instigation of Robert Needham, a relatively unorthodox anthropologist in Oxford, who was also interested in Lévy-Bruhl amongst others, and helped Colin Turnbull, another great maverick figure in anthropology. Turner picked up the book around 1963 when he was in a delicate situation – he got a position in the US, at the University of Chicago, he gave up his job and house and was on his way to the States, but he didn’t get his visa in time, as in the second world war he was a conscientious objector. These circumstances put him in a liminal situation, so on reading of the book he immediately recognised that this was the concept he was looking for all the time when he was trying to understand the rituals he experienced during his fieldwork. He always knew that rituals cannot be accommodated in the structuralist, functionalist and conflict theory frameworks he learned from his teachers; that the explanation must be searched somewhere. So he first developed the concept of social drama, in the mid-1950s, and now in 1963 he realised that liminality is the master concept that covers this particular kind of in-between, or transitory experience, capturing the transformative potential of a ritual.

Then something else happened. A few years later in the late 1960’s came the student movement, May 1968 in Paris, the Vietnam war, all these things, and liminality became somewhat hijacked in this context. It became a celebration of difference and the out-of-the-ordinary, or the anti-structure, thus quite different from what van Gennep had proposed. Turner published his most influential book, *The Ritual Process* in 1969, and to some extent he surfed on the waves of his times. It thus codified a limited vision of liminality, as the term doesn’t simply mean some happy celebration of an escape from structure, rather incorporates anguishing situations of uncertainty. This is the interpretation that Agnes Horvath emphasised, returning to van Gennep’s examination of liminality and beyond, focusing on the potentially dangerous, negative character of liminality, beyond the celebration of creativity, the loss of structure and things like that. Finally, in this way liminality helps to understand globalisation from another perspective, because globalisation as the end of all limits is indeed like an irresponsible incitement for liminality through a conscious elimination of all kind of limits, and therefore an endless perpetuation of liminality, without realising the paradoxical and deeply counterproductive or disturbing characteristics of this kind of permanent transitionality or transitoriness.

**JD:** Bearing in mind the personal encounter of Turner with the concept of liminality could you talk about how you have ‘applied’ the concept the liminality while highlighting the place or use of reflexivity in taking up the concept?
AS: I started to work on transition and transitoriness, and it took some time to change my terminology from transition to liminality. This became necessary, as transition is just a general word that doesn’t state anything other than the fact that something is in between while liminality analyses what are the movements, to and from these, and what happens in this kind of in-between situation. Liminality is a truly unique, paradoxical yet empirically and experientially relevant concept; while transition only gives a name to a temporary state, liminality helps to analyse this situation. Maybe reflexivity is related here in the sense that liminality connects transition experience with a reflection on this transition, which was emphasised by Turner in his pioneering article on liminality and rites of passage, and it allows one to have a kind of in depth understanding of the various stages of what is happening in this situation of crisis or uncertainty or transition. Let me give you one example. A rite of passage starts by the rite of separation, so first you have to separate oneself from your previous condition. It is not simply that something is happening to somebody, or that one goes through a ritual or a rite, but there is a prior distancing involved. This distancing, in this framework, is something like a precondition. It is a difficult, troublesome or painful separation from one’s own taken for granted state which people must undergo first. This is helpful to understand the conceptualisation of experience. Experience thus requires this prior separation. Without prior separation, a kind of break away, there is no experience. It also implies that one has to be careful about the extent to which these liminal experiences can or should be undergone. For example one has to grow up, it is clear enough and every culture is aware of that. If a child doesn’t leave the family, then the child remains in the family forever, eventually becoming just a kind of grown-up infant who is worse than a good for nothing, because you cannot just keep following your parents. So a painful separation is part of life, but this doesn’t mean that any painful separation is necessary. A central issue concerning the danger of liminality is how this knowledge can be used and abused by subordinating people through purposefully forcing them into a confusing and anxiety-ridden situation of uncertainty. Thus it offers a helpful framework to think about modernisation, helping to understand why this supposedly necessary road to an ‘enlightened’ society historically always proceeded through terroristic regimes, starting not simply with the French or Russian revolutions, but Calvin’s Geneva or Cromwell’s England. The coming modern condition never simply implied a maturation of humankind, rather the separating of people from their surroundings and forcing them into a kind of perpetual state of war. That’s again an anthropological angle on modernity and modernisation, which a purely historical-sociological or even philosophical angle can never properly offer. Here the insights of poets like Goethe and Hölderlin, or novelists like Dickens and Dostoevsky are extremely helpful, way beyond the analysis offered by the Enlightenment or 19th century philosophy, excepting a few figures like Tocqueville, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche.

JD: Plato has also been mentioned. Can you describe your introduction to Plato and how you think Plato’s dialogues relate to thinking about liminality?

AS: The interest in Plato came in several stages. In some way everyone knows about Plato, but perhaps only as a classical theorist, or a founding figure of philosophical idealism which is a complete misnomer. We all think we know Plato but we really do not know Plato. In various steps I became more and more interested in Plato, which also meant to dismantle what I thought I knew about Plato.
through my previous education: through Foucault’s turn to Plato, in his last Collège de France courses; also through Eric Voegelin, and his turn from Weberian sociology to Plato; and then there is another central figure whom I haven’t yet much mentioned, Gregory Bateson. Bateson also returned to Plato in several stages. He was educated in Cambridge and nearly everyone in Cambridge still at that time was educated in Plato, part of general education. As an anthropologist Bateson returned to Plato during fieldwork, as he found the concepts offered by his teachers useless — this is an extremely significant anecdote, concerning the vital contemporary significance of Plato’s anthropology. Then in his late epistemological work he again returned to Plato. All these turns also gave new meanings to Plato. We also returned to Plato, together with Agnes, when we returned to Florence and became interested in the Renaissance and Plato, first through Ficino, but then Agnes discovered that Ficino only gave a very partial reading of Plato, and so returning to Plato is much more interesting. Furthermore, this return to Plato was already stimulated by an interest in anthropology. So it was not a straight line from anthropology to Plato, or from Plato to anthropology, but a series of circles between Plato and contemporary social, cultural, empirical, if you like ethnographic anthropology.

Turning to liminality, Voegelin emphasised that Plato has a concept called *metaxy*, capturing in-betweenness, which is again the same as liminality. Then I realised that there is another similar word of Greek philosophy, *apeiron* (unlimited or boundless), the famed ‘first word’ of Presocratic philosophy, which again literally captures liminality. The *apeiron* and the *metaxy* are concepts that Plato used in the same dialogue, the *Philebus*. They are not tied together very tightly, but yet are present there, and hardly elsewhere (the *metaxy* also in the *Symposium*). The *Philebus*, furthermore, is fundamentally concerned with the limit and the limited, and then we came to recognise with Agnes that the *Philebus*, one of the least commented dialogues of Plato, is something like a last and conclusive dialogue, together with, but in some sense even beyond the *Timaeus* and the *Laws*. The theme of the dialogue is desire and the good, yet it also has a fundamental methodological element, and this is connected to liminality, through *apeiron* but also *metaxy*. The *Philebus* is the ultimate dialogue of Plato in the sense that the idea of its writing was conceived last. It is outside the series Plato projected earlier, and it replaced the dialogue that was supposed to be called *The Philosopher*, to come after *The Statesman*. So it is a kind of meta-philosophy, in Plato’s own recognition, or at least hints.

**JD:** Liminality is a concept closely connected to ‘experience.’ And ‘experience’ is etymologically related to ‘experiment.’ Bearing this in mind, can you describe how the concept of liminality can be employed in empirical sociological or anthropological study?

**AS:** Let me start shortly with experience. This is a central term of Descartes’s philosophy, and – through the distinction between experience and experiment – it also connects French rationalism and the English empiricism, from Bacon to Locke and beyond. But it also helps to understand what is wrong with these traditions – and here the recent book of Vassos Argyrou, an anthropologist from Cyprus teaching at the University of Hull, is of primary importance. The central issue is that the Enlightenment motto ‘think for yourself’ is strictly speaking an aporia. We are always already part of a dialogue, and speak inside it. This implies a delicate balance between tradition and innovation, but the thinking of Descartes and Locke inaugurates a radical breach – which is then repeated endlessly, at least in social theory. So this
focus on ‘my’ experience and ‘my’ theory is the ultimate Enlightenment hubris – it is not accidental that Prometheus, the Titan, was the choice mythological figure of both the Ancient Sophists and the modern Enlightenment figures – including Marx (read the Preface he wrote to his Dissertation). The problem with liminality as developed through rites of passage is that the idea that anything new implies a radical break is almost reified into the very principle of human experience and life. And so at the moment I’m exploring the possibility that the most basic form of liminal experience is not a rite of passage, not even any kind of ritual, but something like the archetypal form of pilgrimage – the leaving of home, in order to visit a special, sacred site, to perform there an at once very real and very symbolic turning around (the periagoge of Plato), and return from there to home. This is a very basic, empirical phenomenon, studied by anthropologists – indeed a pioneering work was done by the Turners, as a couple; while archaeologists are increasingly recognising in centres of pilgrimage the origin of human settlement, even cities. This is of course only a hypothesis, and we should not extrapolate into the past the contemporary forms of pilgrimage, but this is something for anthropologists to think about, especially in Ireland: how about pilgrimage, in the sense of long-distance walking, being the most ancient form of liminal experience? Back to Palaeolithic times, perhaps starting from the Chauvet cave, c.35000 BC?

Notes

1 Agnes Horvath, Chief Editor of the journal International Political Anthropology
2 Bjørn Thomassen is Associate Professor at Roskilde University, and is another founding editors of IPA; see his Liminality and the Modern: Living through the In-between, Farnham Surrey: Ashgate, 2014.
This volume, edited by Heather A. Howard and Craig Proulx, contains twelve papers that speak to important transformations occurring in the relationship between the Canadian state, Canadian society, and Aboriginal peoples. These studies of urban Aboriginal community, identity, and cultural transformations provide innovative perspectives from an interdisciplinary range of academics, community practitioners, and researchers from diverse cultural backgrounds. The majority of the Aboriginal population in Canada has resided in urban areas since the 1970s. Between 1981 and 2001, urban Aboriginal populations doubled and in some cases tripled, and similar trends have continued into the new millennium. As the editors note,

Aboriginal rural to urban migration, the flow back and forth between cities and reserves, and the development of urban Aboriginal communities represent some of the most significant shifts in the histories and cultures of Aboriginal people in Canada. Nonetheless the topic has been largely neglected in Aboriginal studies across disciplines (Howard and Proulx 2011: 1).

This volume is timely in that it provides innovative perspectives on the complexities of urban Aboriginal community, identity, and cultural reproduction in ways that not only enrich theory in the social sciences, but that are also directly applicable to the work of policy makers, practitioners, and researchers working in the context of Aboriginal organizations, NGOs, corporations, educational institutions and government.

This edited volume makes a number of timely and otherwise important arguments regarding contemporary Aboriginal people and populations in Canadian cities. Life in settler cities has been transformative for Aboriginal peoples, but not at the expense of jeopardizing authenticity by means of assimilation. The authors critique the term ‘urban Indian’, or ‘urban Aboriginal’, which became prevalent as urban Aboriginal populations increased across Canada in the latter half of the twentieth century. This term, they argue, is a colonial category that maintains false dichotomies such as reserve/urban, traditional/modern, and authentic/assimilated; it also conflates important differences between First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Moreover, this term fails to comprehend the complexity of contemporary Aboriginal people and populations, as well as to recognize the significance of the heterogeneity of experience within diverse Aboriginal populations and cultures. Most Aboriginal people living in cities have frequent and meaningful connections to their reserve communities, and many move back and forth between reserves and urban spaces. These connections and movements are not adequately captured by the oppositional categories of ‘reserve Indian’ and ‘urban Indian’. A major strength of this collected work is the combined voice the authors advance in critique of the myopia prevalent in Canadian society homogenizing Aboriginal peoples as one generalized and
vanishing, if not invisible, people. As the authors note, there is diversity both between and within Aboriginal cultures, and in how these peoples construct and reproduce community, identity and indigeneity.

The authors also make great contributions to revisionist history, considering the process of Aboriginal migration into emerging settler cities throughout the formation of Canada as a nation. These authors query the historical unfolding of important intersectionalities between race, class and gender within the wider backdrop of colonization and the indigenous rights movements – itself complicated by the movement of Aboriginal peoples back and forth from reserve to urban communities. As the editors note:

*it is impossible to discuss Aboriginal life in cities without referring to the controlling processes involved in the historic, multi-sited, multi-purposed, and continuing colonial projects in what is now called Canada (2011: 2).*

The cases presented in this volume demonstrate how ongoing colonial stereotypes of Aboriginal peoples promoted in the media and popular culture continue to structure how Aboriginal peoples and cultures are perceived in Canada. A quintessential aspect of these stereotypes and representations has been the construction of urban Aboriginal communities as migrant populations that are disconnected from their cultures and ill-suited to urban living. Together these papers argue that urban Aboriginal communities are

*real, they endure, they are growing, and it is long past the time when we can make the mistake of perceiving them as vestiges or missives of some more legitimate land-based community (ibid: 3).*

This volume provides innovative cases and concrete examples demonstrating that urban Aboriginal communities are legitimate sources of new forms of culture, relationships and identity development – grounded as these are in Aboriginal language, territory and knowledge systems.

Perhaps the most complex and nuanced contribution made by this volume is the dynamic perspectives advanced regarding the connection between ancestral territories (land) and identity, and the implications of this relationship in urban centres.

*The difficulties in delineating forms of Aboriginal community in cities are complicated by late-twentieth-century anthropological theorizing on space and place and their relation to identity and community in response to musings about the artificiality and permeability of boundaries and borders (ibid: 13).*

The focus on deterritorialization in the context of globalization draws attention to how production, communities and identities have become detached from local places – as in the case of Aboriginal peoples being removed from ancestral territories, confined to colonial reserves, and later migrating into urban centres.

As these authors note, such theoretical backdrops are often associated with the translation of community as a collective identity rather than an interaction. They argue that community cannot simply be assumed to be an unproblematic or static entity, and may be ‘conceptualized abstractly by members who are part of the social networks, cultural practices, and the institutional landscapes’ (ibid: 15) that comprise non-geographically bounded Aboriginal communities in Canadian cities. This raises important questions about the role of urban Aboriginal organizations, such as friendship centres, within the interactions and discourses that work at
structuring Aboriginal community and identity in urban spaces.

One aspect of urban Aboriginal community, identity and interaction that could have been expanded upon is the manner by which Aboriginal peoples in urban centres (often members of the urban Aboriginal elite) structure and regiment processes of indigenization and cultural transformation by influencing other Aboriginal peoples. While important emphasis is placed on the influence of colonial structures, discourses and historical legacy, the manner by which Aboriginal people scrutinize and influence other Aboriginal people around what is legitimized as authentic Aboriginal knowledge, practice and identity remains an important and largely unexamined area of study.

This volume adds to and deepens recent studies on urban Aboriginal people that elaborate the ideas of community, identity and connection to land (concrete or abstract) as sources of empowerment and cultural generation. The diverse perspectives provided on being Aboriginal in Canadian cities foregrounds the multiplicity of discourse, relationships, interactions and social structures that provide a broad range of pathways to becoming and being Aboriginal in urban Canada today.
The Health Anthropology Network Launch Workshop

The Health Anthropology Network is a new professional network aiming to promote activities associated with anthropology in health in Ireland.

This launch workshop is to be held at the next Anthropology Association of Ireland’s conference.

The workshop’s aim is to open up conversations about work being conducted in various parts of the country. It will include presentations from members of the network (anthropologists and health professionals) as well as a discussion of the networks progress to date and plans for the future.

Saturday the 7th March 2015
9.30-13.00
Break at 11:00
Room BHSC 302 Brookfield Campus, UCC.
Directions shall be provided on the day

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