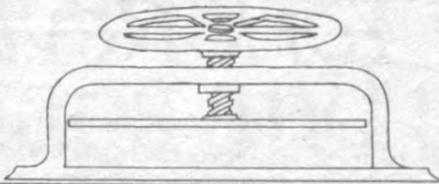


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COMPLIMENTARY

An Interview with Benedict Anderson

Charting Imagined Borders

Kamala Chandrakirana

Books by Benedict Anderson:

IMAGINED COMMUNITIES
Verso, 224 pp., \$14.95 paper

LANGUAGE AND POWER
Cornell University Press, 305 pp.,
\$14.95 paper

Benedict Anderson, currently the Aaron Binenkorb Professor of International Studies and Director of the Modern Indonesia Project at

Cornell, began his scholarly involvement in Southeast Asia in the late 1950s when, as a graduate student at Cornell University, he studied the nationalist revolution in Indonesia. Since then, Anderson's work has focused primarily on language and consciousness and their manifestations in politics; the relations between state and society; and nationalism. His books include *Jawa in a Time of Revolution* (1972), *In the Mirror: Literature and Politics in Siam in the American Era* (1985), and *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (1990). The latter is a collection of papers written throughout Anderson's career, and contains several of his most influential works on Indonesia (for example, "The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture" and "Old State, New Society: Indonesia's New Order in Comparative Historical Perspective").

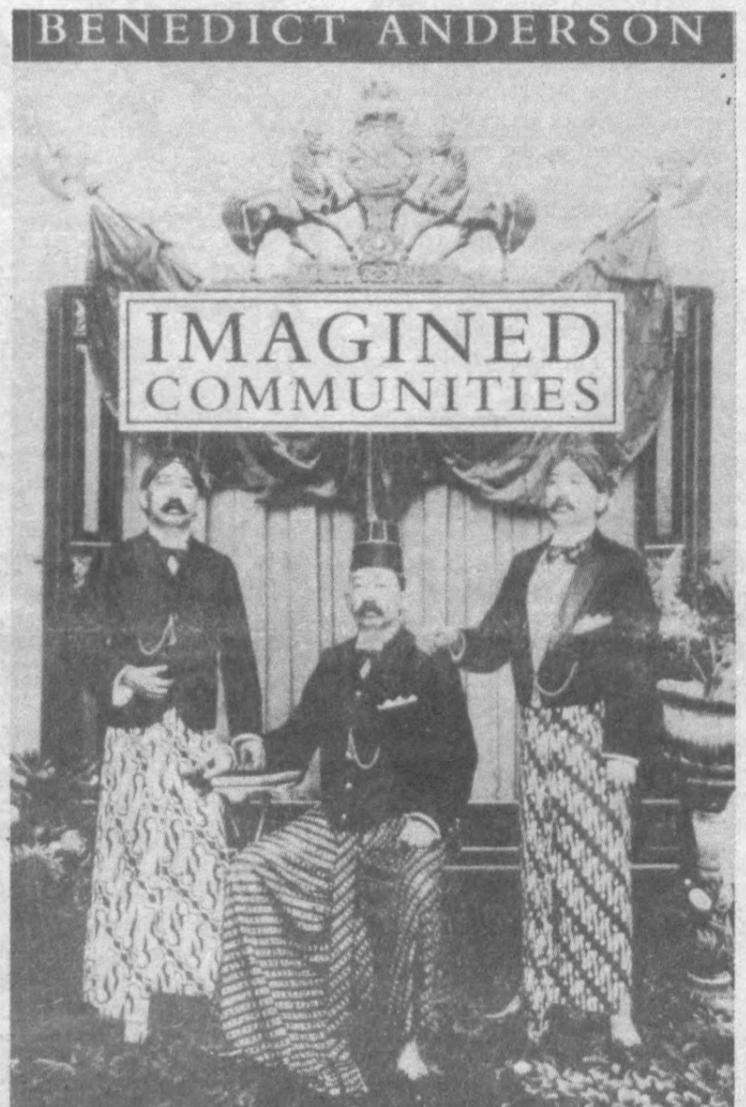
Anderson's knowledge and understanding of Indonesia's history and political cultures has made him a leading figure in Indonesian studies. Yet, for the past 20 years, he has been barred from entering that country. The apparent reason is a paper that Anderson and two other scholars wrote on the coup of 1965, which presented an interpretation that challenged the Suharto regime's official version of the overthrow of President Sukarno (This paper

eventually became widely known among Indonesian political elites as the "Cornell Paper.")

Anderson sees himself as an exile from Indonesia. To those who know him well, it is obvious that his attachment to Indonesia is deep and sincere. Indeed, his sharply critical writings on the "New Order" state of Suharto can be seen as reflecting a loyalty to the original ideals of the Indonesian nationalist revolution. In this sense, he is a nationalist. Consistent with this belief in the right of self-determination for nations, Anderson has also supported East Timorese independence from Indonesia.

In his quest to understand the origin and spread of nationalism, Anderson has ventured beyond Southeast Asia and into the histories of the Americas, Europe, Africa and the rest of Asia. The product is his *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983 and 1991), a popular and timely book that has been translated into several languages, including Eastern European languages.

Described by one reviewer as "engaging, imaginative, sweeping, relevant, humane," *Imagined Communities* is one of Anderson's most important contributions to the study of nationalism. The vast range of
see Our National, p. 18



cover design: William Webb

EXCLUSIVE

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replies to attack
in *New York*
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Physicist
Mitchell Feigenbaum
critiques the Peters
Projection Map
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Runaway Prose

Mark Shechner

THE RUNAWAY SOUL

by Harold Brodkey
Farrar Straus Giroux, 835pp., \$30.00

Some years back, while sitting in my dentist's waiting room, I came across an article about Harold Brodkey in, of all places, *People*, and managed, when the receptionist turned her back, to tear it out and spirit it home for my files. It was one of those hang-loose interviews that you never find in literary quarterlies but abound in the slicker of the slicks, in which the writer lets down his guard and takes the interviewer into his confidence. This one was as astonishing a confession of *chutzpah* and delusion as I had ever come across, the writer prophesying "a Brodkey dictatorship in letters" while entertaining fears that "his passionate autobiographical fiction

will 'change the world too much,'" even as he worries that it won't change anything at all. There was, to be sure, a motive for self-exaltation, since Brodkey at the time was polishing off a gargantuan manuscript, a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, rumored to be somewhere between three- and six-thousand pages in length. A portion has now been published as *The Runaway Soul* which, at a mere 835 pages, suggests that to this *Remembrance of Things Past* it is a mere *Swann's Way*.

Apart from Norman Mailer, we don't see this kind of naked egotism very much in this era of the minimalist novel and the written-for-the-screen book; the demand for them is small at best, and the risk of putting all your eggs in a few baskets is too much for all but the most daring, or self-deluded, of writers. Harold Brodkey is either very dar-

see Runaway, p. 15

K.W. Taylor

THE TRAGEDY OF CAMBODIAN HISTORY: Politics, War and Revolution since 1945

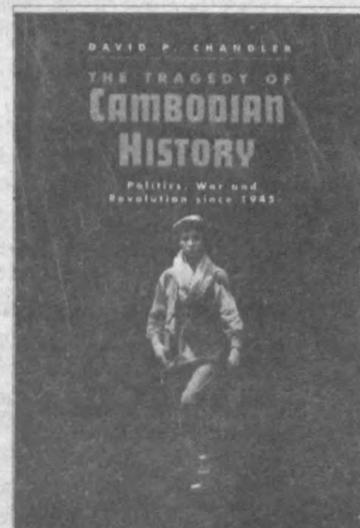
by David P. Chandler
Yale University Press, 396 pp., \$35.00

Cambodia has been attracting greater international attention recently because of the proposed United Nations plan to establish a new government through elections, thereby, it is hoped, bringing an end to more than a decade of warfare. This book can be recommended for those seeking a readable yet serious survey of modern Cambodian political history to enhance their understanding of the contemporary situation. It covers the period from 1945 to 1979 and focuses upon the three successive leaders of Cambo-

Tragic Clowns

dia, Sihanouk (to 1970), Lon Nol (1970-75), and Pol Pot (1975-79).

David P. Chandler, an Ameri-



can whose interest in Cambodia dates from his posting there with the U.S. Foreign Service in the early 1960s,

now a professor at Monash University in Australia, is the author of a previous book on Cambodian history, from ancient times to 1953, *A History of Cambodia* (1983). His new book, according to the author's preface, was conceived as a "sequel" to the earlier one. He chose to cover again the 1945-53 period because new archival material from that time has recently become available. In the preface, he explains that he decided to end the book in 1979 because it "seemed an appropriate place to stop," Cambodia having become "difficult to define" in the 1980s, making it hard to organize "a coherent narrative about the 1980s." What this is all about becomes clear by the end of the book where, in the conclusion, he says that he has written a tragic narrative history, figuring Sihanouk, Lon Nol, and Pol Pot as tragic heroes who became clowns.

see Tragedy, p. 15

Bernal Replies to *New York Review* Attack

This essay is a response to the review of *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization. Volume II: The Archaeological and Documentary Evidence* by Professor Emily Vermeule that appeared in the March 26 *New York Review of Books*. When Volume I was reviewed in 1989, the printing of my reply to it was delayed for several months because the reviewer's response to my reply was "lost in the mail" and it was deemed that my piece could not be published without it. This time, I immediately wrote a response to Vermeule's review and, fearing that a similar accident might occur, I called Robert Silvers, the editor of the *New York Review*, to be sure that my letter would be published soon, whether or not Professor Vermeule answered it. He replied rather testily that I would have to wait my turn in the queue and that they had a backlog of letters going back to October. I was not delighted at the prospect of Vermeule's review being left unchallenged until the summer or fall, by which time very few readers would be able to follow the arguments. I therefore asked Jack Goldman whether he would consider publishing it in the *Bookpress*. He did better than that, by asking me to write a full reply, as opposed to the very abbreviated letter I had written to the *New York Review*. I am extremely grateful to him and all at the *Bookpress* for the extraordinary efforts they have made to bring out this essay so quickly and well.

In her *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry* (p. 69) Professor Emily Vermeule wrote about outside influences on Greek views of death during the Bronze Age: *These Bronze Age patterns of thought and representation, the tomb as a house for the body, the soul in a new home, the mourning in files and beside the coffin or bier, the psyche, the soul-bird and the sphinx ker—were not all developed spontaneously on the Greek mainland, without influence from abroad. The natural source for such influence was Egypt, which had the grandest, most monumental, and the most detailed funerary tradition in the ancient world. The mechanics of transmitting some of the Egyptian ideas and some physical forms to Greece is not at all clear yet.*

I have tried to provide some clarification of this problem and Egyptian derivations for such concepts and names as *psyche* and *ker*, and she is appalled. It seems that my writing *Black Athena* has posed unacceptable threats both to her classical background and to her archaeological professionalism. It has become customary among conventional reviewers to give guarded praise to Volume I, which deals with historiography and the ideology of Classics, while damning Volume II, which is focussed on archaeology.

Professor Vermeule appears to want to follow this even-handed approach but cannot quite bring herself to do so: "Yet even for eager readers of *Black Athena I* it was not always easy to understand the nature of the anti-Semitism that so angered Bernal...." She then cites some examples of what she sees as my exaggerated sensitivity on the sub-

ject, such as my disapproval of J.B. Bury, the writer of the best-known 20th-century history of ancient Greece in English, whom, Vermeule correctly states, I held to be "at fault when he described the Spartans as refusing to intermarry with their helots, thus keeping their blood 'pure'." This summary of my objections would seem to me indication enough of Bury's racism. Bury's own words, quoted in *Black Athena I*, indicate other important aspects of his thought:

The Dorians took possession of the rich vale of the Eurotas, and keeping their own stock pure from the mixture of alien blood, reduced all

stratification of different civilizations, social organizations, or cultural artifacts. There is far more about legends, and linguistics, and revised chronologies. Unfortunately, Bernal handles most of his archaeological discussion by simple assertion.

At one level she is right in this claim. I wrote in the introduction to *Black Athena II*:

My intention to keep the different types of evidence neatly apart has broken down completely as I have found it impossible to indicate the significance of one type without reference to the others. For instance, I claim that the establishment of pal-

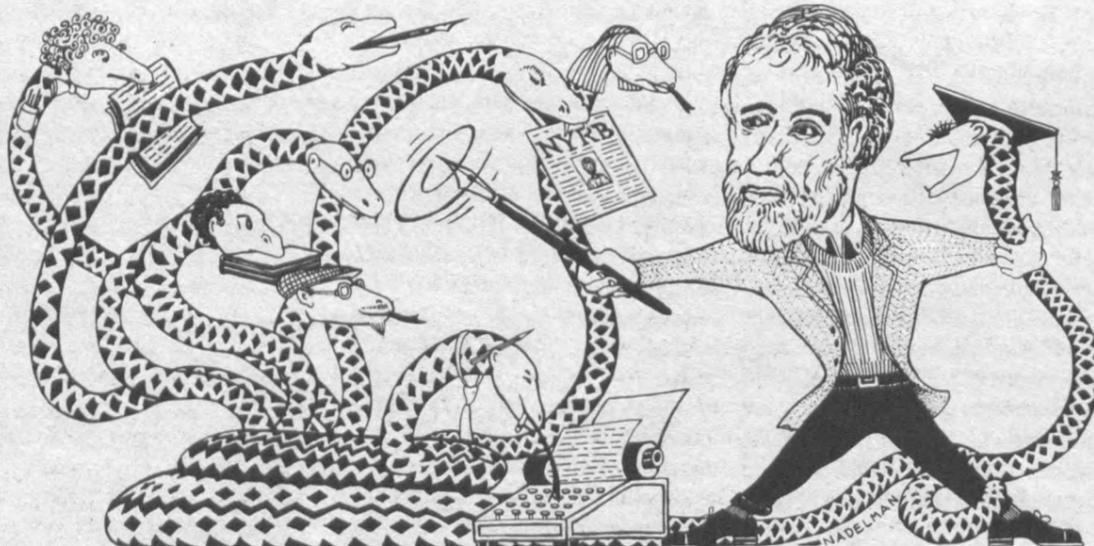


Illustration: Benn T.F. Nadelman

the inhabitants to the condition of subjects.... The eminent quality which distinguished the Dorians... was that which we call 'character' and it was in Lakonia that this quality was most fully displayed and the Dorian was most fully Dorian.

This passage leaves no doubt of the writer's and the assumed readers' complete identification with a "master race." It is also significant because Bury, a Protestant from Ireland, saw the Helots as native Irish. This is not the only parallel he took from his own day to apply to ancient Greece. "Character" was the code word used in Oxbridge through much of the 19th and 20th centuries to justify admitting stupid, rich English students, while excluding "clever" members of the lower classes and Jews. Any further doubt of Bury's anti-Semitism is dispelled by another passage in his standard history, which was finally deleted in the 1976 edition:

The Phoenicians doubtless had marts here and there on coast and island; but there is no reason to think that Canaanites ever made homes for themselves on Greek soil or introduced Semitic blood into the population of Greece.

I did not quote this in *Black Athena I* to denigrate J.B. Bury: he was more liberal than many of his colleagues. I cited it as an example of attitudes common among classicists and others at the time, and to show how contemporary anti-Semitism and racism could affect and distort perceptions of contacts between the Levant and Egypt on the one hand, and the Aegean on the other.

To return to Professor Vermeule's review, this time to her anger at what she sees as my disregard for archaeology:

[Bernal] in fact includes very little standard archaeology, in the sense of reference to excavated evidence,

aces in Crete in the 21st century BC was heavily influenced by the contemporary restoration of central power in Egypt at the beginning of the Middle Kingdom. I believe that this argument can be made convincingly only if one links it to the contemporary introduction of a bull cult to Crete and the latter's Egyptian precedents and parallels. Similarly, in examining the significance of the Mit Rahina inscription, I have felt obliged to look extensively at Classical and Hellenistic sources and at the archaeological evidence. Thus, I abandoned the attempt to apply disciplinary rigour to the material in favour of 'thick description' involving many types of evidence simultaneously.

Looking back, I realize how naive my earlier idealistic view of relying exclusively on archaeological evidence was, and that few archaeologists anywhere — and none in the East Mediterranean — can disregard "non-archaeological" evidence. Take, for example, Vermeule's own book, *Greece in the Bronze Age*. This work is primarily archaeological, but it is full of references to documentary evidence from Linear

B and Egyptian texts, to divinities and heroes known about largely from later sources and from Homeric and later descriptions written hundreds of years after the collapse of the Bronze Age culture of Mycenaean Greece.

Thus, in admitting other evidence, I am not going beyond conventional archaeology of the East Mediterranean as it is practiced today. Whether Vermeule likes it or not, other specialists in her area do not consider my work beyond the pale and spend considerable time thinking and arguing about it. For instance, the June 1990 edition of *The Journal of Mediterranean*

Archaeology was largely devoted to discussion of my work, and professionals are now reading *Black Athena II* with close attention.

I do not want to exaggerate my orthodoxy here, and there is a problem for Mediterranean archaeologists in that, as a review in the archaeological journal *Antiquity* put it: "Bernal has the alarming habit of being right for the wrong reason." If an outsider makes one or two lucky guesses it is only mildly embarrassing. However, as correct professional procedures are only a means of reaching a more accurate reconstruction of the past, my habitually "getting it right" becomes a threat to conventional methods and approaches.

Returning to Vermeule's charge that in most cases I use "simple assertion," the difference between

an assertion and a conclusion is that, while an assertion is made in a void, a conclusion is supported by evidence. This is what I have attempted to do in all instances. It is true that, in many cases, the evidence one way or the other is exiguous, and I may have "jumped the gun." However, I am convinced that it is useful to set up working hypotheses on the evidence that is available, even though they may later be refuted. I am a firm believer in Bacon's dictum that "truth comes more easily from error than from confusion." Even so, I have tried to avoid reifying these working hypotheses and, as far as I am aware, I have always emphasized not merely the bases on which arguments are made, but also the inadequacies of the bases.

"Conclusions" are bound to be influenced by subjectivity. This does not mean, however, that I think that any opinion is as good as any other. Clearly, some conclusions have much greater predictive and heuristic value than others. This — if we are to believe the anonymous reviewer in *Antiquity* referred to above — would seem to be the case with a number of my tentative conclusions. Nevertheless, throughout my work, I have insisted that I do not believe "proof" is possible for the questions with which I am concerned, and that the best that one can achieve is "competitive plausibility."

This leads on to the strangest element in Vermeule's review. It is not often that a reviewer compares a book's author to the devil, but she quotes Milton's *Paradise Lost*:

*But all was false and hollow,
though his tongue
Dropp'd manna and could make
the worse appear
The better reason to perplex and
dash
maturest counsels...*

Let me begin with Vermeule's subtexts. First, quoting Milton at all is clearly a message to her readers that she is not a dry professional but a broadly cultured professor at Harvard! Second, although the passage does not refer to it, the reader knows that Lucifer's sin is pride. She sees me as a fallen angel who has had the *hubris* to challenge the heavenly host of classicists, ancient

see *Response*, p. 4

Editor's Note

Due to space considerations, the conclusion of the "Black Athena" debate between Martin Bernal and John Coleman has been delayed. It will appear in the May issue of *the Bookpress*.

Correction

Credit for the illustration on p. 5 of the March issue of *the Bookpress* should have been given to Charla Barnard. We apologize for this omission.

the BOOKPRESS

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Stretching the Truth

Good Maps and the Peters Projection

Mitchell Feigenbaum

In the early 1970s Dr. Arno Peters, a German historian and expert on political propaganda, presented a new "equal-area" world map that would correct the "colonial" biases of the Mercator Projection, by showing Third World regions such as Africa and Latin America as much larger in area relative to the northern industrial or colonizing regions of the U.S., Europe, and the Soviet Union. Peters called this map (similar to one described in 1855 by Dr. James Gall of Scotland) a more "egalitarian" projection of the world's land areas than the Mercator. (The Mercator has long been the standard world map. Created in the 16th century specifically to aid navigators, it has been used since the 19th century by educators, news organizations and the general public.)

According to notes accompanying the Peters Projection, the "traditional" map, i.e. the Mercator, "distorts the world to the advantage of colonial powers ... [and] countries in which white people live," "is skewed to the advantage of the northern hemisphere," and "is not compatible with objectivity, which is required in a scientific age."

The Peters Map claims to show "all areas - whether countries, continents or oceans - according to their actual size," and "each country's actual position in the world." The notes conclude: "In this complex and interdependent world in which the nations now live, the peoples of the world deserve the most accurate portrayal of their world. The Peters Map is that map for our day."

Peters' map won endorsements from the World Council of Churches and various United Nations bodies, such as UNESCO and the UN Development Programme, and it continues to be quite popular. In a recently published book, *How to Lie with Maps* (University of Chicago Press, 1991), Syracuse University Professor of Geography Mark Monmonier says that the success of the Peters Projection was partly the result of misleading assertions that cartography itself was in an ailing state and needed revivification. In the essay that follows, physicist Mitchell Feigenbaum, Toyota Professor at Rockefeller University, analyzes the Peters Projection mainly as cartography. Along the way, he provides readers with an introduction to cartographic principles.

A most peculiar map, the so-called Peters Map, created by Dr. Arno Peters some two decades ago seems to enjoy much popularity. The map comes with a handbook by Ward L. Kaiser which purports to explain how it is the fruit of modern mathematics, so that if it looks strange at first glance, it's due to your ignorance of correct cartography. This aberration, one learns, is universally attributable to childhood imprinting of the image of Mercator's map. At first blush, the palette of this Peters Map (hereafter simply the Map) is of a jaundiced hue. As we shall come to see, the handbook, too, is nothing but jaundiced.

To begin, page 10 of the handbook informs us that the "Peters Projection furthermore keeps the unavoidable distortions of forms, distances, and angles so minimal that a world picture of great faithfulness to reality came into being." Now, this isn't Mr. Kaiser's writing, but a quote attributed to the *American Congress on Surveying and Mapping: Bulletin. Number 59, 1977*. Several other quotations of authority lead finally to the firm assertion that the Map is of unprecedented accuracy and perfection. That this is false we shall see, not by the handbook's device of deference to authority, but rather by the more honest method of clear thought.

On page 22 of the handbook, Kaiser engages himself in debate: Question: "...it reminds them of Salvador Dali's paintings: ... watches melting over the side of a table and all that. Couldn't it have been made less different?"

Answer: "Can you help me know - perhaps with some examples - what you mean by the term 'less different'?"

Question: "Take Africa as an example. Couldn't it have been depicted more normal - not so long and narrow?"

Answer: [Peters'] "...goals impose extremely strict requirements on the mapmaker. He or she cannot 'fatten' Africa's midsection at will, nor reduce its long stretch from top to bottom. There is then no way to play with the picture to make it 'less different' without sacrificing at least one of the three fidelities: area, axis and position. Yet it is precisely these properties that make this a very good map."

So the claim is that this eternally inevitable Map is founded upon the bedrock of unprecedented accuracy. There is only one difficulty with all this: it is false in all particulars. Indeed, as we shall see, the great idea of Peters was nothing more than the vertical stretching by a precise factor of two of one of the oldest projections known to cartography. The superior predecessor of the Peters Projection did have an awkward ratio of height to width: a rectangle just over three times wider than its height. Peters simply compressed its width and stretched its height. Why is the map Daliesque? Why is Africa so long and narrow? Only because Peters stretched them to those shapes by a full factor of two! That and nothing else is the deep principle of the Map which so many take as Truth, including the United Nations which gave its imprimatur to the product through the display of its logo. But, whatever its political and social merits, I shall only take the Map to task for its physical representation of "reality." This requires us first to think a little bit about spherical surfaces.

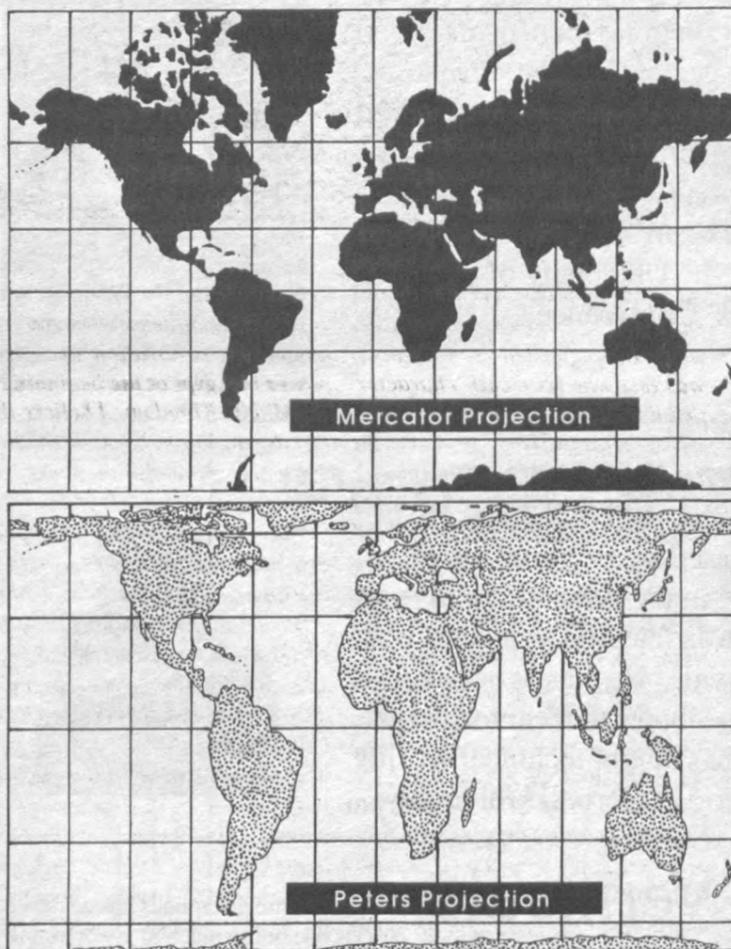
The Earth is a three-dimensional ball of near spherical shape. For all matters of principle it is sufficient to regard it as precisely spherical. Now, while the Earth is three dimensional, its surface is two dimensional - but a curved two dimensions. Similarly, a cube is a three-dimensional object, but its surface is composed of two-dimensional square faces. The

number of dimensions of an entity is simply the number of quantities needed to uniquely locate any of its points. For the surface of a sphere one needs precisely two such quantities: latitude and longitude, for example. Of course, we know of other 2D objects - especially the Euclidean plane, exemplified by a flat piece of paper. Now, a 2D object such as a cylinder or cone (we will always understand these to be their surfaces) can be slit open and then perfectly flattened out. Such objects possess no "curvature." The surface of a sphere, however, is curved, so it is impossible to flatten it. That is, the map of a sphere on a flat piece of paper must possess distortions. Let us now understand what distortion is and why indeed maps of spheres must be distorted.

Any smooth surface has a property of paramount importance for the comprehension of its geometry: at every point on the surface, there exists a tangent plane. That is, there

these tangent plane pieces may represent a map on a piece of flat paper. Thus, with sufficiently many such pieces of maps about their corresponding points of tangency, each printed on its own page, we end up with an atlas of the Earth, and the larger the number of pages, the more accurate the atlas will be.

But now, why not cut out all the pages of the atlas and lay them down on a table, with each neighboring map nicely abutting upon the next, thereby creating an arbitrarily accurate single map of the entire Earth? This is the goal of an undistorted world map. On such a map, the region about each point would appear just as it would upon viewing a globe from just above that point. It emphatically does not look like the globe itself when viewed from very far away. That distant view, a so-called orthographic projection, permits us to see only the one hemisphere facing us, whereas for our perfect map on the table, we would



A Comparison of the Peters and Mercator Projections

illustration: Benn T.F. Nadelman

is a unique plane that meets the surface at that chosen point and there, just touches it, stretching off out of the surface into an extra dimension - the third - from which we pictorially view it. Moreover, for sufficiently small excursions from that point, the surface and the plane are indistinguishable. This, of course, is our common knowledge about the Earth: over distances of the order of a large city, it is difficult to guess that the surface is other than flat. This too, is the foundation in experience of the mathematical object called the Euclidean plane. When we say "tangent" and "indistinguishable", we mean something very precise. We mean that the tangent plane separates away into space much less quickly than the distances of our excursions grow. That is, for small enough excursions, the surface can be replaced by the piece of the tangent plane, with an arbitrarily small error committed. Clearly, any of

see the entire globe. Is the orthographic projection a good view of a hemisphere? Certainly not, since regions near the limb of visibility are seen edge on, and so, highly distorted. We may like this view because it confirms that the Earth is really a sphere. But, apart from the region directly in front of us, things grow increasingly distorted until they vanish as we reach the edge of the hemisphere. Our perfect map, to the contrary, would look, above each and every point just as that part of the orthographic one made with the chosen point head on.

So, why not make this perfect map? Had the surface been that of a cone or some other surface constructed out of straight lines, we would indeed succeed. But for the curved sphere, this is impossible, when we lay out our atlas pages on the table. Starting with a piece centered at the North Pole, and laying out successive pieces, one abutting

upon the next, we proceed along the Greenwich Meridian until we reach the South Pole. In fact, we will first lay out only the Northern Hemisphere, so that we stop laying out pieces when we reach the Equator. We now return to the pole and lay out pieces along the next meridian, chosen so as to include the pieces of the sphere adjacent to those already laid down. The intuitive reader will wonder if the pieces could be so shaped to render this possible. We will now simply assume so, and then discover that this skepticism is well warranted. So, the hemisphere is now complete on the table, and we shall consider its properties.

Let us first consider large lengths along meridional directions. Recall that each piece was as accurate as we cared for it to be, provided we had made enough pieces. Let us assume that each is accurate to .01%. What does this mean? It means that all relative errors are no more than .01% in the piece. This means that the difference of a length on the Earth from the represented length on the map divided by the length on the Earth is less than .0001. Each piece, again, has exactly the same property. What happens then, if we consider lengths that span many of our abutted pieces? Since the errors were all relative, it follows that the relative error of this large length is also within .01%. (Of course, that can amount to many miles indeed!) Whether or not all the pieces abut, certainly the ones we laid down along the meridians, by construction, do. So, all meridional distances are accurate to within .01% of relative error. This means that if the circumference of the Earth is C then the length from pole to Equator, one quarter of a full circumference, will be $C/4$ to within .01%.

Now, consider large lengths along parallels (the curves of constant latitude). In particular, consider the Equator itself. Its length on the Earth is just C . What about on the table? Since each point on the Equator is at the end of one of our radial (meridional) spokes, each of length $C/4$ up to .01%, these points describe a circle distorted by no more than .01%. What is the circumference of this circle? Well it is, by Euclidean geometry (it's on the table!) $2\pi(\text{radius})=2\pi(C/4)=(\pi/2)C$. But $\pi/2$ is 1.57.. which is certainly not 1 to within .01%: the Equator on the perfect map is 57% longer than it is on the Earth! What has gone wrong? We know we can make the pieces with errors up to .01%. We can certainly lay down flat pieces on a table. Had the pieces all abutted upon one another with neither overlap nor gaps between them, then the relative error in the length of the Equator obtained by adding the lengths of each of the pieces along the Equator must, too, be correct within .01%. So it can only be that the radial strips along the meridians can't possibly be laid down to each abut upon the next. That is, it is impossible to make our arbitrarily accurate map of the Earth. What in fact does the map on the table look like? Since the pieces indeed contain a length C worth of the Equator,

see *Peters*, p. 16

Off Campus at the Bookery

The "Off Campus at the Bookery" lecture series continued last month with James McConkey reading from his latest work, *Rowan's Progress*, and Molly Hite reading from her "police procedural" novel, *Breach of Immunity*. "Off Campus at the Bookery" continues to feature lectures and readings on a wide variety of topics, one flight up in the office complex Atrium of the DeWitt Mall, on Sundays at 4:00 P.M.

April 19: Sidney Smith

will read from his recently-published first novel, *Flannery*, and sign copies. The book deals largely with "fringe-political, pub-literary" Dublin life in the early '70s. The author of several plays and poetry collections, including *Girl with Violin*, *Sensualities and Scurrilities*, and *Sherca*, he has also written and performed solo plays in Ithaca, London, New York City, and at the Dublin Theatre Festival. He currently teaches writing at Ithaca College.



May 3: Susan Hubbard

will read from her short fiction collection, *Walking on Ice*, which won the 1989 Associated Writing Programs' Short Fiction Prize, and sign copies. Hubbard received an M.A. in creative writing from Syracuse University, and now teaches writing in the College of Engineering at Cornell University. This summer she will lead a fiction-writing workshop at the University of Southern Maine's Stonecoast Writers' Conference.



May 17: David Adams

will read poetry from *Shaped Like a Heart*, published in 1991 as part of the collection, *A Red Shadow of Steel Mill*, and sign copies. Released by Bottom Dog Press, the book features poems set in the industrial and rural Midwest. In 1991, Adams was featured as a guest poet at the James Wright Festival. He has worked in a variety of occupations, from laborer to technical writer, and for the last three years has taught technical writing in the College of Engineering at Cornell University.



Response to Vermeule

continued from p. 2

historians and Mediterranean archaeologists – an interesting analogy. I see myself as much less of a rebel, and I shall discuss my massive debts to professional archaeologists and ancient historians below.

Meanwhile, consider Vermeule's use of Milton's verse to attack what she sees as my diabolical seductiveness. In this she is echoing other reviews, such as the one in *Antiquity* which concludes, "not for beginners or the gullible." On one plane, the concern is political, the fear that blacks and the "politically correct" will be persuaded by my ideas because they fit with their ideological outlooks. However, the fear is not limited to these, as there is no doubt that students of all colors and shades of opinion, as well as others new to the fields, find my ideas inherently plausible. In their innocence, they cannot see what is wrong with the idea that Egypt and the Levant exerted substantial influences on Greek civilization and

language.

It is interesting to note that *peithō* – "persuasion" – is generally considered one of the glories of Greek politics and civilization as a whole. This is clearly right, although it is outrageous to consider it a peculiarly Greek phenomenon. Throughout my work, I am quite explicit that my arguments are based on "competitive plausibility." This is because objective and subjective constraints make it impossible to reach certainty in these areas and also because conventional wisdom itself is only based on plausibility. Therefore, all I attempt to do is to establish that my view of the East Mediterranean in the Bronze Age as an interlocking whole, with centuries of intense contact among the cultures around it – notably those of Egypt, the Levant and the Aegean – is less implausible than the presumption of isolation and the requirement of "proof" for any contacts.

My task is clearly one of persuasion; however, whatever success my challenge to so many powerful

academic disciplines has achieved, is due not so much to my own abilities as to timing and the inherent implausibility of the conventional view of a formidable barrier separating familiar Western and European Greece from the exotic Orient. The ideological underpinnings of the Aryan Model have disappeared among scholars. What is more, new archaeological evidence of contact is being found all the time.

Academic disciplines use two basic formulae to defend themselves against major challenges: "It's all rubbish" and "We all knew that anyhow." These can be combined in the single sentence often heard in Oxbridge senior common rooms: "Some of what he says is new and some of what he says is true, but unfortunately what is new is not true and what's true is not new." This seems to be Professor Vermeule's attitude to my work. The line she and other defenders of the status quo are attempting to draw (see for instance Mary Lefkowitz's article in the *New Republic* – "Not Out of Africa," 2/10/92, pp. 29-36) can be

see Bernal's, p. 9

On the Consolation of Poetry

Libbie Rifkin



UNENDING DIALOGUE
Voices from an AIDS Poetry Workshop

by Rachel Hadas
Faber and Faber, 150 pp., \$17.95

"With this illness, one that elicits so much guilt and shame, the effort to detach it from these meanings, these metaphors, seems particularly liberating, even consoling. But the metaphors cannot be distanced just by abstaining from them. They have to be exposed, criticized, belabored, used up."

In the midst of the medical and political crisis that is AIDS,

Susan Sontag's polemic, from her *AIDS and its Metaphors*, speaks to the very real desire to free the disease from the rhetorical, thereby sloughing off the guilt and shame that have become its "meaning." For Sontag, these are the preliminary steps to telling the truth about AIDS, to revealing it as, in her words, "just an illness." She argues that, in the hands of "AIDS mythologists," metaphor has been a tool of oppression and stigmatization, which retards the process of healing.

But what about the metaphors that come from the immediate experience of getting sick, mourning the death of friends and lovers, and thinking about the reality of one's own mortality? What is the role of poetry for people living with AIDS? These questions prompted Rachel Hadas, a poet and professor of English at Rutgers University, to conduct a poetry workshop at the Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC) in New York City. Her new book, *Unending Dialogue: Voices from an AIDS Poetry Workshop*, includes a selection of poems produced in the workshop, along with her own poetry and commentary.

The book is more than a compilation of poetry, for Hadas is concerned with embedding the poems in the emotional and intellectual environment of the workshop. *Unending Dialogue* begins with an essay by Hadas entitled "The Lights Must Never Go Out" (a line from W.H. Auden's "September 1, 1939," one of the many poems Hadas discusses in the context of AIDS and the GMHC community). The second section of the book, "AIDS and the Art of Living," includes 45 poems written by workshop members between 1989 and 1991. The last section, "Out of your Nakedness, My Nakedness" (a line from Jane Cooper's "Conversation by the Body's Light"), contains 15 poems by Hadas, along with her commentary. Constructed in this way, the book raises a question of positioning which Hadas worries over throughout her commentary, specifically the way in which the work of the eight men with AIDS – bracketed in the center of the book – might seem quarantined rather than highlighted.

From the beginning, Hadas is full of questions about the place of poetry, and about herself as its temporary representative, in an environment filled with a pain she can never completely share. Calling on the work of Czeslaw Milosz, Primo Levi, and Mikhail Bakhtin to aid in the process of definition, Hadas situates the workshop between the seemingly incompatible poles of "compassion" and "stimulus." She is not comfortable with this dialectic, however, and she continues to try to redefine her role throughout the first year of the workshop. In prose that conveys both her honesty and the troubling insistence of her curiosity, she takes the reader through a process of inquiry that becomes as important as the poetry itself.

To Hadas's credit, the process is many-voiced. Even her introduction, which might have been purely subjective, stays true to the discursive claims of the book's title. Mingling passages from Emily Dickinson, Robert Lowell, Theodore Roethke, and W.H. Auden with selections from workshop members Glenn, Wayne, and Bill (their last names aren't included), Hadas orchestrates a polyphony of voices. And even though the room gets a little crowded, each voice retains its individuality. Take, for instance, this anonymous workshop response to Dickinson's "I Heard a Fly Buzz When I Died":

The day I was diagnosed
the fan blew coolly upon me
From the window vent the fan
hushed me up. And I forgot
for the moment that it
was I who was slowly blowing away.

The opening essay captures the learning experience of the workshop mode, the poets' interaction with one another, and – through the medium of Hadas – with other poets and theorizers of poetry. Hadas is concerned with the entire process, and our encounter with the poetry benefits from the intimacy of her involvement. For example, during the first week of the workshop, Hadas somewhat self-consciously suggests that if she were in the men's shoes, she would be angry. The

see *Unending*, p. 17

Witnessing the Impossible

Sandor Goodhart

TESTIMONY

Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History

by Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, M.D.
Routledge, 294 pp., \$15.95 paper

Testimony is at once a very powerful, and, potentially, a very dangerous book. It is powerful because it articulates for the first time, to my knowledge, a generalized theory of testimony (or of witnessing) and thereby addresses a need that has been felt in the humanities for some time now. Moreover, it applies this theory to a number of critical subject matters: the historical upheavals which have defined our age (principally, the Holocaust) and the post-war manifestations of such change in literature, literary criticism, pedagogical practice and, most recently, film. But it is potentially a very dangerous book because, despite its occasionally dazzling insights, it gets things fundamentally wrong, reproducing the very difficulties it highlights at a moment (and in an arena) where the stakes are particularly high.

At the heart of the book is a notion of "impossible witness." The notion derives from the work of Dori Laub — psychoanalytic practitioner, founder and interviewer of the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale, and

a child survivor himself of the camps — and refers to the silence that commonly envelops the voice of Holocaust survivors about the events they have witnessed, but which have rendered them unable to speak. The impossibility of speech issues from the overwhelming nature of the traumatic event, which has structured and shaped the victim's subsequent experience in a thousand ways, and yet has appeared only in the displaced form of an uncanny repetition, or acting out of its innermost conflicts.

The situation Laub describes, of course, is not unlike the post-traumatic responses often associated in psychodynamic literature with other overwhelming events — warfare, for example, or prepubescent (and especially violent) sexual encounters with a parent or parent surrogate. Like other such traumatizing occurrences, Laub argues, the Holocaust has occasioned the disappearance of the real Other (the addressed ethical interlocutor, the "Thou" of Martin Buber's "I-Thou" relation) and, as a result, all that remains is a kind of black hole which swallows up any attempt to enter or even observe it.

As a consequence, there are, in effect, Laub argues, "no witnesses" to these events — no outsiders or bystanders who might have described them from a distance, but also no insiders, neither victims nor perpetrators, who might relate them from within. Not because the event did not occur (and both authors are careful to distinguish this argument

from the revisionist position that the reality did not take place) but, to the contrary, because it occurred *only too overbearingly*. We can only bear witness to what we can bear to witness, these authors assert. To declare that you neutrally observed humans being put into an oven at Auschwitz is to discredit that neutrality in the act of proclaiming it. On the other hand, to declare that you were either complicit with such monstrosity or its victim (or both) is also to invalidate cognitive witness. No position, in Laub's view, is "untainted" or "uncontaminated," least of all, the position of those who observed (or failed to observe) the horror close up.

Laub illustrates his theoretical discussion with examples drawn from his analytic practice, his interview work at the Archive, and his engagement with professional historians who would claim that much survivor testimony is historically "inaccurate." Shoshana Felman extends these considerations to her teaching at Yale, the writings of Albert Camus, Paul de Man's silence about his wartime journalism for the Belgian collaborationist newspaper *Le Soir*, and Claude Lanzmann's film, *Shoah*.

Introducing two samples from the Video Archives in her classes (where formerly only "testimonial" literature was considered) becomes the occasion for a "crisis of witnessing" within the confines of Felman's course, one that requires the assistance of a professional



"The Transport" by Pierre Mania (Buchenwald, 1943)

counselor — in this case, Dori Laub, having transformed himself from a The French existentialist writer post-war liberal humanist (*The Camus is reinterpreted by Felman as see Witness, p. 11*

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— Hamlet, I, iii, 72

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Feminism Against Itself

Tracy Mitrano

FEMINISM WITHOUT ILLUSIONS

A Critique of Individualism
by Elizabeth Fox-Genovese
University of North Carolina Press,
347 pp., \$12.95 paper

"Pessimism of intellect, optimism of will," which is the trademark of Elizabeth Fox-Genovese's pedagogy, also guides her most recent book, *Feminism Without Illusions*. In this critique of contemporary American feminism, Fox-Genovese, former Professor of History at SUNY Binghamton, and currently the Eleanor Rouel Professor of History at Emory University, draws on history and contemporary politics, law and literature, the private and the social to wrestle with that most enduring of historical dichotomies: that between the individual and society.

Fox-Genovese suggests that mainstream feminism shares the same excess as the modern bourgeois ideology of natural rights: an exaggerated emphasis on the individual at the expense of society. Rather than challenge this ideology, which has structured a restrictive social order, mainstream feminists have chosen to make their claims in the name of it. According to Fox-Genovese, individualist ideology and its illusions have the effect of reproducing within the feminist movement the same racial and class divisions that characterize contemporary society. Warning that a so-

cial order based on extreme individualism "risk[s] a radical fragmentation that realizes the most Kafkaesque nightmares of solitary individuals at the mercy of sinister, faceless power," Fox-Genovese cautions that "if we fight for a worthy goal on the basis of unworthy premises... [we] would open the floodgates to undesirable and even vile consequences... [and] shall go down to a well-deserved defeat."

Philosophically, it is not the concept of natural rights which Fox-Genovese rejects, but the notion that natural rights derive from the individual rather than the society. On the issue of abortion, for example, she maintains that social considerations weighing the values of society should guide the debate, not natural rights. Avoiding a discussion of the most difficult abortion decisions - those involving wanted children found in the last trimester to be severely handicapped - Fox-Genovese offers a politically moderate idea: "Most Americans would probably accept a definition of life linked to the notion of viability and accept abortion on demand up to the twentieth week of pregnancy."

In her discussion on pornography, Fox-Genovese is likewise careful to balance all the factors that inform the debate. Bracketed on the one side by libertarian notions of free speech, and on the other by radical feminists who view "pornography as the theory, and rape as the practice" of male violence against women, Fox-Genovese notes that

endless confusion about how best to frame the problem remains the primary obstacle to progress. Once again, social considerations emerge as a potential solution: "I am not pretending that the suppression or regulation of pornography could come unaccompanied by political

represents the better perspective for understanding gender constructions is a case in point. This debate took a dramatic turn in the 1986 employment discrimination case, *Equal Employment Opportunity Commission v. Sears, Roebuck, and Co.*, in which a Reagan-appointed judge

Genovese cautions that "this book does not offer a political program." Nonetheless, the theme of infusing bourgeois individualism with "a more generous social vision [of] equity" (rather than equality) - thereby restoring the balance between individual rights and the needs of the society - recurs in each chapter, including those that discuss such questions as multiculturalism, and the relationship of women's history to "the canon."

To many readers, *Feminism Without Illusions* may read like a Rorschach test. Conservatives, for example, might well be pleased to see the author, once a self-defined "Marxist, feminist, Freudian," newly styling herself a conservative. Lest Robert Bork get the wrong idea, however, she moves delicately around theoretical considerations of the relationship between sex and gender, and by no means accepts the biological determinism that most conservatives embrace. Radical feminists, on the other hand, may feel rebuffed because they will not find here the ubiquitous buzz words, such as "male supremacy," that generally tend to console them. Marxist feminists will chafe at the respect Fox-Genovese accords the private sphere. Mainstream feminists may experience a full range of emotions - from a defensive anger at having their ideology unmasked to a sigh of relief that someone wants to help get them off the treadmill.

Of all camps, socialist feminists see *Feminism*, p. 13



Painted photo: Kathy Morris

risks. But we need to accept those risks - not so much because pornography could be proved to cause specific crimes (although it may), but because it offers an unacceptable mirror of ourselves as a people."

Fox-Genovese finds it ironic that the greatest traps that catch mainstream feminists are the ones they themselves set. The debate among academic feminists over whether "sameness" or "difference"

used the testimony of a woman historian championing "difference" as evidence in his ruling against a claim of employment discrimination. Sears is the largest private-sector employer in the country, and the loss of this suit dealt a stunning blow to large numbers of working women. It also hindered the feminist movement from unequivocally supporting these women.

In her introduction, Fox-

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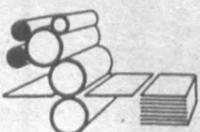
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Crossed Catholics

Patrick Scotus

LISTEN TO THE STORIES: Gay and Lesbian Catholics Talk About Their Lives and the Church

Edited by Raymond C. Holtz
Garland Publishing, 278 pp., \$37.00

For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbath, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant... their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.

Isaiah 56:4-8

When Oscar Wilde saw Niagara Falls, he commented, "It would be more impressive if it flowed the other way." In the midst of the AIDS crisis, a falling-off of faith in the lesbian, gay, and bisexual community would hardly be surprising. The wonder is that Niagara is indeed flowing the other way: gay, lesbian and bisexual people are testifying to their renewed faith.

However, gay Catholics remain triply embattled. The AIDS crisis seems to have intensified the Vatican's historic disapproval of non-procreative sex, while the gay community's mistrust of the church has been reinforced by its actions during the crisis. A new book in Garland Publishing's "Gay and Lesbian Studies" series documents the variety of responses to the current impasse.

Listen to the Stories, edited by Raymond Holtz, a Roman Catholic priest, offers 33 separate histories as an insight into the state of cognitive crisis shared by many gay Catholics. The spiritual upheaval attendant upon the second Vatican Council made some contradictory messages inevitable, and the church sometimes seems to take back with one hand what the other hand gave.

For example, *Listen* describes how the same church which dismissed Lou Tesconi from his Carmelite order for having AIDS, then enabled him to establish Damien Ministries for people with AIDS. And every informant in the book describes the shattering impact of the 1986 "Letter to the Bishops... on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons," known as the Ratzinger or

"Halloween" letter, on the activities of Dignity and on gay Catholics in general (Dignity was founded in 1970 as a congregation of lesbians and gay men within the Roman Catholic church. Most U.S. dioceses allotted space to Dignity and permitted the group to offer its own eucharistic celebration until 1986. Now its functions are primarily social and political, and it exists in a relatively autonomous state).

The Ratzinger letter, signed by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger with the approval of Pope John Paul II, had an effect in the gay community similar to the devastating reception of Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae Vitae* in the straight world. Almost overnight, Dignity chapters, which had been peacefully saying mass in parishes with episcopal approval, were asked to leave. The Vatican disciplined Archbishop Hunthausen for his liberal stand on homosexuality.

The most charitable interpretation one can put on the Ratzinger letter is that it was an attempt to disabuse gays and lesbians of the illusion that the church's teaching on homosexuality had in fact been liberalized. Dissenters from the church's view, like Fr. John McNeill, author of *The Church and the Homosexual*, have argued that practicing "constitutional" homosexuals should be accepted by the church, while occasional, situational, or willful homosexual acts should not. The strategy of claiming an essential homosexual identity backfired when Cardinal Ratzinger recognized this identity and proceeded to condemn it: "it is a more or less strong tendency ordered toward an intrinsic moral evil and thus the inclination itself must be seen as an objective disorder."

Gay men and lesbians felt as if Rome had sold them into Egypt. James Abdo, a psychologist, says, "This letter was not about theology, it was about pastoral care and psychology, mental health." He left the church. So did Jimmy Kennedy and his lover Derrick A. Tynan-Connolly. "Why are they fighting intimate relationships founded in love?" asks Kennedy. "[M]y experience is that they are the pharisees of today."

Tynan-Connolly blames closeted priests for refusing to speak out against the letter. "They are followers of Jesus. Jesus was nailed to the cross for speaking the truth. How

can they be silent when gay people are being persecuted?" Mary Hunt agrees. "I think that homosexuality is the linchpin because it is the hidden secret of a lot of persons in the leadership who create a homosocial environment."

The stories of gay, lesbian, and bisexual religious in the book tend to confirm the importance of the

chapter, affirms that "[w]hen the Ratzinger letter on homosexuality came out I was put in a position where I was forced to share my opinion."

Schultz grounds the gay issue in the broader controversy over sexuality in the church. The way "couples have been treated by not being allowed to make decisions about their own married life... is



photo: Kathy Morris

institution of the celibate priesthood for the church's policy on homosexuality. A common experience is that of feeling no attraction to the opposite sex, interpreting this as a vocation to celibacy, entering Holy Orders, and then discovering one's homosexuality. Josef Schultz, a priest, reports feeling that "I wanted to become a priest, therefore I am not gay. That was the syllogism and it was working."

Because celibacy is a valued lifestyle in the church, it becomes too easy for some Catholics to dismiss the claims of homosexuals by assigning them a vocation to celibacy. In fact, this is spiritually unsatisfying, because it suggests that giving God one's celibacy is determined by sexual orientation rather than a free gift. Paul Albergo received good advice from a sympathetic priest. "He said he felt that the reason I wanted to become a priest

probably more violent." An even bigger issue is the position of women in the church: women who feel left out of the liturgy and the priesthood and alienated from Dignity founded the Conference of Catholic Lesbians. Karen Doherty, a founder of CCL, reports that her resentment of sexist language in the traditional liturgy has softened since she began participating in the CCL's woman-centered ritual.

Doherty felt the Ratzinger letter was providential in shaking Dignity's complacency. "I think it helped a lot of comfortable gay and lesbian Catholics get off their fannies and start to see how things are. The church would be wise to make it just comfortable enough to stay in the closet, so that we could get by with some crumb of dignity while staying there." The Ratzinger letter radicalized Dignity. Albergo, then president of Dignity's Washington

chapter, affirms that "[w]hen the Ratzinger letter on homosexuality came out I was put in a position where I was forced to share my opinion."

Often, it was the gut-wrenching trauma of being evicted from their places of worship which led Dignity members to reevaluate their place in the church. Albergo describes what it was like to attend a friend's ordination and his nephew's christening with the humiliating consciousness of his second-class citizenship. "While I was thrilled that Mike had reached his dream, I was so angry. I was thinking, why is he so much better than me?"

Dignity is not universally loved among gay and lesbian Catholics. Lou Tesconi argues that its social focus "perverts the purpose of the Eucharistic celebration." Michael Conley's experience supports the claim that Dignity exists to fill other than purely spiritual needs: "I wasn't meeting the kind of people I wanted to meet... I decided to look up [Dignity]... I was very lucky to get a second chance to experience the social life I never had in high school."

It must be pointed out, however, that in the current state of things, gay and lesbian people operate on a different timetable. Because of a lack of pertinent advice from parents and pastors, their development into wise sexuality may occur later in life. Dignity helps to structure this transition for many. Toby Johnson mentions that "[m]y prayer life was involved with the people I was attracted to." This is true in a broad sense for many people, gay or non-gay. Reconciling the sexual impulse with moral teachings - a decidedly Catholic aim - seems to be the work of Dignity.

Why, members of the gay community as well as Catholic prelates ask, don't they simply leave the church? Several of the interviewees describe their sense of Catholicism as an ethnic home, a birthright. Mary Hunt speaks for many. "There was never a time when I didn't identify with being a Catholic, although there have been times when I'm not so sure about being a Christian." Others are attracted to the Catholic intellectual milieu of the Roman church, which often seems closer to other universalizing religions like Islam than it does to Protestantism, with its emphasis on "faith alone." "As

see *Listen*, p. 14

Trouble on Board

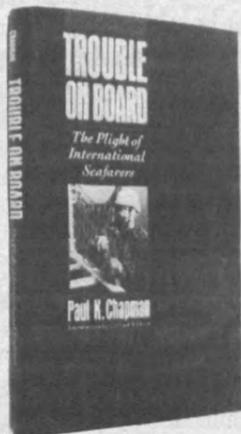
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Montage, Mastery and Masquerade

Rebecca Egger

On March 7, artists and scholars gathered to discuss their increasingly overlapping endeavors at a symposium on Visual Feminist Discourse at Cornell University. Artists Mary Kelly and Renée Green, filmmaker Lynne Sachs, poet and critic Rachel Blau DePlessis, performance artist Linda Fisher, and Cornell faculty members Hal Foster, Molly Hite, Jean Locey, Harryette Mullen and Tim Murray participated in a series of presentations and discussions dealing with the connections – sometimes fraught, sometimes productive – between feminism and the visual arts.

The possibility of “feminist art” – an artistic practice that necessarily performs a political function – has long been a contested concept, especially within the community whose work has been given such a label. Mary Kelly, for instance, claims that she prefers to think of her work as “art that is informed by feminism,” in an effort to avoid the prescriptive qualities associated with “feminist art.”

What nearly all the participants seemed to share, however, was an engagement with such forms of contemporary thought as psychoanalysis, deconstruction, and post-colonial theory. Renée Green, for instance, draws upon a rich variety of texts for her installations, which incorporate the ideas, images and stories of African-American history, literature, and popular culture, as well as theories of ethnicity and identity. Rachel Blau DuPlessis describes her poetry through such post-deconstructive literary terms as heteroglossia [multiplicity of language], polyphony, the undoing of the text's integrity, and the destabilizing of the authorial “I.”

Questioning traditional distinctions between “artist” and “scholar”, participants in the symposium sought to bring their work together under the rubric of *discourse*, a term designed to break down distinctions between the visual and the verbal. Indeed, all the artistic work presented was marked by the strategic integration of the image/object and the word: Green's and Kelly's “visual” projects employ large amounts of text and assume a literary relation with the spectator, while DuPlessis' poetry relies upon certain nonlinguistic, purely visual devices, such as erased words and images drawn into the text.

What follows is an interview with participant Mary Kelly, whose current installation, *Gloria Patri*, is premiering at Cornell University's Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, where it is on view through April 5. A conceptual “feminist” artist, Kelly is best known for her two major projects: *Post-Partum Document* (1973-79; published in 1983), an investigation of motherhood through the lens of psychoanalytic theory; and *Interim* (1984-89), which examines women in middle age. She has been a member of the editorial board of *Screen* and the advisory board of *m/f*, and currently teaches at the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program.

The interview was conducted by Rebecca Egger and Tim Murray. R.E. Could you describe your cur-

rent installation, and discuss how it relates to your previous work?

M.K. The concept of the installation remains an important critical strategy for me. Rather than producing discrete objects, I aim to undertake a kind of extended work, like *Post-Partum Document* in the '70s, and then *Interim* in the '80s. Use of the installation as a form allows the artist to be as ambitious as a filmmaker. I had in mind the films of Jean-Marie Straub and Daniele Huillet, which became the model for what I tried to do in the exhibition—the use of real time, in addition to montage. In *Post-Partum Docu-*



Mary Kelly

photo: Emil Ghinger

ment, I attempted to pull the spectator into a narrative space and comment on the way early conceptual artists limited their references to art-about-art. *Interim* reflects more recent versions of conceptualism, which many women artists like Jenny Holzer and Barbara Kruger are associated with, and which incorporate elements of popular culture.

Gloria Patri looks a little different from the two earlier projects, which consisted of a number of separate sections. *Gloria Patri* has three different parts, but they're actually integrated into one piece in the installation: In the upper register of the gallery, there are a number of discs that might be called military semaphores – different medals and military insignia from, for example, ROTC, the Air Force, the First Artillery, and Officer's Candidate School. These insignia or semaphores are not just appropriated forms; I wanted to turn them into ironic comments. So I juxtaposed half of one emblem with half of another for the montage.

The next register is a series of six trophies – not literally in the round, but rather two-dimensional figures. A figure on each trophy holds one of the letters of “Gloria,” and a plaque at the bottom introduces what I call the ethnographic material that I recorded during the Gulf War, which ranges from the mundane “Not enough gees and gollies to describe it” – a comment on the spectacle of the war – to the sinister and terrifying “Cut it off and kill it.” These statements, together with the military semaphores, function as a backdrop for the shields, which form the register at eye level. Also part of the military imagery is the highly polished surface of everything in the exhibition.

You have to go up close to read the stories, which work against this military backdrop. Each story is a situation of mastery that is set up to

be undone, but I'm not saying there is this hegemonic kind of masculinity that I want to expose. I'm saying it's a very problematic thing, and for me the most important factor is the way it's negotiated by the woman.

T.M. How exactly does the work “undo a situation of mastery”?

M.K. This may seem like a rather circuitous answer, but I thought of Gericault's painting, “Mounted Officer of the Imperial Guard,” the gendarme on horseback that artist historian Norman Bryson has referred to in relation to the way the figure fails in his function, fails to maintain the authority of his posi-

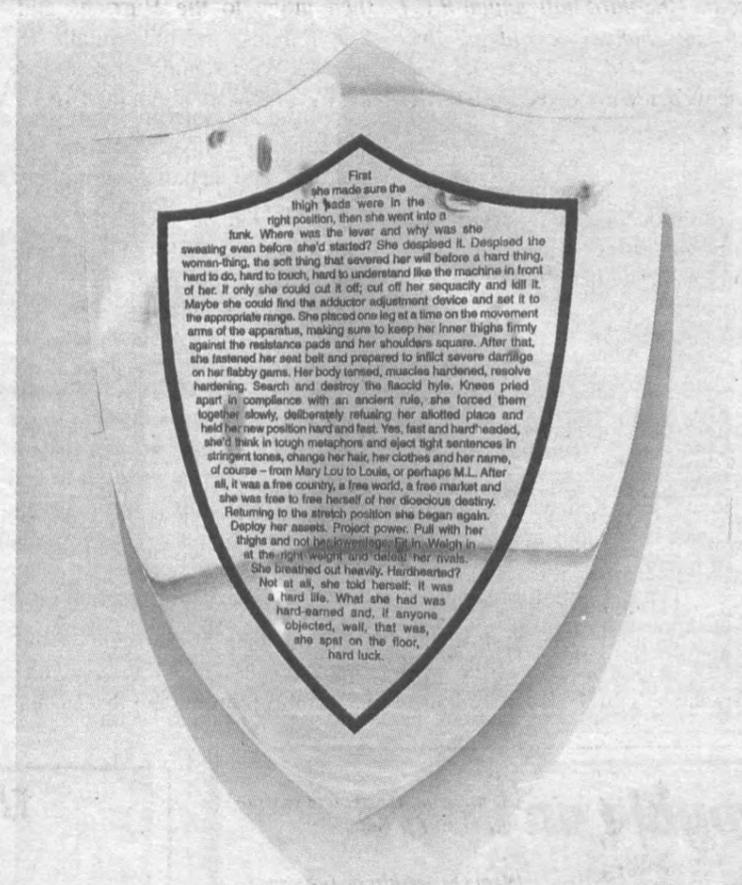
tion. I don't think any individual man actually fits this image. So I chose stories, not about war, but about the everyday: events like fishing, baseball, or witnessing the birth of your child. And for the woman, it's exercising. These are moments that are at odds with the image of the war which is projected by the installation as a whole.

R.E. The stories you've written echo certain genres that one associates with fantasies of masculine mastery; I heard people at the exhibition commenting that the story about the fisherman reminded them of Hemingway.

M.K. Definitely. For example, there is a particular kind of character who masters nature in a way that is not immediately hostile. He observes the geography, wants to integrate himself with the landscape, stalks the fish with “delicate belligerence,” and he describes the erotic significance of it, the adventure of going off the trail. But then the story kind of turns when he realizes that the heron's watching him. Suddenly, the whole fantasy of being in control begins to disappear. He finally ends up, in his imagination, becoming “the beast.” So in each of the stories there's a strategy intended to make the notion of mastery not exactly comic, but strange or precarious.

As you go through the installation—though I don't want people to feel that they have to know all this to understand it—the stories are

tion. The painting occurred to me because I had been thinking about issues of masculinity, and then was motivated to make *Gloria Patri* by the events of the Gulf War.



Detail of “Gloria Patri” by Mary Kelly

Photo: Emil Ghinger

Writing about the war, Noam Chomsky claimed that the United States no longer held sway in the diplomatic or economic spheres, and all that remained was its assumed military superiority. The irony of this façade of American militarism, in an international context of increasing demilitarization, made me think of the Gericault painting, first, in terms of the gendarme being taken along for the ride and then, realizing that he's about to fall off. I thought, how could you capture this feeling, just this precariousness, without making it literal? Although I was

brought increasingly in line with my critique of the war. The second story, which is about baseball—well, softball actually—adds a crucial component for me: the class position of the character who is playing softball, and his memories not only of being a “sissy,” but his reflections on his workplace. My reference here was meat-packing plants in the Midwest like Hormel, which have either closed or cut back because agriculture is in decline. One of the things the unemployed workers do to give meaning to their lives is to form softball teams. Although this

story initially sets up an image of a man in control of the ballgame, he's not in control of his life. Also, being older, he's finding out he's unable to control his body; even making it to the base is a problem. It has a kind of tragic implication, but it was important to add that dimension.

R.E. You've discussed *Gloria Patri* as being about the way in which a masculine ideal pervades culture, and how women—maybe even in the name of feminism—have tended to identify with masculine positions of mastery. You said this became particularly clear to you during the Gulf War, when women were demanding to fight at the front.

M.K. Yes, I think we've really ignored the extent to which women have unconsciously internalized the masculine ideal. There has probably been some encouragement of this through feminism, because we've exorcised a certain form of precocious femininity – which indeed we should – but on the other hand, women have, perhaps unconsciously, overidentified with what I've called the “masculine ideal.” What's problematic about this masculine identification is the pathology of how its produced, which is always contingent on history; the war simply makes this more pointed. As I've said, when women want to go to the front and have the right to kill, we have to ask, Is this part of what we wanted to achieve?

T.M. How have women's identifications with masculinity affected men?

M.K. When Margaret Thatcher was in power, it produced a very interesting reaction in men. Homi Bhabha has described this in relation to the colonial situation: when the colonized subject becomes too close in his or her imitation or mimicry of the master, it provokes a reassertion of difference. “What is this outrageous monstrosity?” asks the master. “This is *not me!*” Similarly, the popularization of feminism has produced in women something that's making men find new ways of reasserting difference, of saying, “this monstrosity is not us.” That's what some men say about Thatcher: “She's worse than we are.”

R.E. In light of this, then, what are you saying in *Gloria Patri* about how men relate to the feminine? Maybe you could begin by addressing the story in your installation about the man who has a complicated reaction to the birth of his child.

M.K. That story starts out with the character thinking that he's a nice guy: he must be part of the birth, in control of the situation. Yet, of course, the whole messy abjectness of it emerges at the end, along with a bout of castration anxiety. There's an important connection between this narrative and the adolescent's story, where there's a direct reference to the boy's positioning as a girl because he's against the war.

The underlying association of women with the abject is extremely important in the work. I think it adds something to the understanding of the dehumanizing process in relation to the other that functions in time of war. Thus in the final story, which introduces the woman, you can understand why she wants to expel anything that has to do with

see Mary Kelly, p. 14

Bernal's Response to Vermeule

continued from p. 4

summarized as follows: Bernal exaggerates the extent of Oriental influences on Greece and it is untrue that classicists and ancient historians ever denied that there were some such influences.

Mary Lefkowitz seems to represent the majority when she concedes that until the mid-'60s there may not have been a full discussion of Oriental influences on Greece (*New Republic* 3/9/92). The testimony of the Semitists Cyrus Gordon and Michael Astour and the archaeologists George Bass and Patricia Bikai shows that this intolerance has persisted long after that. (See Bass and Bikai in *Arethusa*, Fall 1989, pp. 111-14). Nevertheless, Professor Vermeule's position on this is far more hard-nosed:

First, no one has ever doubted the Greek debt to Egypt and the East. Schliemann thought he had found a Chinese pot at Troy, and was delighted; Sir Arthur Evans was equally pleased to see "the Libyan codpiece" turn up in Crete, and confidently derived Cretan tholos tombs from stone circles found in modern Libya.... Why on earth does Bernal claim that he is the first ever to look to Egypt and the East, when virtually all contemporary scholars have welcomed every new sign of contact...?

Vermeule's phrase, "virtually all contemporary scholars," excludes the extremely powerful school of archaeological thought led by the Disney Professor of Classical Archaeology at Cambridge, Sir Colin Renfrew, which maintains that there were no substantial influences on the Aegean from the East after the beginning of the Neolithic. She also fails to note the crucial distinction between the Aegean and the Greeks in the thought of the more old-fashioned "modified diffusionists", among whom she belongs. While these scholars have been quite happy to see Oriental influences on the geographical region, they have been extremely unwilling to admit them on the Hellenes.

Let us consider Vermeule's citation of Sir Arthur Evans, whom I discuss in *Black Athena II* (pp. 67-68). In the first place, under the influence of Oric Bates's work, *The Eastern Libyans*, Evans saw the Libyans as white. Secondly, given the massive amount of Egyptian and Levantine material Evans encountered in his excavation of Knossos,

it would have been difficult for him to deny Egyptian and Oriental influences on Crete. While Vermeule is right to say that he welcomed this evidence, Evans was not considering direct Egyptian or Levantine influences on Greek culture, maintaining instead that the Minoans were not Greek and that the Mycenaeans had been colonized by Minoans. Thus, any Oriental influence had been thoroughly filtered before it reached Greek civilization.

The problem of Oriental influences on the Greeks became more acute when scholars like the historian of religion Martin Nilsson began to see — rightly in my opinion — that archaic and classical Greek culture was based on that of the Mycenaeans, who in turn had borrowed substantially from the Minoans. As Professor Vermeule appears to have missed it, I shall quote a passage from Renfrew significantly entitled *The Emergence of Civilization: The Cyclades and the Aegean in the Third Millennium B.C.*, which was cited in *Black Athena II*:

I have come to believe that this widely held diffusionist view, that Aegean Civilization was something borrowed from the Orient, is inadequate. It fails to explain what is actually seen in the archaeological record. We can no longer accept that the sole unifying theme of European prehistory was, in the words of Gordon Childe, "the irradiation of European barbarism by Oriental civilisation.... Throughout the southern Aegean, for a thousand years [the third millennium B.C.], striking changes were taking place in every field.... These developments evidently owed little to Oriental inspiration. Yet it was at this time that the basic features of the subsequent Minoan-Mycenaean civilisation were being determined. [my emphasis].

It is also clear that Renfrew accepts Nilsson's view that there was an essential continuity from Minoan-Mycenaean civilization to that of Classical Greece, hence that the whole development of European culture is at stake. Where Montelius, Childe and their followers tended to see significant breaks in the culture of the Aegean after 2000 BC, Renfrew, like Nilsson, sees essential cultural continuity.

This notion of cultural continuity gained a great fillip with Michael Ventris' decipherment of

Linear B and his demonstration that the Mycenaeans spoke Greek. It was at this point that the earlier tolerance for Oriental influences on what had been thought to be the Pre-Hellenic Aegean was challenged. While scholars like the Cambridge archaeologist Frank Stubbings continued to see considerable exchanges of material goods and even a Hyksos invasion of the Eastern Peloponnese, they were adamant that these had no long-term effect on Greek culture.

Where some cultural exchanges were admitted, it was emphasized that these goods and ideas had been taken from the Orient by travelling Greeks. When George Bass, the leading underwater archaeologist of the Mediterranean, suggested, on the basis of his excavation of the shipwreck at Cape Gelydonia off southern Turkey, that Levantines might have played an active role in such contact, his work was systematically ignored.

Not surprisingly, different subfields have been uneven in their openness on the issue of borrowing. Art historians have tended to focus on two periods, the Minoan in the first half of the 2nd Millennium BC and the so-called orientaling period in the 7th century, thereby avoiding the formative periods of Greek civilization in the centuries between. Nevertheless, they have been the least closed-minded on this issue.

Concerning mythology and literature, there has been a tendency to make general worldwide comparisons and, when dealing with the Near East, to start with the Hittites, then move to the Hurrians and Babylonians, and only finally to consider West Semitic speakers and the Egyptians, to whom the Greeks of the Classical period attributed their religion and mythology. When, in the 1950s and '60s, the Semitists Cyrus Gordon and Michael Astour put forward detailed arguments that Greek mythology had borrowed specific stories and names from the Semitic-speaking Levant, their work was largely dismissed by classicists.

The most rigid subfield of all has been philology. The decipherment of Linear B showed that a number of admitted loan words from Semitic had been borrowed, not in the 9th or 8th centuries, but in the Bronze Age. However, this shock did not lead linguists to reconsider the more than 50 per cent of the Greek vocabulary and the vast majority of its proper nouns that cannot

be derived from Indo-European. There has been no attempt to revive the Semitic etymologies proposed for many of these words and names by 17th-, 18th- and early 19th-century scholars, which had been dismissed in the late 19th- and early 20th- centuries, when we know that philologists were heavily influenced by anti-Semitism. Nor have these scholars attempted to profit from the mass of new linguistic material arising from the discovery of two ancient West Semitic languages, Ugaritic and Eblaite. Still less has there been any attempt to look for Egyptian etymologies in Greek, even though evidence from archaeology, art history, tradition, and contemporary documents all indicate that there was considerable contact between the two cultures.

The reluctance of the philologists to seize these new opportunities can only partly be explained in terms of the scholarly conservatism that afflicts so many disciplines. There is a clear current of hostility among them to finding loans from the southeast. It is impossible to dismiss this as a lagging of just one aspect of Classics. Philology is at the core of the discipline because language is the sine qua non for classicists, allowing philologists to dominate the other subfields. Also, from the beginning of the discipline in the first quarter of the 19th century, language has been seen in a Romantic way as the purest expression of a culture. Hence Greek is felt to be at the very heart of ancient Greece.

I will be convinced of the openness that Vermeule sees among classicists when the philologists begin to examine the possibility of explaining the unknown half of the Greek language in terms of the two languages that were dominant in the East Mediterranean during the Bronze and Early Iron Age: Egyptian and West Semitic.

Professor Vermeule argues that it was the Greeks of the Classical Period, not the 19th-century classicists, who invented the Aryan Model: [Bernal] has claimed that those who believed in some kind of natural intellectual and artistic superiority of the Greeks did so because they were racist, probably anti-Semitic. Yet it was the Greeks themselves who first drew a sharp contrast between Asia and Europe, between "Us" in the democratic West and the "barbarians" in the royal, imperial East...

Naturally, I am fully aware of these Greek views, in particular those of Herodotus, whose *History* is based

on the conflict between Greece and Asia. This theme, and the general Greek pride or chauvinism after the Persian Wars, make it all the more remarkable that Herodotus and most of his contemporaries should have maintained that they had been colonized and civilized by Phoenicians and Egyptians, and had received their religion from the latter.

It is natural that Greeks themselves should have seen themselves as the best people of their time. However, until the end of the 18th century, few others accepted this at face value. Thus, the widespread Philhellenism, the denial of the Aryan Model and the rise of the Aryan Model of the early 19th century must be seen as new phenomena, occurring in the general context of the European sense of categorical superiority over other peoples and the belief in the eternal essences of "races." Hence a need to project present triumphs into the past and the suitability of Greek achievements and anti-Asiatic ideology for this purpose.

Professor Vermeule maintains that:

Bernal believes, or seems to believe, that there is no essential difference between Egyptian culture and language, written in hieroglyphs, and the languages of the Near East, written in cuneiform. Large sections of his book consist of claims that words from one language derive from another.

While I cannot find these "large sections," I certainly accept the conventional wisdom that there are many cognates shared by Egyptian and ancient Semitic languages. Vermeule's sense of the exotic Orient has led her to exaggerate the significance of script. Both Egyptian and Semitic are branches of the Afro-asiatic language family. Furthermore, there is ample evidence of loaning between them in both directions. Contact between the two cultures was most intense in the Levant and especially in the great port city of Byblos, whose prince for many centuries was treated by the Egyptians as an Egyptian governor. This region of mixed Egypto-Semitic culture was of particular importance because it was the one with the most direct contact with the Aegean.

Vermeule also claims: *Bernal believes there is no essential difference between Egypt and the city states and kingdoms of the Near East.*

see Bernal's, p. 13

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— *The Taming of the Shrew*, IV, ii, 120

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On Plagiarism

Robert Hill

"The dead writers are remote from us because we know so much more than they did." Precisely, and they are that which we know.

— T.S. Eliot, "Tradition and Individual Talent"

Poor Laurence Sterne. His writerly reputation over two centuries has been badly tarnished by his voracious literary plunders. And poor Coleridge, ditto. But why poor, after all? Sterne's ineluctable charm and Coleridge's unarguable poetic brilliance have established them almost beyond the reach of those fussy academicians who, nearly since their passings, have called them to task. Why poor, indeed? Plagiarism is so easy, usually so easily detected, and so needless, that the republic of letters feels an ambivalence about pointing the finger, as though it might impugn itself for its own small-mindedness. And as Poe, himself a dauntless word thief and fingerpointer, remarked, "When a plagiarism is detected, it generally happens that the public sympathy is with the plagiarist."

Plagiarism is a slippery slope; its currency is not in every case readily identifiable as pilfered from another, and it tempts by degrees. It can deal in that trackless continuum between idea and word. It can find putative legal precedent in the loose strictures of conversation. For when opinion, as often happens, is widely shared, we may assume more often than not it is borrowed. Opinion is just the sort of commodity that is easily borrowed without the lender being any the wiser or poorer; far less precious than is, say, air, being too heated to breathe properly and more voluminous, if much lighter. When someone frequently purveys in conversation opinions which we know to have come from another more cogent or authoritative source, we smile and take it all at face value with a minor discount for its having been parroted. We cannot regard, but do not usually impugn such a person, the rules of everyday converse or polite exchange being of necessity as they are, loose. Conversation is understood to inhabit a public domain.

This is also true in the academy, where opinions (perhaps uncommon ones) carry the day as much as in less constricted and precious circles of interchange. But the academy countenances other more scholarly forms of conversation in an overwhelming volume of professional and learned articles, and the literary engine whereby so many careers are floated. Accepting the written word as legal tender for conversation (with reputations residing thereon), we must perforce accept the less-than-polite understanding that another may not borrow these words as personal currency without attribution. If you quote me, you must note me. If you cite me, please indite me.

The avowed task of a university, the increase or improvement of knowledge, most often occurs incrementally in a preexisting realm of discourse. Originality, intellectual "creativity," are not typically found beyond the pale of an ongoing conversation; and following the argument does not necessarily en-

courage that democratic intellectual melange that enjoys ascendancy as a contemporary ideal with little recommendation from history. There is always, perhaps most evidently in the physical and mathematical sciences, the concession Newton happily made to Hooke, that if we see farther it is often by standing upon the shoulders of giants. It is not surprising, then, that tradition and agreement within a tradition might lead to similarities of language which were, in another time, not unfailingly taken to be sinister.

Now there may be a very fine line between standing upon the shoulders of a giant, and tramping about the intellectual countryside in his borrowed vestments. This is certainly a case in which the clothes can make the (wo)man. Flat-footed theft, in which one simply writes one's own name at the top of another's draft, makes the most interesting tale, and histories of plagiarism are highly anecdotal. But the more significant variants, among academics in particular, are those for which conventional accommodations and adjustments are made, so that what on the face of it seems plagiaristic is, by agreement, acceptable behavior or, at least, not really plagiarism.

(What better place, by the way, to plagiarize the recognitions of others than in the desultory and loosely associative form of the essay, particularly one on plagiarism? By now you are forewarned, if the topic were not enough by itself to alert you; I will have, in the course of this, either to cite my forbears or pretend breezily that I never read this or that piece of commentary masquerading as more original. Or I may plead sloppy note-taking, the osmotically vague memory that comes with much research, or any number of classic exculpations for verbal kleptomania, including the "nothing new under the sun, anyway" defense, to which the good Dr. Johnson appeals in a cautionary reminder that we will not smell plagiarism so often when we remember that the catalogue of ideas and passions available to the race of writers is sorely straitened by a shared human nature and narrow common experience. Still, implicit in any page of type resides a *caveat lector*.)

It is a matter of record that reputations have been built upon the brazen blocks of plagiarism in its simplest form. Academic, more than artistic reputations tend, when plagiarism is discovered, to dissolve quietly so as to save everyone concerned a good deal of embarrassment. It is the sort of thing that universities and their departments are loath to act upon publicly. Professional societies and scholarly affiliations are more than happy to spare themselves the accusatory denunciation, the chance of mistake, or worse, prosecution (a course plagiarists, for all sorts of reasons, are ready to pursue). The academy, in its own specious interest, willingly (and willfully) considers the plagiarist a rarity, a moral freak, a minor problem. So it is significant that the United States Congress, lacking the squeamishness born of collegiality and association, has directed government research agencies like the National Institute of Mental

Health to include an office of scientific integrity, which establishes normative guidelines and polices the field.

Scientific investigation in the universities is conducted by teams of graduate researchers working under the direction of a faculty advisor and financed by grants. Research published by students reaches scientific journals with the professor's name at the top, and this is not considered plagiarism. It is universally practiced by agreement, a convention that acknowledges the collective character of scientific authorship and the circumstance under which it is financed. Since it

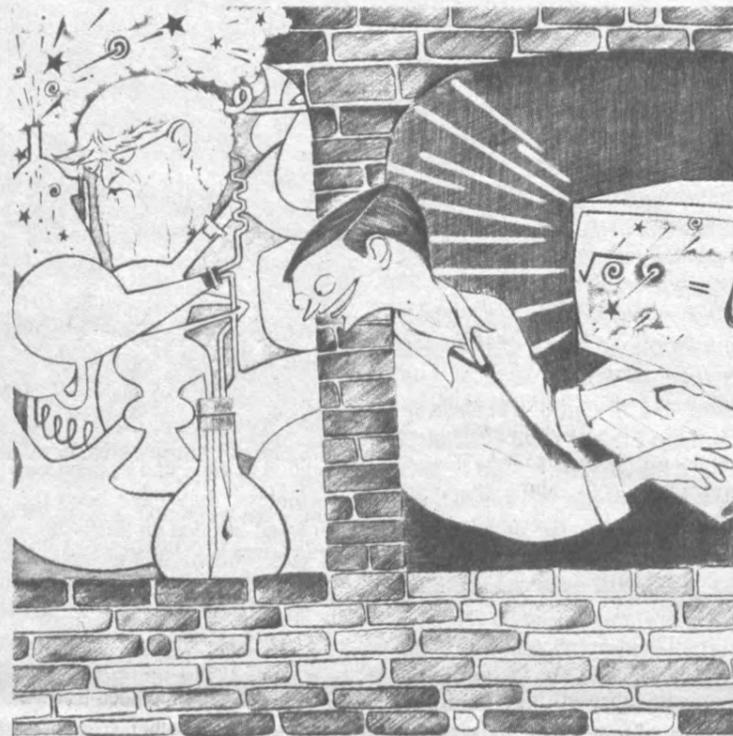


illustration: Milly Acharya

is an accepted practice, it is also clearly an acceptable one, and only *prima facie* startling.

Sometimes, however, ideas rather than the words of a research paper are used by another; much harder to prove, particularly when those ideas may as yet only be ingredients in an early stage of research. But science has not, for a long time now, been the midnight passion of the lone and sleepless genius. It is conducted in the daylight hours by teams of researchers who chat in corridors, exchange hunches, make false starts, come to unexpected findings; who, by intuition or inspiration or sheer accident, add piecemeal to the body of scientific explanation, or just reach impasse. Scientific research is filled with unsystematic anticipations, lacunae, anomalies. Of course, a finding that baffles one team of researchers may be the piece in the puzzle for someone else working on a related problem. Is it plagiarism if another's dead end or unciphered piece makes one's own picture whole, puts all the beads in the right holes? Probably not. That is often how progress in the sciences occurs. It seems not so much culpable as just the nature of the game (especially when there are a lot of very smart players playing at once). But the slope can begin to feel slippery even here, particularly when the situation is charged with the mounting pressures of publication and competition in grant acquisition.

On the other hand, when research students are required to propose and defend research to their faculties, they lay themselves open

to predations of their ideas with little recourse to their right of eminent domain. The general rule, and the necessary presumption under which such a system operates, is that one's mentors are so scrupulously honest and secure in their professions as not to find it necessary to feather their reputations with another's originality. In cases where it has happened, however, no words changed pages (or word processors). But there is the unsavory sense that, from a position of authority, someone with superior research experience, with a broader view of the field, and with a research capability already operating, has made an easy kill, and no

one to prove wiser, although the hapless student may be poorer. By general agreement, I think, the slider has slipped.

In those studies typically called liberal, the nice distinction between uncritical acceptance of a body of writing and plagiarism of that writing can be fatally easy to transgress. That correspondence of opinion that is too often taken for knowledge leads, as Plato saw, to harmony of souls and (why not?) harmony of language. (It was doubtless some such desire for harmony in the truth that prompted the early church fathers to promulgate their orthodoxies by attributing their own writings to a motley of saints, twelve apostles, and assorted members of the holy family. "Any expectation of an increasing regard for truth with the coming of the Christian era," notes Harry Paul in his heavily anecdotal *Literary Ethics*, "is doomed to disappointment.") Reputations, particularly in letters, have been built upon the revival of some obscure or antiquarian doctrine redressed in contemporary language and presented to the world as the legitimate progeny of its current exponent. How many theologians, for example, would recognize the doctrines of Erulphus or Hippolytus or Chrysostom or any number of obscure (even to their own contemporaries) St. Johns of the Something-or-Other, were they suddenly tricked out in hermeneutical rags in next month's professional journal? This is not, strictly speaking, honest scholarship, nor original thought, nor fruitful contribution to ongoing discussion.

More original thinkers may by a kind of forgery purchase the espousal of their own views as "reinterpretations" or "reconsiderations" of an earlier, preferably deceased, author who can no longer abjure the appended glossolalia. This academic "shirtiling" at least has the slender virtue of (possible) originality; but it seeks currency by forging a more illustrious name on the title page. Another variant of this tactic is the importation of writings, or critical methodology, or new perspectives, or analytical tools, of some other thinker writing in a foreign language, or, for some similar cause, out of the immediate purview of the prevailing intellectual culture. Who beyond his own shores first discovered, say, the critical methods of Roland Barthes? Did the American importer attribute such new tools and new-gained purchases? Like as not, it is safe to say. The intellectual pusillanimity, the craftiness, of this duty-free importing is that it allows the perpetrator, if discovered to calmly turn the tables: "Why of course. Anyone who's kept abreast can see that I've been heavily influenced by...." It is even more difficult to legislate against these intellectual masquerades than to detect them; often it remains a personal judgment whether common sanctions should come into force. The world is less forgiving of these predations when the victim is alive and breathing, perhaps only because the thief has proven so bold or so foolish as to leave someone calling foul and demanding retribution. There is also the prudent suspicion that it might as readily happen to any of us, and these things are best nipped in the bud. But when the victim is dead or for some other reason obscure (and likely to remain so, voluntarily, constitutionally, culturally), the act is harder to discover and easy to overlook.

The natural sciences, by contrast, have long recognized the need for vigilant self-scrutiny, since accurate data and fair access to it is critical to the extension of our understanding, critical to the wise expenditure of scarce money, irreplaceable time and resources, and could literally signify life or death. One of the checks researchers have for the accuracy and significance of others' findings is just whose findings they happen to be. Sir William Osler's remark, 75 years ago to the Royal Society of Medicine, that "in science the credit goes to the man who convinces the world, not the one to whom the idea first occurs," is not so frequently the case any longer.

The world of literature outside the universities is also more subject to scrutiny, both from within and without, than the academic realm. If utter novelty, as Samuel Johnson remarked, can often be taken as a sign of error in scholarly matters, it seems to be precisely in literature, if anywhere, that we have come to expect novelty, to attribute unquestionable value to it, and to envy the mind capable of it (Keats bemoaned his poet's fate, born into a late age when every poem had been written already). We recommend novels for novelty, poems for originality of

see Robert Hill, p. 14

The Witness of Trauma

continued from p. 5

Plague) to someone for whom such a position becomes his own subject matter (The Fall). Felman interprets de Man's silence — especially about his participation in an anti-Semitic issue of *Le Soir* — as the revelation of an autobiographical "fall" which would render any more "direct" confession necessarily inauthentic. De Man's "impossible witness" aligns him — heroically it would appear — as a kind of "brother" to figures like Walter Benjamin (who took his own life trying to escape from the Nazis) and with those survivors of the Holocaust (described, for example, by Primo Levi in *The Drowned and the Saved*) who have similarly chosen not to speak. Finally, Felman sees Lanzmann's film as a breakthrough cinematic gesture, reclaiming the possibility of testimonial discourse within the desacralizing context of the one-on-one video interview. The "crisis of witnessing," which for Felman constitutes the Holocaust, becomes in Lanzmann's film, as in Laub's practice and his interview work, observable itself, as the survivors — the bystanders as well as the participants — begin, in some cases for the first time, to speak about their experiences.

These ideas are not to be treated lightly, if only because what is unacceptable about them is so thoroughly bound up with what is powerful and genuinely positive. But the sensationalist manner in which these authors formulate their conclusions, and the particular understandings at which they arrive, seem self-defeating and more reflective of the difficulties they describe than an adequate account of them.

Laub's two articles exemplify this problem. In one, he comments upon his work with survivors and trauma victims and in the other he discusses his own status as a child survivor and offers a theory of testimony in relation to the Holocaust. In the first article, he cites the relation between the listener and the patient in psychodynamic terms that seem entirely suitable as a potential model for discussion of the Holocaust:

The listener to the narrative of extreme human pain, of massive psychic trauma, faces a unique situation. In spite of the presence of ample documents, of searing artifacts and of fragmentary memoirs of

anguish, he comes to look for something that is in fact non-existent; a record that has yet to be made. Massive trauma precludes its registration; the observing and recording mechanism of the human mind are temporarily knocked out, malfunction. The victim's narrative — the very process of bearing witness to massive trauma — does indeed begin with someone who testifies to an absence, to an event that has not yet come into existence, in spite of the overwhelming and compelling nature of the reality of its occurrence. While historical evidence to the event which constitutes the trauma may be abundant and documents in vast supply, the trauma — as a known event and not simply as an overwhelming shock — has not been truly witnessed yet, not been taken cognizance of. The emergence of the narrative which is being listened to — and heard — is, therefore, the process and the place wherein the cognizance, the "knowing" of the event is given birth to. The listener, therefore, is party to the creation of knowledge de novo. The testimony to the trauma thus includes its hearer, who is, so to speak, the blank screen on which the event comes to be inscribed for the first time. [p. 57]

The victim's absent memory of trauma, however, does not preclude the trauma from "showing up" in other ways:

The continued power of the silenced memory of genocide as an overriding, structuring and shaping force, may be, however, neither truly known by the survivors, nor recognized as representing, in effect, memory of trauma. It finds its way into their lives, unwittingly, through an uncanny repetition of events that duplicate — in structure and in impact — the traumatic past. [p. 65]

And in fact it is upon this "uncanny repetition" of these events that the possibility of effecting a change — through transference — depends:

To undo this entrapment in a fate that cannot be known, cannot be told, but can only be repeated, a therapeutic process — a process of constructing a narrative, of reconstructing a history and, essentially, of re-externalizing the event — has to be set in motion. This re-externalization of the event can occur and take effect only when one can articulate and transmit the story, literally transfer it to another outside oneself and then take it back again,

inside. Telling thus entails a reassertion of the hegemony of reality and a re-externalization of the evil that affected and contaminated the trauma victim. [p. 69]

Thus far, Laub's argument seems trenchant, bound to offer us a helpful theoretical elaboration of the silence with which Holocaust survivors come to the interview or analytic session, the stifled cognitive process in which it originates, and the possibility for future transmission and transformation of the experience as conscious discourse. It would seem relatively easy to move on this basis from the more localized contexts of the psychoanalytic session or testimonial interview to the more generalized historical context of the Holocaust itself.

But for some reason, when this shift occurs in the second article, curious things begin to happen:

On the basis of the many Holocaust testimonies I have listened to, I would like to suggest a certain way of looking at the Holocaust that would reside in the following theoretical perspective: that what precisely made a Holocaust out of the event is the unique way in which, during its historical occurrence, the event produced no witnesses. Not only in effect did the Nazis try to exterminate the physical witnesses of their crime; but the inherently incomprehensible and deceptive psychological structure of the event precluded its own witnessing, even by its very victims. [p. 80]

The shift is subtle, but decisive. On the one hand, the scenario is familiar: the event precluded its own registration. On the other, something new has happened. For one thing, the formulation is different. In the earlier formulation, Laub talks of the absent memory of the trauma victim. But to say there were "no witnesses" begins to sound as if either there were no one there at all (apart from the participants), or no one capable of reporting it — although nothing in Laub's earlier formulation suggests that bystanders or perpetrators of the trauma were crippled by it in the same manner as its victims.

Still, let us accept the suggestion (which seems reasonable enough) that perpetrators and bystanders to traumatic events may be affected in ways that distort their ability to report what took place. But Laub's translation of this notion into such a massive mental blackout or "mal-

function" on a planetary scale without more explanatory discussion seems, at the least, very odd. And even if we were to grant the sudden appearance of such a world-historical collective amnesia (an event, that is, for which there were "no witnesses" either within or without), that would still not establish that the evidence for the trauma is lacking. Evidence of the trauma — in the displaced and repetitive mode about which Laub earlier writes so compellingly — is available everywhere. It is one thing to say that events are not readable in the customary manner, another to say that they are not readable at all. The Holocaust is readable, witnessable, if not from the testimony of survivors, then by taking cognizance of all subsequent behavior — the myriad ways in which the trauma repeats itself. "The real," Jacques Lacan says, and Laub reminds us, "always returns to itself."

Yet Laub now appears to insist upon this exclusionary formulation:

A witness is a witness to the truth of what happens during an event. During the era of the Nazi persecution of the Jews, the truth of the event could have been recorded in perception and in memory, either from within or from without, by Jews, or any one of a number of "outsiders." Outsider witnesses could have been, for instance, the next-door neighbor, a friend, a business partner, community institutions including the police and the courts of law, as well as bystanders and potential rescuers and allies from other countries.

Jews from all over the world, especially from Palestine and the United States, could have been such possible outside witnesses. Even the executioner, who was totally oblivious to the plea for life, was potentially such an "outside" witness. Ultimately, God himself could be the witness. As the event of the Jewish genocide unfolded, however, most actual or potential witnesses failed one-by-one to occupy their position as a witness, and at a certain point it seemed as if there was no one left to witness what was taking place. [pp. 80-81, italics added]

These are very strange remarks. The "truth of the event could have been recorded in perception and in memory?" Wasn't it? Wasn't it recorded in both, in Adam Czerniakow's diaries, for example (about which Raul Hilberg speaks in Lanzmann's film), and in the memories of the seventeen hundred individuals whose testimonies are

on file at the Video Archive of which Dori Laub is the founder? Wasn't it recorded, again in Lanzmann's film, by Abraham Bomba who cut the hair of the victims inside the crematoria at Auschwitz just before they were gassed, or by Phillip Müller, who also worked within the same installation, as part of the *Sonderkommando* whose job it was to remove the bodies from the gas chambers once the killing operation had taken place? Or finally, by Franz Suchomel, the Nazi camp officer, who sings for Lanzmann the song he "taught" the victims to sing as they were whipped and beaten through the camouflaged tunnel structure that led them to the crematoria's inner chambers?

And by "outsiders" as well, both Jews and non-Jews alike? Was it not registered by the Polish official Jan Karski, who himself accompanied two Jews (who had escaped the Warsaw ghetto) back into the ghetto, where he experienced "another universe"? Or by American journalists who picked up and published the stories of the atrocities in no less a publication than the *New York Times*, albeit often buried within the newspaper rather than prominently displayed? Defenses against recognizing what is taking place around us when the cost of that recognition is too high are one thing. But Laub speaks in more categorical terms, as if in some way, for bystanders and participants alike, the task of recognition was theoretically impossible.

There is another aspect of the passage that is puzzling. Laub writes, "at a certain point it seemed as if there was no one left to witness what was taking place." "Seemed" to whom? If there was no one there able to bear witness, to whom did these events "seem" anything? The words begin to suggest (however slightly) that in fact a monitoring perspective remains, although he has chosen for the moment (for whatever reason) not to reveal it, and yet about which there is clearly more to be said.

After detailing these "failures," Laub turns to the failure of "inside" witnesses:

In addition, it was inconceivable that any historical insider could remove herself [sic] sufficiently from the contaminating power of the event so as to remain a fully lucid, unaffected witness, that is, to be sufficiently detached from the inside, so as to stay entirely outside of the trapping roles, and the consequent

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identities, either of the victim or of the executioner. No observer could remain untainted, that is, maintain an integrity – a wholeness and a separateness – that could keep itself uncompromised, unharmed, by his or her very witnessing. The perpetrators, in their attempt to rationalize the unprecedented scope of the destructiveness, brutally imposed upon their victims a delusional ideology whose grandiose coercive pressure totally excluded and eliminated the possibility of an unviolated, unencumbered, and thus sane, point of reference in the witness. [p. 81]

No observer? All victims were delusional? A heterogeneity seems here to have been hammered into a uniformity. And in the following remarks we may begin to learn why: *What I feel is therefore crucial to emphasize is the following: it was not only the reality of the situation and the lack of responsiveness of bystanders or the world that accounts for the fact that history was taking place with no witnesses: it was also the very circumstance of being inside the event that made unthinkable the very notion that a witness could exist, that is, someone who could step outside of the coercively totalitarian and dehumanizing frame of reference in which the event was taking place, and provide an independent frame of reference through which the event was observed. One might say that there was, thus, historically no witness to the Holocaust, either from the outside or from inside the event.* [p. 80]

How are we to understand these remarks? The conclusion is the same as that of the formulation of the earlier article – the massively traumatic nature of the event precluded its registration. But where are the “ample documents,” the “searing artifacts,” the “abundant . . . historical evidence” of the earlier formulation? We are left to conclude that either this time the situation is radically different, a situation truly unprecedented on the world-historical scene – a collective amnesia on a world-wide scale – or that something else has occurred.

Laub's concluding remarks allow a glimpse of what this “something else” may be: *When one cannot turn to a “you” one cannot say “thou” even to oneself. The Holocaust created in this way a world in which one could not bear witness to oneself. The Nazi system turned out therefore to be foolproof, not only in the sense that there were in theory no outside witnesses but also in the sense that it convinced its victims, the potential witnesses from the inside, that what was affirmed about their “otherness” and their inhumanity was correct and that their experiences were no longer communicable even to themselves, and therefore perhaps never took place. The loss of this capacity to be a witness to oneself and thus to witness from the inside is perhaps the true meaning of annihilation, for when one's history is abolished, one's identity ceases to exist as well.* [p. 82]

Laub thus adopts and applies globally the perspective he earlier identified as “the victim's narrative,” a position from which, until certain changes take place between the analyst and the analysand, no memory of the event is possible. From within this “victimary” perspective, there are literally “no by-

standers,” “no perpetrators,” “no victims,” and we can understand how it may begin to seem to Laub as though the event “perhaps never took place.”

The “impossibility” of witness that Laub articulates as his theory of the Holocaust expresses most powerfully the child survivor's own sense of the collapse of any independent parental framework from which the terrible things that were happening to him could be observed and to which he could appeal. In this context, Laub's curious move between his first and second formulation of trauma theory makes sense. The book itself, in addition to being about testimony, is an example of it, an elaborate deposition of a child survivor who remembers “a holocaust” to which there were no witnesses, who inhabited a world without parents and, consequently, lacked the capacity for self-construction. In this regard the essay itself has become a kind of therapeutic triumph in which the author proudly displays for us an early photograph of himself.

Unlike Laub's, Shoshana Felman's personal history is not given in the book. But at least in the case of Paul de Man, who was her mentor, teacher, and friend in the Comparative Literature Department at Yale, a possibility suggests itself. Is not her essay on de Man's silence a testimony to her loyalty to this deceased elder counselor? Is not this very book, written in collaboration with Laub, the fruitful product of their joint labor, a birth (or rebirth) of sorts, a positive collaboration in which past fathers are honored and new fathers embraced, a happy ending from which we all may benefit?

In other words, read as testimony to the experience, in one case, of the child survivor, and, in the other, to an academic literary critic's loyalty to her past and present counselors, the book itself becomes a powerful version of two statements every survivor makes: (1) words are not adequate to describe what happened, and (2) I was there. The notion that trauma and a holocaust are at the origin, that witness at this origin is impossible, and that self-annihilation is the consequence, assumes an extraordinary explosive power that shares something with the declaration of the survivor in Laub's anecdote that “all the crematoria at Auschwitz blew” (to the consternation of the attendant historians who insisted that in fact only one installation exploded). Writing this book is a little like blowing up Auschwitz.

If we take exception to the authors' position, it is not because we would adopt a literal-minded perspective and say to them, “But there were witnesses, both within and without; we know that historically,” but because – like the psychoanalyst in Laub's recounting who objected to this “historian's controversy” – we would rather affirm or credit the testimonial power of their joint labors than their representational claims.

For, in the context in which they have offered the book, not as Holocaust testimony, but as a theory of testimony, they get things precisely wrong. In Laub's first formulation of the trauma victim's absent memory, it is possible to define two types of witness: (1) the conscious cognizance of events (of which there was, admittedly, very little, but

which at least was theoretically possible); and (2) the unconscious, “uncanny” repetition of those events (of which there was a great deal). In Laub's later formulation, the definition of “witness,” and consequently of “testimony,” has been restricted to the cognitive variety exclusively, and unconscious witness, which was widespread and upon which restorative transformation depends, has disappeared. The diachronic witness of repetition, the symptomatic logic by which everything the patient does testifies to the traumatic event, has been displaced by an exclusively synchronic



“In the Ghetto” by Halina Olumucki (Warsaw, 1943)

witness of cognition – one deemed now possible or impossible, authentic or inauthentic – a witness, in short, which is subject to truth.

“A witness,” Laub writes in the latter formulation (and Felman, in her introduction to her essay on Lanzmann, echoes him), “is a witness to the truth of what happens during an event.” But the “coercively totalitarian and dehumanizing frame of reference” – which is how the authors define the Holocaust – explodes not only cognition, but the very humanistic frame itself by which an autonomous subject of consciousness may be thought to confront an object of cognition. “The years we have gone through,” writes Camus, in the essay Felman cites, “have killed something in us. And that something is simply the old confidence man had in himself, which led him to believe that he could always elicit human reactions from another man if he spoke to him in the language of a common humanity.” The fragments of that explosion of “common humanity” are now everywhere.

Rather than a “crisis of witnessing” or a “collapse of witnessing,” it seems to me we must speak of the proliferation of witness, of the collapse of the effort to limit witness to cognitive testimony. We cannot now but bear witness – unconsciously,

repetitively, as a version of acting out – to what we cannot (consciously) bear to witness. Contrary to the claim Laub and Felman would make, everything now is evidence for and testifies to the Holocaust. Revisionism itself is thus as much a witness to the Holocaust as the survivors' testimony, and we can more radically distinguish between the two than do the authors (revisionism for them being only so much “noise”). Revisionism is not neo-Nazism but Nazism, the same Nazism that has been here all along. Here is Primo Levi quoting from the words of an SS officer cited by Simon Wiesenthal

valuing his later work (about which I have written appreciatively elsewhere) any more than the discovery (or rediscovery) of Heidegger's Nazi affiliations bars us from reading his writing. But in light of the discovery of de Man's wartime journalism, the silence of this theorist of critical avoidance and duplication speaks to us now more audibly than before, whatever the excuses these authors would mount on his behalf. At the very least, we are compelled to distinguish carefully among de Man's collaborative silence, the silence which interrupted the life of Walter Benjamin, and the silence of the survivors of which Primo Levi speaks. For the latter's is also the same silence as before, that which the Nazis produced originally – neither heroic nor demonic, but the traumatically generated consequence of the experiences they suffered and, as such, radically different from the silence of the perpetrator, collaborating bystanders, or the contemporary descendants of either.

The Holocaust is, indeed, not over, as Terrence Des Pres already remarked in 1983 in his shrewd introduction to an account of the work of Elie Wiesel. But it continues, not because, as these authors assert, we have not yet gained closure on these traumatic occurrences, but because the possibility of closure has itself collapsed, and witness can no longer be limited (as these writers would have us believe) to the narrowly cognitive or juridical or artistic contexts in which they would confine it. Witness, in this sense, has no need of validation.

A theory of testimony, then, is of extreme urgency today along just the lines of development pursued by these authors. But our starting point for such a theory must be the position to which Laub gives voice initially: that the psychoanalytic insight into the logic of witness is like the logic of the symptom, and that there are consequently no true or false witnesses anymore than there are true or false presenting symptoms. The evidence for the Holocaust is today everywhere. All of modern life reflects its impact, is structured and shaped by it, as these authors say. As a consequence, our goal must not be to redefine a new modality of witness which is “truly” limited to consciousness, but rather to recognize – as psychoanalysis has taught us to do – the mechanisms by which traumatic experience endlessly reproduces itself in contemporary experience.

The book of these authors, the book of *Testimony*, can be credited with opening the discussion; but we have a way to go before we construct an approach that does not fail us in just the way these authors warn us about (and then enact) – namely, continuing to speak the 19th-century language of consciousness and observability in a context in which it no longer applies. We are not assisted in this endeavor by being encouraged to act in the face of such massive effects of trauma as if it did not exist, as if witnesses were “impossible” or in “collapse,” as if the evidence for the Holocaust were confined to the failed and failing cognition of a few aging survivors. Limiting witness of the Holocaust to cognition is a new way of sacralizing it, of doing just what these authors say they oppose, since assuming the necessity

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Testimony

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of a reification or objectification of the event just doesn't apply in this case.

When he writes as an analyst of Holocaust survivors, or as an interviewer for the Archive, or as a commentator on the act of listening to survivor narratives, Laub does so with unmatched brilliance. His summaries of psychoanalytic notions of trauma and its aftermath, orthodox as they are, remain clear and effective, readily available to other professionals who would turn to trauma theory as a complement to their own approaches. His own childhood experiences in this regard cannot but be helpful, and when he counsels future analysts or interviewers with a list of potential danger spots in listening to Holocaust survivor narratives, or in moving from therapy to education, he is breaking important new ground.

But when Laub turns to address the historical phenomenon of the Holocaust, he appears to confuse his identity as a survivor with that of the analytic theorist, and this confusion generates some of the odd (and unexpectedly testimonial) reflections he offers as historical observation, such as that there were no witnesses — no victims, perpetrators, or bystanders who could count as witnesses — and therefore that the Holocaust, as an event without a trace, "without a record," really was unique and unprecedented in ways barely short of the mystical.

The real danger of this book, in other words, is that while presenting critically important subject matters in ways that avoid the traps of the past, it constructs for us new traps. Remaining content to speak from within the "victim's narrative," the authors reproduce the very sacralized

and distanced relationship to the Holocaust they undertook this study to avoid. Viewing it either too thoroughly from within (in which case all experience is "Holocaustal" and there are no witnesses) or from a position too far removed (in which case all language about the event is fictional and the distinction between survivors, collaborators, perpetrators, and bystanders disappears), they sustain the very synchronic perspective upon which such inside/outside distinctions depend, the same distance, in other words, upon which the humanist framework itself relied.

Rather than "impossible witness," I would suggest that we need to speak more appropriately of "witnessing the impossible" — that which was previously deemed out of bounds, and yet which has become now, in the aftermath of the event, part of the fabric of our lives. "At Auschwitz," Emil Fackenheim writes (quoting Hans Jonas), "'more was real than is possible,' and the impossible was done by some and suffered by others." In this context, the recuperative endeavors on the part of these authors to limit our understanding of the explosion of humanism to the black holes it produced, can only construct for us a new set of blinders which, however genuinely and powerfully they document the personal, academic, or professional triumphs of their authors, gain for us little ground in the ongoing struggle against a larger and worsening cultural predicament.

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Bernal's Response

continued from p. 9

How she could have come up with such a ludicrous idea completely baffles me. I have in fact published an article in which I argue that the Phoenician city states provided models for the Greek *poleis* ("First by Land, Then by Sea: Thoughts about the Social Formation of the Mediterranean and Greece" in Eugene Genovese and Leonard Hochberg, eds. *Geographic Perspectives in History* [Oxford 1989], pp. 3-33). This is beyond Vermeule's brief, but in *Black Athena* I frequently refer to both Canaanite and Levantine city states and their corporate structures, which are totally different from the pharaonic system. For instance in *Black Athena II*, p. 437, I quote Michael Astour's description of the government of the Bronze Age Syrian port of Ugarit: "In Ugarit, the big merchants were the upper class — they owned the largest land estate, they surrounded the throne as advisers and administrators, and they served in the elite corps of the army as mariannu-charioteers... if we look for a parallel to the Ugaritic mariannu, it would be the patriciate not of early Rome but of medieval Venice, except that the social relations in Ugarit were far from the rigidity and exclusiveness of the Venetian mercantile oligarchy."

Does Professor Vermeule really believe that I see this as having "no essential difference" from the Egyptian monarchy, or is she merely trying to score a cheap and unfair point? In light of the example I shall give below, I have to conclude that it is the latter.

Why did Professor Vermeule make so many mistakes?

One of the most striking features of Emily Vermeule's review is the extraordinary number of mistakes and misrepresentations to be found in it. Some of these are trivial and would seem not to affect her argument. For instance, she writes that my grandfather wrote a dictionary of Ancient Egyptian, where in fact he wrote a grammar.

Her general approach is one of *reductio ad absurdum* to exaggerate my position. For instance, at the end of a long sarcastic treatment of the idea of Hyksos being buried in the shaft graves of Mycenae, she concludes:

As they came, they shifted from being Egyptian Hyksos ("foreign princes") to being Greek hiketai, "suppliants" (although that word has a well-attested Greek root, hikneomai, hiko, "I arrive as a suppliant after exile or murder").

While I link the name Hyksos to the title of Zeus Hikesios, Zeus (the Suppliant) who dominates Aeschylus' play *The Suppliants*, I see the relationship as one of punning or *paranomasia* in which Hyksos may have suggested Hikesios. I make absolutely no attempt to derive the root *hiko* from Egyptian, even though it lacks a clear Indo-European etymology.

At another point, she claims that I maintain: "The Greek god Pan is named for a Nile fish, pa in." After raising the point that the name Pan probably involved sacred *paranomasia* and had several

sources, I wrote: "Another and stronger possibility is that the development of the name Pan was influenced by the Egyptian *p^h im* (the groan). A *phonetic parallel* comes in the derivation of the Greek word *pan panos* (a Nile fish) from the Egyptian *p^h im* (the fish)." Probably this was just carelessness on the part of Professor Vermeule, but it fits the general pattern of exaggeration.

Not surprisingly, the most systematic and significant examples of such misrepresentation are concerned with archaeology. She states, for instance, that I believe there was an Egyptian conquest of Boeotia during the Old Kingdom. This is indeed the view of archaeologist T. Spyropoulos. However, while I do see evidence of Egyptian contact with Boeotia at this time, I argue "that the chances that it took the form of a direct colonization are very low" (*Black Athena II*, p. 152). She claims that I view the Cretan palaces as solely Egyptian, whereas in fact, I refer repeatedly (pp. 158-62) to influences from many parts of the Middle East. Vermeule also maintains that I do not consider the Egyptian sense of geographical polarity of north and south, but I do (see pp. 251-53).

More significantly, she states that I have "an endearingly childlike faith in the absolute historical value of Greek myths." This is not so. Throughout my writings I have made it quite plain that I believe that the essential function of myth is to explain and justify the present. However, I also maintain that, as myths and legends do sometimes contain valid historical information, they should not be disregarded. That is why I wrote in the introduction to *Black Athena II*: "I believe that where ancient sources converge and are not controverted in Antiquity, one should take their schemes as working hypotheses" (p. 25). Naturally, before accepting such working hypotheses they should be checked against other sources, contemporary documents, archaeology, linguistics, etc., and this is what I have attempted to do. I am not the first person to do this; it has been the method of many distinguished archaeologists of the 20th century.

This leads on to a much more serious objection to Vermeule's review, namely to her claim that I see "the entire profession of Bronze Age Aegean and Classical archaeologists... as ignorant, prejudiced and racist." It is true that I am entirely opposed to the extreme isolationist views of Colin Renfrew and his supporters. However, while these ideas have been very influential during the past 25 years, they do not represent the more balanced views of what I believe to be the mainstream of East Mediterranean archaeology, of which Vermeule is a distinguished representative.

see Martin Bernal, p. 14

Feminism Without Illusions

continued from p. 6

may have the greatest difficulty responding to this book, due to what is perhaps its central weakness — Fox-Genovese's failure to be clearer about her views on the market. In her critique of modern bourgeois individualism, Fox-Genovese carefully makes the connection between natural rights philosophy and the laissez-faire market. She observes the contradictory role that the market plays in gender relations, acting as both the force driving women out of the private sphere and into the public (for example, the contemporary reliance on the two-paycheck family to meet the standards of the middle class), and as a main source of discrimination against women (competition in the workplace). But her effort to substitute social for individualistic values lacks similar economic connections. In fact, much of the creativity of her views — the mixing of liberal and conservative elements

— derives from ideological thinking abstracted from material considerations. We may know what Fox-Genovese advocates ideologically, but from this text we cannot determine how she would translate that ideology into economic or political structures.

If bourgeois individualism errs by emphasizing the individual, then how can it ever be made more "generous" — that is, willing to give up power — without changing its very essence? So long as Americans continue to defer to the Constitution, a document that firmly grounds a concept of individual rights in private property, are we not confined to a relatively limited range of possibilities for reform? As the author of the *Origins of the Physiocracy* and the award-winning *Plantation Women*, editor of *The Autobiography of Du Pont de Nemours*, and co-author (with Eugene Genovese) of *Merchant Capital*, Fox-Genovese knows the philosophical and politi-

cal contexts of 18th-century society as well as anyone. If she has something more rigorous in mind, she should have elaborated it here, for the issues that she raises in this book are too important to leave readers wondering how she proposes to transcend the apparently intractable confines of American law.

One final quibble with this book. If it is not revolution that Fox-Genovese advocates but reform, might we not benefit from more of her knowledge of prominent antecedents? The first wave of feminism in the United States certainly offers us clues. Nineteenth-century women's rights leaders like Elizabeth Cady Stanton (who, like the author, spent many childhood hours in her father's study), struggled with history and contemporary politics, literature and law, the private and public in an attempt to challenge the social relations of power that they believed compromised women's lives. Nineteenth-century feminism,

moreover, culminated not merely in suffrage, but, by the first quarter of the 20th century, in a wide range of progressive reforms, from the Pure Food and Drug Act, to the inoculation of children for deadly diseases, to labor laws, all in order to curb the unrestrained individualism of the "Gilded Age."

Quibbles, finally, do not detract from what is a very smart book. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese is a progressive spirit who resonates with the aspiration to infuse bourgeois individualism with a deeper humanity. By her own lights, "pessimism of the intellect, and optimism of the will" — a puritan, and therefore progressive, tag if ever there was one — might well prove an appropriate temperament by which contemporary mainstream feminists find their way out of the dark, late twentieth-century woods.

Tracy Mitrano is a historian teaching this year at Cornell University.

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— Richard III, V, v, 7

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Martin Bernal Responds

continued from p. 13

My reliance on and respect for 20th-century archaeology is clear from the very first page of *Black Athena II*, which is dedicated to the memory of the distinguished archaeologist V. Gordon Childe. Near the beginning of the book's conclusion, I wrote: *There would seem to be a paradox here as the main thrust of my whole project has been against the influence of racism and anti-Semitism on scholarship. Yet in this volume I have frequently found myself championing the views of scholars working at the high tide of racism, 1880-1940.*

With the single exception of my

hypothesis about the pharaoh Senwosre/ Sesostris' conquests in Anatolia and the Caucasus, all my specific claims have been based on suggestions made by professional archaeologists or ancient historians.

Vermeule herself has indicated that Egyptian officials were present in the Aegean during the Old Kingdom. In *Black Athena II* (p. 149), I quoted her and her husband's speculations on the origin of a gold hoard containing Egyptian objects of the 5th Dynasty found in Western Turkey:

Did they send an official as a diplomatic or commercial ambassador to the shores of the Mediterranean beyond Egypt... Did he carry his cre-

dentials to be married, or murdered or perhaps robbed abroad?

I never rise to such imaginative heights.

Other scholars have suggested Near Eastern colonization at the foundation of the Cretan Palaces – I do not go so far. However, I do follow the encyclopedic and insightful ancient historian, Eduard Meyer, whom Vermeule and I both admire, when he maintained that the Hyksos had occupied Crete.

Vermeule is shocked by my suggestion that the warriors buried in the Shaft Graves may have been Hyksos princes. This is, in fact, a respectable minority position set out in the relevant article of the canon-

ical *Cambridge Ancient History*. She is skeptical about my dating the great Thera eruption to 1628 BC, rather than 1500, but this is now the majority opinion among the relevant experts.

One reason the redating is significant is that frescoes buried by the island's eruption now have to be seen as coming from the time of the Egyptian 2nd Intermediate Period rather than from that of the New Kingdom, when substantial contacts between the Aegean and the rest of the East Mediterranean are generally admitted. Most scholars who have published work on them agree that the Thera frescoes portray a highly sophisticated and cosmopolitan society reflecting Minoan, Egyptian, and Levantine influences, and we now know that they were painted at a time when the Hyksos were the dominant power in the latter two regions.

This picture of considerable cultural contact around the East Mediterranean in the 17th century BC has been confirmed by the frescoes of a Cretan type, referred to by Vermeule in her review, that have recently been found at the Hyksos capital of Avaris and Tel Kabri in Galilee. As I mention in *Black Athena II* (p. 437), there is no doubt that during much of the 2nd millennium BC, Cretan art was admired throughout the Middle East. However, we know that the chief language in use among the Hyksos rulers of Lower Egypt took on many aspects of Egyptian culture. Hence, it is not wildly speculative to suggest that Semitic and Egyptian vocabulary and religion could have been introduced to the Aegean during this period.

To repeat, my work is not a diabolical rejection of the "entire profession" as Vermeule maintains. I am merely following early 20th-century scholars like Sir Arthur Evans, Eduard Meyer, and Gordon Childe who worked on the very reasonable principle of "modified diffusionism." Where I differ from them is in the belief that influence from the Near East continued long after the Aegean was inhabited by Indo-European speaking "Hellenes," and therefore had a major impact on later Greek civilization.

There are three major reasons for my belief that we should update the work of these great scholars. First, there is the need to discount the racism and anti-Semitism to which they were inevitably exposed. This intellectual environment made them disinclined to see Semitic and Egyptian influences on Hellenes,

although they were open to the idea of early Near Eastern influences on the Aegean.

Second, there is the knowledge, made certain by the decipherment of Linear B in the 1950s, that the language, proper names, and religion of the Late Bronze Age Aegean were Greek. Thus, there is every reason to suppose that Near Eastern influences on the Aegean during the Mycenaean period would have affected the later civilization of Archaic and Classical Greece.

Third, there are striking archaeological discoveries of the past quarter century, notably the Gelydonia and Kas shipwrecks and the Thera and other frescoes. These indicate that during many centuries of the Bronze Age, the cultures of the East Mediterranean need to be seen as parts of an interlocking economic and political system in which it was easy for substantial cultural exchange to take place. Furthermore, given the greater age, wealth, and political power of Egypt and the Levant, the predominant flow was likely to have been from the South East to the Aegean.

In some ways my work is rather similar to that of Vermeule. We are both eclectic in our method and try to integrate archaeological evidence with that from other sources, and we are both open to the idea of Egyptian and Levantine influences on Greece. However, there are much more significant differences – even disagreement as to what these differences are. She appears to see the distinction as one between a scrupulous professional and a bungling amateur with a pernicious political agenda. I see her as a decent and imaginative scholar, who, while having had the joy and privilege to work on ancient Greece, has had the misfortune to belong to a discipline that has been thoroughly skewed by the racism and anti-Semitism of the period from 1820 to 1940. Even today, Vermeule has not been able to escape from its framework, so that for her, while Greece remains *home* territory, Egypt and the Levant are *exotic* and there can never be a true mixing of their cultures. This can be seen in the quotation from her work with which I began this essay. She notes that Greek treatments of death in the Bronze Age are full of Egyptian imagery, but for her this appears to be a delicious mystery. I, on the other hand, believe that we are now in a position to begin mapping both the vast extent of the Egyptian and Levantine influences on Greek culture and the mechanisms by which they were transmitted.

Robert Hill

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image and feeling, plays for their experimentations, essays for their liberties with form. Without deciding whether this is good or bad for literature, it does render plagiarism a cardinal offense of the realm, and one quick to be called. Borrowings stand out more egregiously now than they may have done in another day, when the Edwardian collector of literary curiosities, W.S. Walsh, could positively chortle, "Thank God that these great men had no literary conscience." Where plagiary may not make academic news in many instances, it makes literary news. The stakes and (sometimes) the personalities, are larger; copyright laws are clearer and more likely to be enforced in the public courts. Since a literary production consists principally in its peculiar and individual expression, transgressions are more readily proven than in academic cases where the currency may be ideas which admit latitude of expression.

"Plagiarism is a fraternal crime," writes Thomas Mallon in his study of landmark plagiarisms, *Stolen Words*. "Writers can only

steal from other writers.... The sanction most feasible and most just is the ironic one: publication." The antidote, then, is publish like hell. And there seems to be little danger that the publishing industry will fail us in that regard. Given the sheer numbers of academic cottage presses, given the pressure to swell the pages of existing journals, to create new ones, to write books or edit them, there is a promising future for the literary detective. But another irony blossoms here: publication is the best antidote for plagiarism, but only up to a point. Mass equals obscurity. After all, who's going to read all the stuff?

After more than two centuries Sterne still delights. He can be plucked whole from the shelves of most bookstores; would so many wade through the prose of his victim Burton with equal pleasure? Has he failed to transform Rabelais or Montaigne? Are we any poorer for having read the verse of some anonymous sod reset in one of Coleridge's ornaments? Time, pleasure, and usefulness, it seems, temper and finally dissolve the contempt or outrage we may feel against

plagiarism discovered. Time, because it tempers everything; pleasure, because our delight in a thing of charm easily survives our moral sensibilities; usefulness, in that a preemptive and anticipatory act of plagiarism enters immediately into the general discourse and is put to service apart from anyone's censure. In the end, Poe is right: we thank the one who first proved pleasing or useful, and remain indifferent where the source is another.

The springs of originality are still there; less pure, perhaps, than we had supposed. We find pleasure or advancement of knowledge somewhere beneath or beyond our sense of justice. But the plagiarist wields the power of any parasite by sapping the recognition which is one large encouragement to authors and scholars alike.

...now he was the ivy which had hid my princely trunk, and suck'd my verdure out on't.

- Robert Hill, *The Typhoon*, act II, scene 2.

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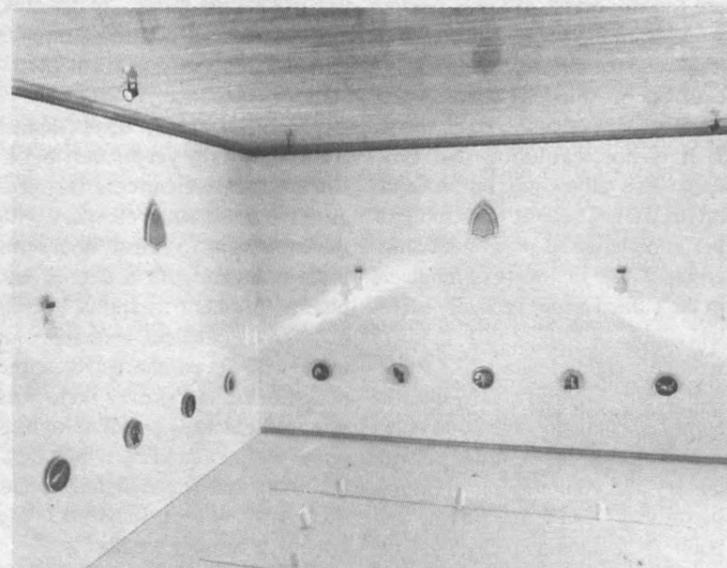
Mary Kelly Exhibit

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this notion of femininity allied with the abject. The woman's story begins with her not having control, and then turns into a fantasy of mastery. T.M. Psychoanalytic theory has always been an important part of your work, and you've mentioned that Jacques Lacan's notion of display is something you're dealing with in *Gloria Patri*. How would you describe "display," and is it related to the more familiar notion of "masquerade"?

M.K. To come back to the Gericault painting – I think Bryson is wrong when he says that the painting has something to do with masquerade. While it's true that you can speak of masquerade in relation to men – as Bryson does in reference to bodybuilders – I would define masquerade as having to do with the feminine, insofar as it involves making one's self visible – a spectacle.

As for "display," Lacan describes it as putting on a kind of skin – he actually uses the word "shield." It's a defense, an intimidation, and sometimes a travesty, but it's not exactly the same process as masquerade. So display is probably more appropriate for the discussion of failed masculinity in Gericault's



"Gloria Patri" by Mary Kelly

Photo: Emil Ghinger

painting. The way I see it, when people put on a uniform, it's not about being looked at, but about obliteration. The uniform rigidly signifies your position, your rank; it's a coded reference to a hierarchy.

Up to now, feminist theory has been more concerned with notions of masquerade, and with a critique of the objectification of women and images representing the woman as an object of desire. We've ignored

the implications of display for women, for whom it is a different way of shielding the body, a kind of doubling aimed at concealment rather than an image of desire.

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Listen to the Stories

continued from p. 7

Catholics we grew up valuing rational, intellectual discussion of religious truths," says Toby Johnson, "which is the beautiful thing that kept us from becoming literalist."

Throughout the volume, Mary Hunt's call for gays and lesbians to "be church" echoes. A perhaps unheeded providential message seems to be recorded in the experience of Joe Izzo, a former Xaverian brother who was dismissed for his connections to the gay community. While praying at the tomb of Mother Seton, Izzo was told inwardly that "If you are to serve the gospel of Christ in any capacity, be prepared to suffer." "Thanks," responded Izzo, "but that's not what I wanted to hear."

He joined the Society of Friends.

In order to live fully the imperative of being church, attentiveness to the words of the Spirit is in order. In turn, this volume argues that the institutional church should "listen to the stories" of those whom God raises up to reform its teaching, before more Catholics drift away into heresy, psychological trauma, schism, promiscuity, apostasy, and pastoral neglect. For, as the gay priest and poet Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote, "Christ plays in ten thousand places," and He seems to be at play in the lives of these gay, lesbian, and bisexual Catholics.

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Runaway Soul

continued from p. 1

ing or obstinately self-deluded, having taken 30 plus years to produce this first novel. Except for a clutch of stories, some fairly well-known and celebrated (see the 1988 collection, *Stories in an Almost Classical Mode*), Brodkey has hunkered down in the shadows, hoarding his words and betting all on a single performance to redeem the time and establish his place in history as the modern American master: Proust or bust. As it turns out, *The Runaway Soul* falls a few light years short. The reviews are coming in, and they are sour with disappointment. Brodkey's way is nothing at all like Swann's.

The Runaway Soul is rather a standard *Bildungsroman*: the story of how a young artistic soul emerges into self-awareness through trials and traumas, shocks and defeats, which are, as blows tend to be, *initiations*. And Brodkey being Brodkey, those initiations are ordeals of envy, guilt, avarice, power, betrayal, and sex, especially the last. Brodkey can do more with an evening's roll on the mat than a troupe of tag team wrestlers or, more to the point, any American writer since Henry Miller, though he has nothing of Miller's easy delight in the humor of it all. His encounters are grimmer, performed with more mechanical passion than tenderness, which he seems to lavish on his prose alone. The proclivity to kiss and tell – and tell and tell and tell – was known about Brodkey from his shorter fictions, a story titled "Innocence" in particular, and reviewers were waiting to see if he would

raise the ante here. Well, one interlude calls forth a marathon performance, fully eighty-seven pages long, to describe an act that from start to finish would seem to require some forty-five minutes – shorter than it takes the reader (at least me) to read about it. That is more than one-tenth of the book's length, and the hero, Wiley Silenowicz, and his lover, Ora Perkins, get it on more than once in this book. You can see for yourself how the pages can add up.

The childhood of Wiley Silenowicz, who is so plainly a stand-in for Brodkey himself that you have to wonder why he bothered to call it fiction at all, is a mine field. For starters, Wiley is an adopted child, his mother having died suddenly when he was two. Rumor has it that she died of a bungled abortion, though we never learn for sure. He has a real father, Max, who is present in his life only as a reclusive source of occasional money. Otherwise, his family consists of the adoptive parents, S.L. and Lila Silenowicz, and sister Nonie, eleven years his senior, who becomes for Wiley a source of fascination and dread. Cold, narcissistic, and calculating – family trademarks all – she is all that he has to struggle not to become and whom, in the end, he resembles in spite of himself.

The Silenowicz family is a nightmare family. S.L. is an accomplished womanizer who cuts a figure in the community, St. Louis, "publicly young... Dapper Dan, Valentino, Mr. Romance – guys in high school called someone like him a *cocksman* – and high popular art began to call someone like him a *stud* – well, that

was in him along with a leery good fellowship – an ironic straining and calculated vivacity among people. An I-am-a-good guy ... "He calls himself "the last of the Red Hot Poppas" and confides in Wiley that women are killing him. Lila can match him for looks, though she doesn't use them in the same predatory way. She is also a gold mine of cynical maxims and weary platitudes, and S.L. says of her, "A woman might as well be bald as have a smart mouth." She says of herself: "I'll tell you a secret: I'm not a snob – but I am a cynic," and Wiley observes, "Momma's nervous stylishness of assault was a curious amalgam of playing with daydreams and melodrama".

Nonie is the byproduct of such parents, bred for combat and incapable of any sentiment that is not self-serving. It is from her that Wiley learns that life is all calculation and scorekeeping, and in later years she will tell him: "Look at us – we're two heroes; we're ICE CUBES." Lila fears and despises Nonie. Twice she left infant sons in the house under Nonie's care and both die, and Lila would recall afterwards, "What was strange was that Nonie wasn't upset – not at all. A mother knows. She did something. I know – she said when I came home, Momma, nothing happened." When Wiley finds out years later that Nonie was burned to death in a fire, he can't find it in himself to mourn, or even to care much what happened to her.

The family endgame, which begins its slow and agonizing course when Wiley is just nine, makes *Cape Fear* look like *The Tonight Show*.

S.L. walks out in a rage, leaving the rest of the family destitute. Eleven weeks later, a call comes from the hospital: he has suffered a stroke and now, a quasi-invalid, he wants to come home. With S.L. back, home life becomes an artillery exchange and the house divides into camps, Nonie taking her father's side and a nine-year-old Wiley throwing in with his mother. Dying slowly of a series of strokes, S.L. is bitter and vengeful, even toward health, even toward daylight. Nonie slips away to relatives in North Carolina, throwing the burden of being the child of this chaos, i.e., buffer, confidant, and weapon, wholly on Wiley's nine-year-old shoulders. "Momma refused to nurse [S.L.]; he refused... to talk to her. I never knew the details of that story... I took over the stuff of taking care of him mostly; and he helped; mostly he took care of himself once he recovered from the second serious episode." Lila, meanwhile, takes leave of her sanity and begins to reel off long hallucinatory rants.

As Lila worsens, *Schadenfreude*, the delight in disaster, kicks in, and home life dissolves into litanies of accusation, almost as though they are the sole pleasures that S.L. and Lila will permit themselves. "Daddy called her Madame Goebels-Poison-Mouth and said she was killing him; and she said he was killing her – and me. He never again forgave her, or if he did, it was in such dark ironic ways I didn't like to see it; and I don't want to think about it now, my dad's ironic mercy." Wiley takes it from all sides, as Lila accuses him: "I know what you're doing; you're laying up grievances so you can leave us in the lurch – you're just like Nonie." Indeed he is laying up grievances: Wiley will say of himself, in a cadenza of despair: "I am a shattered guy, a shallow boy, a battered person. ... Perhaps I might begin to escape now. Maybe I won't make it. Maybe I will always be sad and mostly silent. It is likely I won't live too long. I gave my childhood and youth away. Still, the main thing is not to show how hurt you are and how hard it is for you to go on at the moment. *You don't want to be mainly a structure of blame, of accusation – of exhaustion.*" [italics added].

Of course, an unhappy childhood is the novelist's birthright; how many great novels, from Dickens's

David Copperfield to Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist*, have been rooted in the miseries of childhood? But their greatness does not lie in the depths of the horror, but in the writer's ability to harness the pain by giving it form. Form is the transformation of chaos into meaning, and the novel without it will sooner or later appall, rather than inspire. Brodkey, whose feeling for plot is as weak as his attachment to the phrase is overbearing, walks away from any considerations of formal grace. Pandemonium and grief are simply laid out here in blunt and uncompromising ways: an aesthetics of passing your nightmares on rather than of managing them. Along the way, also, Brodkey passes up the opportunity – and 835 pages is ample opportunity – to move beyond the musty and habitual circles of ego, sex, and family, to take account of the world beyond them.

The Runaway Soul is an affront, an infliction. Did Job lament so before God as Brodkey does before man? To be sure, the book is poetic and mysterious in parts; the mystery of Brodkey's own origins is ratcheted up now and then into a language rich in symbol and music, giving the emotional life all the P.R. it can bear. But all too much of this book is pure transcription, raw notes snapped into place like Leggos with scarcely a thought to continuity or integration. What begins as a poetics of personality decomposes before our eyes into the fragments of a life. This book would have profited from a sharp pair of scissors. *The Runaway Soul* turns out to be 835 pages of runaway book, *David Copperfield* gone apeshit. In light of all that Brodkey the boy had to deal with, we can forgive Brodkey the man a good deal, including his own egotism and the narcissism of his hero, but the only absolution a writer truly desires is a full reading, cover to cover, and how many readers have that much charity to spare?

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The Tragedy of Cambodian History

continued from p. 1

It is the distinctive feature of this book, provocative for some, intriguing for others, to emphasize continuities in the styles of leadership exercised by these three men, who successively dominated Cambodian politics. All three glorified the Cambodian past and held quasi-mystical ideas about Cambodian racial qualities. All three operated autocratically, endeavored to monopolize information, indulged in self-deification, rejected any real accountability toward the people they ruled, and were the victims of their own delusions. By plotting the personal characteristics and the fate of the governments of these three men in the same tragic style of narrative, the author tells us that the absolutist style of Cambodian leadership and the deference toward anyone "firmly in command" that has characterized Cambodian politics reveals a fundamental continuity that typifies the period covered by this book. Since 1979, the author suggests, this tragic narrative no longer seems to apply. Sihanouk and Pol Pot are still alive and still active in Cambodian politics today, but, according to the author, their tragic heroism has dissipated and they have become caricatures, clowns. Time will tell.

The emphasis upon continuity in the author's narrative is clearly a reaction against all the rhetoric in and out of Cambodia during the past two decades about the "end of history," "the year zero," and the popular perception of massive dis-

continuity. The author declares that the "Cambodian revolution" failed because of continuities: "the persistence of so many counterrevolutionary ideas among rulers and ruled, so much poor leadership, and so much counterrevolutionary behaviour." The author wants to reclaim modern Cambodian history from the clutches of apocalyptic rhetoric, to rehumanize the terror and brutality as something monstrous, but monstrous in a way that is not alien to human history.

In a narrative of political leadership that reads as easily as this book does, it is inevitable that some topics will appear to be mishandled in the opinions of critical readers. For me, one such topic is the author's analysis of the experiment in "pluralistic, representative government" in the late 1940s and early 1950s; at one point the author says that this experiment was doomed to failure because there was no basis for it in Cambodian society, while at another point he suggests that there was a possibility for success that was choked off by Sihanouk's "cronies and French advisors." If such electoral, parliamentary government was in any way an option, as many pages of this book's narrative seem to indicate, then the author's characterization of Cambodian politics as autocratic and submissive may need to be refined.

Another obscurity is the role of Cambodia at the 1954 Geneva Conference and the attitude of the great powers toward Cambodian

affairs. The author seems to exaggerate Vietnamese ability to affect the outcome of the Geneva settlement; he says that Molotov supported the Cambodian resistance, but does not explain how. A third obscurity is the role of China in the events, beginning in 1977, leading to the outbreak of hostilities between Cambodia and Vietnam; the only reference, oblique and without explanation, is a statement that "several thousand Chinese experts were evacuated from the country" during the Vietnamese invasion of 1978/9. Finally, the author appears to subscribe to all the old chestnuts about the Vietnamese: they are "stubborn" and "obsessed" as usual.

But, the book is the most accessible and scholarly introduction to modern Cambodia in the English language. It is solidly researched, wonderfully concise, and shows flair. The author has done more than any other scholar to wrest the study of Cambodia from the grasp of polemicists and to raise the possibility of treating modern Cambodia as a legitimate object of scholarly attention, not just an arena for contending ideologues. By plotting a tragic narrative to encompass at one stroke Sihanouk, Lon Nol, and Pol Pot, he has folded contemporary Cambodia back into itself and allowed us to glimpse a country inhabited by real human beings, rather than angels and monsters.

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Peters Projection

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whereas they are deployed along a circle of length 57% longer than the Equator, it means that we see radial strips of pieces with gaps growing between them as we move out from the pole. So the map is as perfect as we want. It simply isn't one smoothly connected piece. Such a map is termed "interrupted," and corresponds physically to having slit the Earth along many radial lines issuing out of the pole and down to the other pole, and then opening it out, and laying this many-petalled rosette shape upon the table.

Thus, all maps of the Earth in one smooth piece must be distorted. For sufficiently small regions, of course, we can do arbitrarily well. Let us now consider how we make these maps and the distortions entailed in doing so. Since the pieces are getting too small to fill up the table without gaps between them, all we need do is magnify radially distant pieces to close the gaps. All smooth maps must do this. However, there are many different ways to enlarge the pieces, each different way giving rise to another projection. We can, for example, leave each piece at its meridional deployment, but stretch it *circumferentially* to close up the gaps. This map is an "equidistant azimuthal projection," very easily drafted, and with, as we just saw, some 57% error by the Equator. Where is the map distortion free? Why, at the pole. Do errors "immediately" grow (as the Peters handbook maintains) as we move out from the pole? No! They indeed grow, but almost not at all at first, since the pole is the point of tangency, within an unmodified piece. In fact, a calculation shows that the error doesn't even reach 1% until we have moved through 14 degrees of latitude and not 2% until 20 degrees. But, it grows more and more swiftly as we proceed further, until it's 57% at 90 degrees. Also, as we move out of the pole, the map becomes "anisotropic." This means that distances are measured differently in different directions — for example, truly along radii, but too long along circumferences. Thus, angles become distorted — again by up to 57% at the Equator. Don't be misled because the meridians intersect the Equator perpendicularly: all other angles are wrong. Since, with anisotropy, scale and angle encounter increasing distortion away from the pole, it is meaningless to provide a scale of measurement far from the pole.

Let us analyze other methods of enlargement of the pieces. One can simply magnify each piece *isotropically*, using stronger and stronger magnifying glasses further and further out, but non-distorting

ones. Since the radial direction is now also enhanced, the pieces must be deployed further and further out from their original meridional placement. Thus, this map grows larger than the equidistant one. In fact, the South Pole now ends up at infinity! However, all is good near the North Pole, with errors growing very, very slowly, again not reaching 2% until moving through 16 degrees of latitude. This is somewhat worse than the previous projection, but it has an extraordinary advantage. Namely, it is isotropic, and so there is just one scale of length measurement for any direction out of any point, although the scale varies with latitude. Also, *all angles of intersections are exactly preserved*. For this reason, such a map is called "conformal." However, bear in mind that large shapes will be distorted, since the scale of local magnification is varying over the map. There is no way to preclude the distortion of large shapes in any map. At least, conformal maps preclude all *local* distortion. Peters has something to say about this. To quote from the handbook (page 7): [conformal maps are often] "interpreted as having fidelity of angle. Dr. Peters has, however, demonstrated that it fails this test. No two-dimensional maps can claim this quality. Therefore fidelity of angle is not a meaningful category." How is this verdict to be reconciled with the obvious fact that one can make maps that preserve angles? Peters is patently wrong.

Although there are many more kinds of projections that can be crafted, we will end this line of discussion with an analysis of a last important class of maps: those that preserve area — "equal area projections." The Peters Map is of this class. This time, all we do is enlarge each of our pieces by some amount circumferentially to close the gaps, while also radially *reducing* the scale by the same amount, thereby preserving the total area of each piece. Since the radial directions are reduced, the pieces are shifted closer in towards the pole than in their original meridional deployment, and the map is smaller than the equidistant azimuthal one. Indeed, it fills up a finite radius circle whose area is just that of the Earth's surface. Now, even large-scale regions — however distant from one another they may be — can validly be compared with respect to their areas. Evidently, global shapes are going to be again highly distorted. Still, near the pole everything is good and very slowly grows worse — under 2% error for excursions from the pole up to 16 degrees of latitude — just as for the conformal version. (Cartographers specify half this error by considering the error either in circumferen-

tial lengths or radial lengths. For angles, however, it is the sum of the two errors that matters.)

While the handbook can think of no property more overwhelmingly important than area preserving, it is very hard for human beings to judge the relative areas of different shapes. Should you be asked to compare a one inch square with a rectangle of .1" by 10", you couldn't possibly assert equality of area without an accurate planimeter. Most germane to the Peters Map, though, is that maps that preserve areas have an extra flexibility: uniform stretching in any direction still leaves the map depicting equal areas by equal areas. This should be very clear. Any area can be divided into many small



illustration: Benn Nadelman

rectangles, oriented at will. Should we double the height of each of these rectangles, each of their areas is doubled, as is then their sum, so that the area of the figure is simply doubled by stretching by a factor of two in any chosen direction. It has been known for several centuries that the simplest equal area map is made by plotting longitude horizontally and $\sin(\text{latitude})$ vertically. All Peters did was to multiply by two, so that the "sophisticated" mathematics of the Map is $\text{vertical} = (2)\sin(\text{latitude})$. That's all there is to the Peters Projection. To see this factor of 2 on the Peters Map just look at the boxes of 10 degrees latitude by 10 degrees longitude at the Equator. They should be squares. Instead, they are rectangles, almost exactly twice as high as they are wide. The caption on the Map discussing the Peters decimal grid is quite wrong. Had the Map really been made that way, it would not exactly preserve areas, nor would it even be smooth.

Now, according to the handbook: "Whereas Mercator is accurate only on the Equator and begins immediately to distort both north and south of that line, approaching total distortion at the poles, Peters achieves accuracy at 45 degrees lati-

tude north and south. Maximum distortion is therefore, at one stroke, reduced by half. At the same time, Peters achieves proportionality, by which we mean spreading the necessary error out evenly across the map." But what does it mean that "Peters achieves accuracy at 45 degrees?" It means the Map is dreadful. Due to the magic factor of 2 the Map is highly anisotropically inaccurate other than at 45 degrees (100% inaccurate at the Equator!) Now where is 45 degrees? That's right! Austria, France, Hungary, the USA and — yes — New Zealand! Africa and South America? Awfully depicted at full 100% distortion. Does France look right on the Map? Yes. Why? Because it is. Does Africa? No. Why? Because, not only isn't it, but it's hard to make such a bad map of Africa. Remember: when is a map good? It's good when it looks like what you'd see in a bird's eye view just above that region on the globe.

Let us now see quantitatively how bad the Map actually is. First of all, remember the idea of a tangent plane: errors don't grow "immediately"; rather they are arbitrarily smaller than the displacements, for small displacements from the point of tangency. In a rectangular map, rather than a point of tangency, there is a *line* of tangency. For example, simply lay out the pieces of our almost perfect atlas with one piece abutting upon the next along the Equator. Does the Mercator map "immediately" distort above and below it? Not at all! In fact, the error is within 1% for a 16 degree swath about the Equator. Had Peters not used the Magic 2, his map, too, would have kept conformal errors to within 1% for an 11-degree swath, since the classic sine map is somewhat worse than the Mercator in the growth of errors away from the Equator, but still very well behaved, because it is tangent all along the Equator. But this is precisely where Peters mercilessly deformed his map. Now, in this same large swath about the Equator, everything is anisotropically distorted, with vertical lengths depicted twice as long as horizontal ones. Ratios of lengths now assume values of up to 2 instead of 1, or a relative error of 100%. Indeed, the Peters Map is accurate only at 45 degrees latitude, Dr. Peters' northern colonial home — the very political idea the handbook tells us is so abhorrent!

So, why choose to ruin the classical map which met all of the qualities of a good map? What about "distortion... at one stroke, reduced by half?" More nonsense. A bulk of the Peters Map has gone from 1% or so, to 100% distortion. As for the polar distortion of Mercator, what the handbook calls "total distortion," really means *infinite* distortion. All rectangular maps must have infinite

distortion at the poles. This is so, because circumferential distances are always expanded out to the full width of the map independent of latitude. But at the poles this full width describes merely a single point, so that horizontal lengths are infinitely longer than vertical ones. Since this occurs at infinite distance on Mercator's map, you see only the badly worsening distortion. But on an equal area map you actually see this infinite distortion before your eyes. So what is, and where does this "one stroke, reduced by half" improvement occur? Nowhere. It's just more dishonest rhetoric. Where is this "spreading of error," by which the handbook means "proportionately?" Who knows? Not on the Map. Just in the handbook. Quite a modern miracle, but surely not one of accuracy of depiction of "reality." (In the handbook, "reality" means "not Mercator.")

Thus, can there be any valid social or political merit to a map where angles between rivers or places near the Equator are wrong by as much as 39 degrees? Where, because vertical distances are depicted twice as long as horizontal ones, it is impossible to see which of two neighboring towns is closer to any other? And where, precisely the "southern" countries, which are presumably to derive some geopolitical benefit from the depiction of their relative areas, must pay for this at the price of near 100% distortion? Mr. Peters succeeded in obtaining a United Nations endorsement for something dreadful, in so old-fashioned a way, that anyone with common sense knows it is strangely bad.

Mitchell J. Feigenbaum is Toyota Professor at The Rockefeller University. He is a member of The National Academy of Sciences, and recipient of the Wolf Prize in Physics of Israel, as well as other awards. He is also a practicing map maker as chief technical consultant to Hammond Incorporated. He lives in New York City with his wife, previously known in Ithaca as Gunilla Mallory Jones.

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Unending Dialogue

continued from p. 4

response is not immediate, or at all what she expects, but Hadas tells us that suddenly one workshop member, Wayne, "started writing in an almost virgin notebook":

In the midst of soaping my body
to start the day automatically
I turn and catch a view of me
in the mirror -
dying...
a look of death
that lies around the eyes
in pale taut skin
against the bones.
I want to reach out and soothe
the anger and sadness of the man
there in the mirror.

From this poem, written by a man who died less than three months later, Hadas learns an important lesson about the contradiction she had initially perceived between "consoling and telling the truth." Commenting on his poem, she writes that "Wayne saw that soothing... can be accomplished, not by denial, but by naming," and to this she adds her own realization that "to soothe and to point out are both gestures, and the real choice is whether or not to make any gesture at all." Hadas often discloses the communal source of her insights, gathering them up with the mingled poetic fruit of the workshop experience. Hers becomes an active approach to the work of poetry in a time of crisis: she learns from the men what poetry can do by the sheer force of its gesture. "Even if the truth does no good," she writes in later commentary, "trying to tell it is a way of combatting the sinister mandate of dumbness that the paper remain white."

The poems in section two reveal the differences that characterize this effort to tell, with poems by Charles Barber, Glenn Besco, Dan Conner, Tony J. Giordano, Kevin Imbusch, Glenn Philip Kramer, Raul Martinez-Avila, and James Turcott. These men's lives were their own before the disease, and they are determined not to have their individuality subsumed by its overbearing presence. From the bitter humor of Barber's "Thirteen Things about a Catheter," to the disembodied vision of Giordano's "The Storm," to the variation on classic elegy of Turcott's "Keith Haring, Deceased," the poems display their variousness, sometimes quietly, sometimes passionately. In "Letter Poem," an epistolary tribute to the Future, the Present Moment, and Memory, Barber addresses the Future as a washed-up drag queen:

What a tease you are, big old gassy thing,
Up there on the stage week in and week out;
In something pink and overdone you sing
While down below the hoary customers shout.

Memory is a homeless person, seen "slumped over, pushing that cart, lost in a maze/ Too many coats, proudly worn, set in your ways." This highly figural language strongly contrasts with the matter-of-factness of poems like Besco's "Tuesday in the Holy Week, 1990, Dark Grey Day in Peekskill, NY," in which the poet finds himself "Sitting on the grounds of St. Mary's Convent School / (Now converted condominiums with a view) / Gothic buildings guarding the Hudson's Tappan Zee."

The energy of these poems seems to defy the potentially paralyzing reality of AIDS, which continues to invade individuals and whole communities. But *Unending Dialogue* is not without its moments of felt defeat. A poem by Hadas, entitled "Hospitals," exudes a kind of stale exhaustion:

Nothing confuses me.
I tick the hospitals
off on my fingers, see?
Cabrin: eyes of the blackclad saint
strategically located
to focus on the pillows sweating freight.
St. Vincent's: the same room
where I saw T. in June
K. died in September.
Co-op Care, where January sunset
gilded the winter river,

lives moving out to sea
so many and so many
names months prognoses, light
insistent at this window or that window.
September: the school picnic
coincides with K's memorial.
No conflict here: of course
life must prevail. But wait:
picnic or memorial: which is life?

The proliferating times, names, and places dance into timelessness, away from the personal. The "I" that "saw T. in June" melts into the "K." who "died in September." How different, the verse asks, is "I" from "T." and "K."? Empty pointers, pronominally distant from their real referents, the catalogue of initials serves more to mark place than to lend human particularity to the "pillow's sweating freight."

The passage introduces itself as the utterance of a "me" to whom everything is clear, whom nothing "confuses." But the verse movement works to evoke the opposite effect. "So many and so many" floats disattached from the "lives" which precede it and the "names months prognoses" (unpunctuated as if to form the one horrific word that is the essence of AIDS itself) which follow it. In the last inconclusive line, which asks the unanswerable question, "which is life?", the poem seems to indicate that questioning and listening and mourning promise more of tedium than of consolation.

Whether the voice conveys exhaustion, alienation, dejection, or joy, *Unending Dialogue* allows it to speak with honesty and urgency. The project may be problematic, but it is certainly productive. Making metaphor out of the particular realities of AIDS, the poets contained in this volume work to communalize the lonely ordeal of surviving. Of the "polarizing language... that has characterized so much of the discourse about AIDS," Hadas writes, "the talk of 'us' versus 'them,' disrupts our sense of the tragic continuity of our human situation." This book, in its attempt to communicate that continuity through a multiplicity of voices, is a promising beginning to an important conversation.

At a recent booksigning in New York City, Libbie Rifkin had an opportunity to speak with Rachel Hadas about the "Unending Dialogues" project.

L.R. In the book, you begin with the contradiction between "compassion and truth telling," and end with an affirmation of poetry as "gesture," as a way of combatting silence in the attempt to tell the truth. Are you saying that poetry can do something without really talking specifically about anything?

R.H. To have written or said something is not nothing, it's extremely important, even if a cry of pain is not necessarily art. In the workshop, I was constantly playing devil's advocate with myself. I would accuse myself of raking up painful matters by encouraging people to write. There was a voice that said, "let's get our minds off of this," a voice which was usually overruled: I finally decided it was better to rake things up than not.

L.R. Susan Sontag has opposed the use of metaphor in connection with illness, warning against the willful manipulation of the truth in the hands of "illiberal mythologists." What is the use of metaphor in writing about a disease - a medical, scientific subject?

R.H. Metaphor is a way of connecting your experience to the world you know, instead of being overwhelmed by the technology of medicine and what is happening to your body. If we tried to banish metaphor from discourse on AIDS, it would be unevocative; we wouldn't be able to convey the intensity of experience. In the workshop, our interest in the use of language turned the group into more than just a support group.

L.R. Did you feel that by conducting the workshop you were doing something political?

R.H. While I was aware that it was an issue where feelings ran high, I didn't use the word "political" to myself. I felt that since I am a woman, not gay, and I don't have AIDS, my conducting the workshop was a political issue and would be received that way. Even though it was the territory of the Gay Men's Health Crisis, I didn't want to pretend I was something I wasn't. From the beginning, I wanted to work in my own way and not from someone else's agenda.

Libbie Rifkin is a first year graduate student in the Ph.D. program in English at Cornell University.

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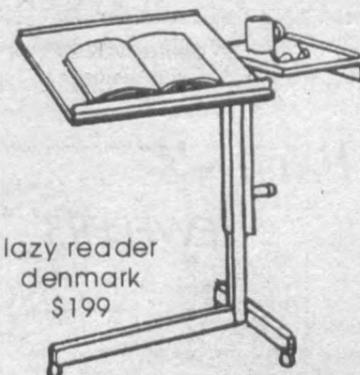
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Our National Imaginings

continued from p. 1

historical literature cited from all parts of the world makes this book particularly fascinating, though this very breadth has made Anderson a target for criticisms about exclusions of particular cases, such as Irish nationalism, Basque separatism, and the Palestinian struggle, which are seen as not fitting his argument. Anderson's broad coverage has also led those who advocate a general theory of nationalism to criticize his work because it does not lead to one. But making general theories on social phenomena is probably the last thing Anderson would be interested in, for the strength and significance of his work lies in its consistent respect for, and its groundedness in, the *specific* cultural and historical roots of social phenomena.

Anderson has also been criticized for focusing on the more emotive and idealistic aspects of nationalism, and disassociating racism from nationalism. Nationalism, Anderson says, is inspired by love, and racism is a function of class rather than of nationalism. While discussion on nationalism in terms of love may not sound very scholarly or scientific, it is valid in the eyes of the nationalist. In light of this, *Imagined Communities* reflects not only Anderson the scholar, but also Anderson the nationalist.

K.C. *Imagined Communities* is subtitled "Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism." Could you explain the connection between the "imagined community" and nationalism?

B.A. Thinking about nationalism, I was struck by the paradox that people can feel so emotionally identified with millions of people whom they've never met, whose names they don't know; not merely the living, but also the dead, and unborn children. This remarkable attachment is what encouraged me to think that one peculiarity of nationalism might be best described by the term "imagined community." I picked the word "imagined" carefully because I didn't want people to think that it was *imaginary*, that there was nothing there. "Imagined" lies nicely on the border between something real and something not real, in the way that a good novel is imagined, but is also very real for us who read it.

K.C. How is *Imagined Communi-*

ties distinct from other works on nationalism?

B.A. There are two traditions in the writing on nationalism. The older one considers it in terms of intellectual history in the writings of great 19th-century patriots and some 20th-century philosophers. The other tradition regards nationalism sociologically: what kinds of groups bring nationalism into being, what economic circumstances make it plausible, and so forth. What I'm trying to do is go deeper and ask, What fundamental transformations in the modern world, particularly in terms of conceptions of space, time and language, would account for modern nationalism? Another thing I was interested in, which most of the writers on nationalism have not addressed, is why people feel so passionately about it. Why are people willing to die for this "imagined community," as millions have in the last 150 years?

K.C. You say the stage was set for the birth of nationalism by a transformation in the world view of the people of Western Europe in the 18th century.

B.A. Two kinds of transformation are important. One is in people's conceptions of space and time. The big change is that the mass production of clocks begins to accustom people to an idea of time that is not seasonal, and so not divine. Time is mechanically measured, not only by clocks but by calendars. This gives rise to the possibility of thinking about the community in a way that is framed within what the philosopher Walter Benjamin calls "homogeneous empty time," that is, not divine time.

As for ideas of space, people became more and more accustomed to thinking through the medium of print, as the great mapmakers of early modern times imagined it: space laid out on a flat surface, seen from the sky, from God's point of view. All our atlases and maps today demarcate nation-states by lines and colors which are, of course, imaginary. This creates a perspective on space which is quite new.

The other transformation is the extraordinary impact of printing in vernacular languages. It's really in the 18th century that vernacular languages take over from Latin in Western Europe as the medium through which mass communication develops. Of course, languages in print are accessible only to people

who have command of the vernaculars. So, rather than having a potentially global audience for a dead language like Latin, which nobody really knows how to speak, you have much more restricted audiences emerging – but still mass publics – for vernacular print French, Czech, Spanish, and so forth.

K.C. Can you elaborate on the role of "print-capitalism" in the development of nationalism?

B.A. A lot of people argue that print was crucial to creating modern mass publics, the spread of literacy being one essential element. No doubt this is quite true, but we also know that printing was invented not in Europe, but in China, where it did not produce a nationalism or anything that looks like the "imagined community." So the effects of print had to be linked to the rise of capitalism in Europe. And it's very striking that the first mass-produced commodity turned out to be books. Millions of books were produced in the first 50 years of printing in the Western world, creating a market to which there was no comparison in China. These markets developed through the 17th and 18th centuries, propelled by businessmen who built the printing establishments, trade networks, and retail outlets. The energy of capitalism, linked to this extraordinary new communications technology, set the stage for anonymous reading publics, which made possible the widespread dissemination of nationalist ideas.

K.C. You write in *Imagined Communities*: "Successful revolutionaries inherit the wiring of the old state: sometimes functionaries and informers, but always files, dossiers, archives, laws, financial records, censuses, maps, treaties, correspondence, memoranda..." In some authoritarian nation-states such "wiring" also includes structures of control and repression. If these are inevitably inherited by one regime from another, how does this affect the chances for successful democratization?

B.A. I didn't mean that as a broad generalization, but to try to explain why modern world revolutionary movements, particularly Marxist ones, whose objectives were to produce democratic, socialist societies, would often produce regimes based on those they overthrew. This was surprising to people, at least in the early part of this century. I simply wanted to remind people of

what was being inherited.

The issue of democratization is not so much that of "wiring," but a question of people's realization of how rapidly the technique of building the repressive, authoritarian state has progressed, and therefore the enormous need to be conscious of that, and work toward its dismantling. This is a struggle that all peoples have to engage themselves in. My own instincts are basically anarchist – I deeply distrust the state, and think it would be helpful if more people around the world had the same distrust.

I think the nation and the state are quite distinct things. Most nations started out as anti-state movements. They were against imperial systems. In the Western hemisphere, for example, most states began as nationalist movements against the British, French, and Spanish empires. Once successful, the nationalist movement, as it were, inherits the "wiring" of the absolutist state. So, we should keep in mind that nation-state and nation are not the same things.

K.C. Aside from explaining the origin and spread of nationalism, your book aims to explain why people are ready to die for what is, after all, the invention of their imaginations – the nation. Can you share your explanation?

B.A. I'm not sure it's really very adequate. But I was struck by the fact that the most powerful symbols of nationality are typically associated with death. We know, for example, the tomb of the unknown soldier, the cenotaph. These symbols are completely modern. Because many of the most powerful rituals of nationalism are commemorations of the dead, we have to think about how these deaths are imagined. The power of this idea of death probably has something to do with the secularization of the modern world: the less people believe they are in passage from some kind of divine pre-life existence to a worldly existence, and then to paradise or hell, the less death itself has a divine meaning. Thus people feel the profound need to give it another kind of meaning. What the national imagination does is to give these commemorated deaths a kind of eternal life.

K.C. After a nationalist movement achieves its initial goals, how is devotion to the nation sustained in later generations?

B.A. You have to distinguish between two kinds of nationalism. With a nationalist movement that

has thrown out foreign rule and established its own autonomy, the new state, which is now married to the nationalist movement, sustains devotion to the nation by such obvious mechanisms as school systems, civic education, conscription, and state-organized mass media. All such states use funds, technology, organizations and institutions to socialize young people and inculcate the message of the early nationalist movement. With nationalist movements that remain oppressed under the control of some other state, devotion to the nation is more likely to be perpetuated by oral tradition and through secret or subversive communications of various types. This type of nationalism is perhaps more alive, because its ties to the people are more organic.

K.C. During the Gulf War, nationalism/patriotism was used to generate public support by creating hatred against "the enemy" and arrogance at home. What are your thoughts on this dark side of nationalism?

B.A. The Gulf War is a curious event. What's striking is how quickly support for the war, or interest in the war, seems to have evaporated. We all know that President Bush, who had extraordinarily high popular approval at the war's conclusion, is now facing a severe problem in getting himself re-elected. We don't hear much now about the military heroes, either. This suggests that a lot of the support for the war was consciously manipulated by the state. Also, in some ways, enthusiasm for the war compensated for the abiding pain and humiliation experienced by Americans in the Vietnam War – the first war in which the U.S. was defeated, and also profoundly wounded politically, inside itself.

I don't think ordinary Americans really believed it was necessary to go off and protect Kuwaitis and Saudi Arabians from Iraq. This was not in itself a nationalist cause, nor really defended in those terms; it was saving the world, saving the Western world, saving democracy, and so forth. Such rhetorics have very little to do with nationalism itself. And I think there was also some element residual to World War II, American imperialism, and multinationalism.

That isn't to deny that nationalism can have a dark side. But if one looks, for example, at the popular expressions of nationalism – poetry, songs, historical memories – how unimportant, really, enemies are. Nationalism is built by the strength of a kind of love expressed in songs,



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poems, and in memories of landscapes to which we're attached and heroes for whom we all have admiration. Usually, when the dark side comes up, it's linked to something else: anti-Semitism, racism, imperialism. In itself, I don't believe that nationalism is naturally something dark.

K.C. In the preface to the revised edition, you write: "History seems to be bearing out the 'logic' of *Imagined Communities*." How would you explain the breakup of the Soviet Union in terms of this logic?

B.A. In the 1983 edition I had said that the Soviet Union is more likely to be regarded in the long run as the heir of the huge polyethnic empire which the Czars built over centuries, from Siberia to Eastern Europe. The inheritance of this vast territory was only possible as long as people believed that the Soviet Union was, in some ways, a temporary affair. The revolutionary leaders of the Soviet Union did not regard it as final in its form at all, but as the basis from which world revolution would eventually emerge. However, the Soviet leaders demarcated the components of the Soviet Union in shapes that looked like incipient nation-states: Belorussia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and so forth, even if they weren't really given much power or autonomy. But again, the folk memories, the poetry, the costumes, the music, all of these continued to exist. When belief in the future of the Soviet Union crumbled, these shapes and forms were ready to become active. What happened in Eastern Europe was a kind of delayed version of events in Western Europe in the 18th century, and in Asia and Africa in the early twentieth. The logic of "imagined communities" is, in a sense, that the world eventually will end up consisting of nothing but states that understand themselves as national.

K.C. In the revised edition you changed the title of the chapter discussing "creole nationalism" from "Old Empires, New Nations" to "Creole Pioneers." Can you tell us what made you decide to do this?

B.A. Reviews of the original edition persuaded me that many people didn't take this chapter seriously and continued with the old myth that nationalism started in Europe. I was a bit irritated by this, so I chose the title "Creole Pioneers" to re-emphasize the importance of the fact that the nationalist movement started outside Europe - first in North America, then in the Caribbean and South America. I use the word "creole" simply to designate European peoples born and living outside of Europe. One of the most astonishing phenomena of the modern world is precisely this transplanting of millions of Europeans, first to the Americas, later of course, to South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and so on.

K.C. In the introduction to *Language and Power* you said of *Imagined Communities*: "It seems an odd book to be written by someone born in China, raised in three countries, speaking with an obsolete English accent, carrying an Irish passport, living in America, and devoted to Southeast Asia. Yet perhaps it could only be written from various exiles, and with divided loyalties." What are you saying here about the nature of your perspective and the requirements for understanding nationalism?

B.A. There are benefits to being marginal. If you are submerged in nationalist culture and consciousness, it seems as natural as the air you breathe. People who breathe air naturally think less about it than somebody in an oxygen tent. If I have a country, it is three or four countries, in my mind and in my heart. Part of me feels Irish, part of me feels English, part of me feels American, and part of me feels Indonesian. Maybe it is necessary to be distanced, to be marginalized, in order to appreciate fully the strange power of nationalism. I remember as a young man being envious of people who were uncomplicated nationalists. I recognized that this would be extremely difficult for me to achieve.

K.C. Because of communications technology, cheap travel, the increasingly interdependent global economy and the worldwide environmental movement, there is a new consciousness in the making - let's call it "global" consciousness. What do you think of this?

B.A. The global environmental movement, for example, is spreading rapidly, and that's extremely important. But there is a kind of paradoxical side to this which hasn't been sufficiently studied. The extraordinary movements of populations that create global consciousness, in fact, are also creating huge numbers of people who think of themselves as nationalists but don't live "at home." There are millions of Greeks, Turks, and Filipinos all over Europe; America is full of migrant populations - Cubans, Vietnamese, Russians; Japan has an astonishing number of illegal immigrants from all over the world. These people, precisely because they can telephone home, or travel home, live in a peculiar marginalized position. In a sense, they have double identities: they are both Cubans and Americans, Vietnamese and Americans, and so forth.

This opens the possibility of a dangerous sort of displaced localism. The people most active behind the Irish Republican Army or behind the Tamil movement in Ceylon, for example, are like Irishmen in New England who don't speak any Irish, know very little about Ireland, go there maybe on vacations, but have no intention of living there. Global communication is a technology which doesn't necessarily lead to a positive future. It encourages a certain kind of irresponsible fantasizing. If you're an Indonesian living in Indonesia, you have to take responsibility for what goes on there; if you are an Indonesian living in Colorado, you can fantasize Indonesia without having the risks and responsibilities of being in the country itself. This can encourage narrow-minded, irresponsible, and even extremist nationalism of an entirely new sort.

K.C. Before moving on to your other book, *Language and Power*, I'd like to ask you about the peculiar photograph on the cover of *Imagined Communities*. Why did you select that particular photograph?

B.A. It's actually a trick photograph, such as was popular in the '20s and '30s. It's really the same man dressed up in three different costumes but appearing as if it's three different friends, or three members of a family. What I like about the photograph is that it's somebody imagining himself compositely - that is, me im-

aging myself as three other people. It's a kind of quiet way to remind one that nations are also, from a certain point of view, each person's projection of oneself on to other people. I also like the background with its sort of imperial scaffolding, which doesn't look like a natural background, and yet it suits the three dignified gentlemen. This, again, fits with the idea that, when one thinks about one's past, one tends to imagine it in a kind of stagey way. Also, I came to the study of politics and nationalism from my life and study of Indonesia. I wanted to acknowledge that in this book - which is not really about Indonesia but about the whole world - by having an Indonesian on the front.

K.C. It is especially interesting to go through *Language and Power* after having read *Imagined Communities*. *Language and Power* is a collection of eight of your articles written between 1961 and 1989, with a wonderfully reflective, autobiographical introduction. Reading *Language and Power*, one can see some of the building blocks on which you constructed your "imagined communities" argument. What is interesting is that these building blocks are Java- or Indonesia-specific cases. What brought you from writing about Java/Indonesia and Southeast Asia to writing about large-scale social transformation in Europe and the rest of the world?

B.A. I was lucky to be relatively young when I was kicked out of Indonesia in 1972. The political circumstances under which I was expelled made it clear that it would be a long time, if ever, before I would be allowed to go back, so I had to decide how to go on. First, I decided that, as I couldn't talk to Indonesians or walk around inside of Indonesian society, I had to work on historical documents and literary texts. My removal from the immediacy of Indonesia encouraged me to think in a larger historical framework - on origins, how Indonesia had got to the place it was at. The other track was to go and study somewhere else. Friends encouraged me to study Thailand, which, at the time, was just being freed from a brutal and corrupt dictatorship. The minute you start to study two countries seriously, you think comparatively. Because these countries were utterly different, I was forced to stand much further back to encompass them both. Also, there was a connection with my brother, Perry Anderson, and his circle at the *New Left Review* in London, who said, "Don't just do two countries, think more broadly about the making of the modern world." Perhaps I was rather too bold to imagine that I could do that, but I was probably at the right age. I wrote *Imagined Communities* in the early '80s when I was in my late forties. I probably wouldn't have dared to do it before, and wouldn't have the capacity and energy to do it later.

K.C. Your 1972 piece, "The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture," is a singular classic in the study of Indonesian politics. It shows amazing depth of understanding of the Javanese perspective. Now, 20 years later, what are your views on this?

B.A. Part of it I still like, namely that the original impulse was a reaction against what I'd heard from Americans who worked in Indonesia, who were constantly going on about how irrational the Indonesians and Java-

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nese were. I was convinced this was wrong, and I simply had to find out what kind of logic and assumptions were really operating. Obviously, the Javanese didn't think of themselves as mad, crazy, or confused. Yet I think now, looking back on it, that the piece is in some ways too logical. Also, it tended toward a view of power in Javanese culture which was rather top-down, explaining the thinking of elites, and how they deal with people below them. It's not clear to me now that ordinary villagers in Java necessarily think the same way. Perhaps I too quickly assumed that there is a single way of understanding the idea of power in Javanese culture. Unfortunately, as I published that text in the year I was expelled, I haven't had the opportunity to go back and talk to the villagers to see how far these ideas make sense to them.

K.C. A historical, culture-specific approach seems to be your trait and strength as a scholar. What is your view on generalizing about social phenomena?

B.A. Generalizations don't have to be divorced from history. The obvious example would be someone like Karl Marx. The preoccupation with ahistorical, supracultural generalizing has dominated social science in the U.S. It has to do with the professionalization of these disciplines - political science, sociology, psychology, economics. But it also follows from a perception of the U.S. as somehow unlike any other place; at the same time, there is a paradoxical assumption that, deep down, every other place is really like the U.S. This is a fantasy that's quite deeply rooted.

These tendencies became more entrenched after World War II, when policy-making circles in the U.S. turned to social scientists for general schema and studies that would be the intellectual background or guideline for policy-making in places about which the government knew very little. This led to a lot of theories about development, modernization, and democratization that were not well-grounded in historical reality, but were easy to digest by people in policy-making institutions. And because there were grants and prestige for academics who supplied the market, this encouraged a great deal of what are now very obsolete analyses.

K.C. Are there any other aspects of nationalism which you will be exploring in the future?

B.A. I'm currently studying Philippine nationalism, which opens the door to a problem I think will be extremely important. This is the development of a nationalism which is no longer unitary, but divided or plural. In the Philippines, elites who have tried to develop nationalism have been confounded by the fact that they are themselves of mixed ancestry (Chinese, Spanish, American, Malay). There are very few pure Filipinos. They've changed their national language from Spanish, to English, to Tagalog - three different languages in the course of the last 80 years. Also, large numbers of Filipinos live outside the country these days, yet they haven't ceased to feel themselves Filipinos. This is a paradoxical and often painful situation for them. But I think it points to what I mentioned earlier: the increasing displacement

of nationalism from a real and bounded territorial space. The assumption of *Imagined Communities* was that nationalism takes root among people who inhabit certain areas where they have always lived, where their ancestors lived. Increasingly, however, modern communities and the demands of the capitalist labor market are causing extraordinary migrations of population, which will create new forms of nationalism. I will be working on this, in one way or another, for the next few years.

K.C. You have testified before Congress and given talks on human rights and self-determination in East Timor. What do you think are the obstacles to East Timorese independence and what are the chances for its realization in the near future?

B.A. The obvious immediate obstacles to East Timorese independence are the Indonesian military and the government of President Suharto, whose prestige is linked to the successful incorporation of East Timor into Indonesia. Also, a number of foreign governments, most importantly the U.S., Australia, and Japan, have decided over the last 15-16 years to give their support to Indonesia. But I don't think this support is eternal, because the situation has changed in the past 2-3 years with the end of the Cold War. Suharto himself is over 70, and without him it is likely that the army will become more divided about East Timor. So, in that sense, I am rather optimistic. There is a more important factor, even, which is that the force of nationalism can't be blocked. It has been blocked in many places for a while, but once it's there, once it's in

place, it is impossible to destroy, and will eventually find its own form.

The case of East Timor is very interesting. In the late '60s and early '70s, the population was divided into small groups speaking mutually unintelligible languages, so that Timorese nationalism was very shallowly rooted in a small number of elites and educated people (who proclaimed independence in 1976). But the irony of the Indonesian occupation is the same as that of the occupation of Holland by Spain, and of Ireland by England, which is that imperial rule always has unexpected consequences. It usually finds it necessary to educate the local population in the imperial language, as Indonesians have done in East Timor, as the Dutch did in Indonesia earlier. This means that they themselves create, in a sense, the literate publics that spread the nationalist sentiment. What's striking in East Timor is that a substantial generation of youngsters born just before or shortly after the Indonesian occupation - with no experience of life under the Portuguese, no experience of independence, educated in Indonesian schools - is now adamantly opposed to continued Indonesian domination. So the Indonesian occupation has produced precisely the nationalist force that will end the occupation, just as the Dutch occupation of Indonesia eventually produced forces of Indonesian nationalism that liquidated the Dutch empire.

K.C. Being an Indonesian, I am very moved by your deep affection for Indonesia. If you were able to enter the country again in the near future, what would interest you as a

scholar and as an "exile"? **B.A.** Obviously, I have an enormous desire to see firsthand what has happened. The other thing on my mind is that a whole generation has passed since I was last there - a generation which an enormously powerful authoritarian government has ruled with virtually no opposition. This government has induced enormous social change and economic development, and has made strenuous efforts to indoctrinate, first of all, the civil servants, but also the rest of the country. I'm extremely curious to know how much of this is going to stick. That is, when Indonesians are no longer silenced, no longer coerced in the way they've been, what are they going to be thinking? The Indonesia that I remember in the 1960s was enormously vibrant, energetic, quarrelsome, turbulent - a fascinating place. And it's hard for me to believe that it has disappeared forever. I guess I want to believe that it will be just as turbulent and interesting and alive as I remember it.

Kamala Chandrakirana is a graduate of Cornell University, currently living in Ithaca.

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