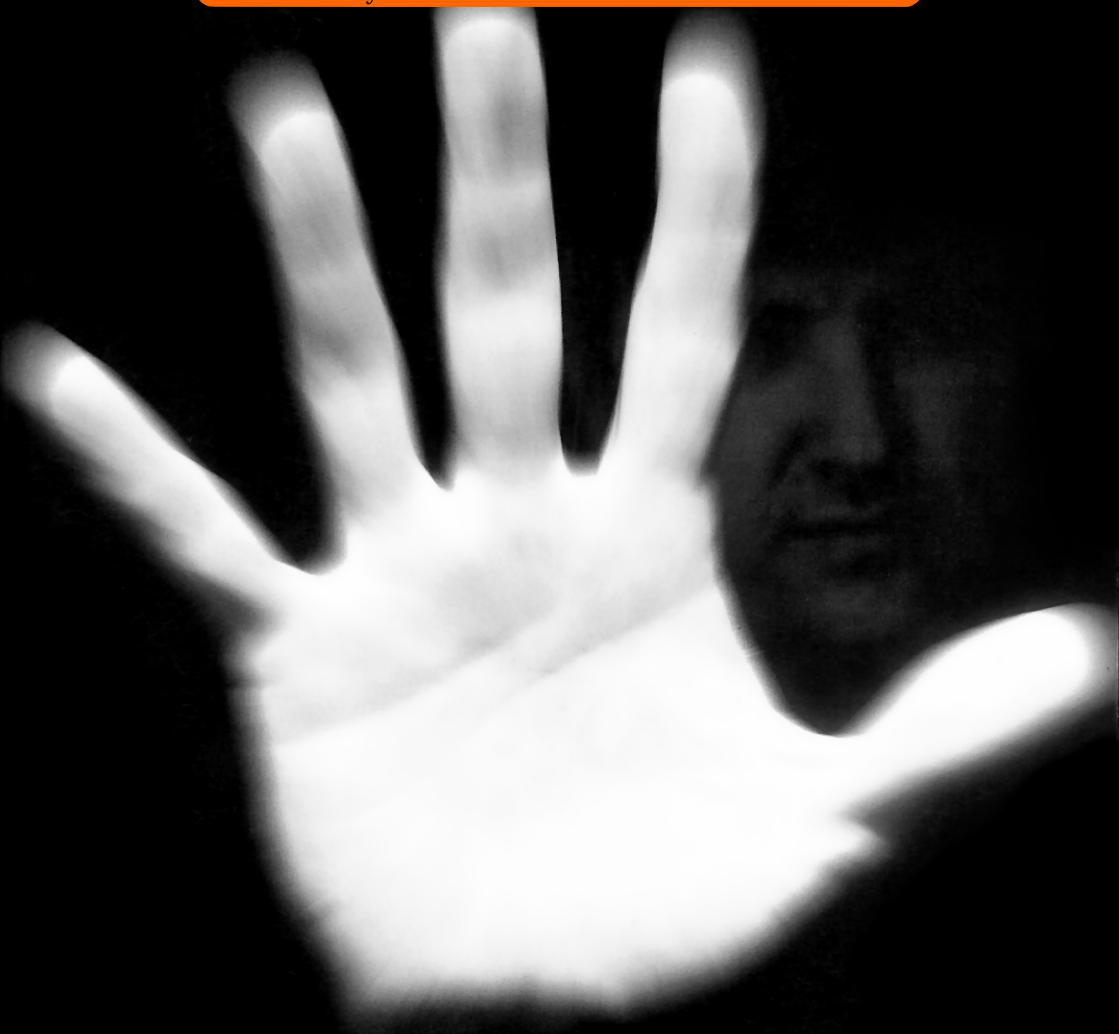


Edited by DEVORAH KALEKIN-FISHMAN



D e s i g n s f o r

ALIENATION

EXPLORING
DIVERSE REALITIES

SoPhi

Devorah Kalekin-Fishman (ed.)

DESIGNS
FOR
ALIENATION

Exploring Diverse Realities

SoPhi

University of Jyväskylä
1998

SoPhi

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INTRODUCTION

Centering on empirical studies of alienation in varieties of institutional milieus, this volume presents thoroughly rewritten versions of papers selected from four seminars of the Research Committee for the Study of Alienation of the International Sociological Association, including an internet mini-conference.¹ Still, this is not simply a collection of ‘proceedings’. From among the varied contributions to the seminars, the selected papers were condensed or expanded and revised as appropriate. They all speak to the theme of how, under different circumstances, social structure and the consciousness of groups and individuals legitimate the generation of ‘otherhood.’ Thus, the collection complements traditional publications on alienation by confronting theoretical debates with an examination of devices for disempowerment, manipulation, and marginalization – continuities of deprivation and disillusionment.

Contributions present views of how alienating mechanisms operate in specific environments. Among the writers are researchers from Brazil and Canada, from Finland and Sweden, from the Netherlands, Siberia, and Israel, as well as from the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Papers relating to ways in which alienation is perpetuated in a computerized society contribute relatively unconventional points of view on this endemic device. In sum, the authors represented in this volume afford a multi-faceted view of alienation theory as a tool for analyzing social realities – and for understanding burgeoning virtualities. As we might expect, alienation takes on different shades of significance when examined in the light of what is taken for granted in different cultures.

* * *

The topic of alienation has an intricate record in the religious literature and in traditions of philosophy. Sociological concern with alienation is rooted in the early writings of Marx who, in train of his studies of German idealist philosophy, adapted Hegel's ideas of non-alienation to his own materialistic teleology. As is well-known, Marx viewed alienation as the inevitable affliction of capitalism under which dehumanization of the worker and the general commodification of human beings are inescapable. Capitalist interests are realized in the efficient fragmentation of selves into fractional roles. For efficacy, design and planning – mental production – is separated from manual labor. Persons are processed so as to perfect their capacity for creating *surplus* (rather than *use*) value through alienating work. The worker is reduced to spending most of his or her life-time as a constituent of production, while other roles – sex, parenting, sociability, creativity, are distributed over the short intervals between workdays. Capitalists, too, although they are in control of the means of production, are transformed into resources cut off from authentic interaction and from the creativity of actually shaping of materials.

In modern sociology, therefore, alienation is a term which refers to the distancing of people from experiencing a crystallized totality both in the social world and in the self. We have no reason to surmise that this is a local phenomenon. In the contemporary context of capitalism run rampant, the description holds world-wide. No wonder alienation is often interpreted as a condition akin to human destiny.

But together with the growing power of capitalism throughout our planet (extending into outer space), the effects of material arrangements on people's actions and on their perceptions are intertwined with cultural factors which cannot be summarized concisely. There are many different ways of approaching an analysis of alienation. Thanks to its complexity, the construct of alienation supports an understanding of the objective and the subjective deprivation inevitable in capitalist society while providing insight into the nuts and bolts of identities in day to day living. The collection of articles in this book presents an array of symptoms which are identifiable as evidence of alienation and some of the many faces of their effects.

The four sections of *Designs for Alienation: Exploring Diverse Realities* suggest that different aspects of alienation can best be laid bare by a close scrutiny of detail. Thus, on the one hand, we are admitted to focused in-depth examinations of alienation in specific times and places. On the other, we are inspired to further queries. Let us review the contents in short.

Section One, "Patterns of Culture," comprises four articles each of which examines culture from a different point of view. The order of the papers

follows the unfolding of awareness from preverbal sensory understandings to a complex identification with comprehension of the transcendental, from popular culture to a culture of the sacred.

Hedvig Ekernald (“Reflections on culture”) examines culture by fathoming the differentiation of sentience and perception. Focusing on popular literature and music in Sweden and in the United States, she points out how cultures of origin defined in terms of religion, gender, or race induce a consciousness of community among the group included and a cognizance of deviance among others. The perception of deviance is, of course, the basis for defining ‘otherness’ and an excuse for alienating others.

Pirkkoliisa Ahponen (“Alienation in Finnish culture”) draws on newspaper reports and insights from folk traditions in order to interpret the subtle entanglement of solidarity and alienation within the Finnish nation, as well as the ambiguous relationships of Finns with guests, tourists, and, sometimes tragically, with residents who were not born in Finland.

The paper by *Devorah Kalekin-Fishman* (“Alienation and material culture: Conceptions of Israeli Palestinians”) is based on life-story interviews with Arabs of different religions who are Israeli citizens. Conversations which began with an exploration of language – the relative importance of Hebrew and Arabic in the daily lives of the interviewees – turned into a probing of life styles. The interviewees experience tensions of otherness as a minority in their country of origin and as part of the majority in the Mediterranean region. They describe the crystallization of a culture uniquely their own by relating to artefacts.

Perhaps more than any other theoretician, *Philip Wexler* has investigated alienation theory from diverse, even divergent, viewpoints. Having adopted a Marxist perspective in his early writings – notably in his book on *Critical social psychology* (1983), he now centers on a view of alienation related to a possible re-construction of human nature. In the paper presented here (“‘Re-selfing’ after post-modern culture: Sacred social psychology”), Wexler explores the need for healing in the wake of post-modern fragmentation. He traces philosophical and sociological grounds for understanding influences of the sacred on the formation of a renewed and re-sacralized self .

Section Two presents material on alienation which is concerned with “Family and Gender”. Each of the articles relates to the configuration of gender and of the family in a different geographical context.

Loek Halman’s paper is a straightforward report of conclusions from the European Values Studies Project, a project in which a random sample of Europeans in several countries were asked for their views of what is neces-

sary and desirable for the constitution of the family. They were also asked about their perceptions of the conditions which prevent the healthy development of family life. For the most part, Halman demonstrates that traditional values have a hold even in places where the structure of the family has undergone significant change.

Anna Mikheyeva, whose point of departure is a disciplinary background in demography, reaches conclusions similar to those of Halman in her study of "The role of subcultures in the spread of the phenomenon of cohabitation in the Siberian countryside". When comparing statistics of marriage, divorce, and fertility in the Siberian countryside with data from other parts of Europe, Mikheyeva concludes that there is a trend toward radical changes in values. Follow-up interviews, however, demonstrate that such conclusions are justified only in part.

Far from what one might claim to be the homogenizing effects of Europe, *Maria Christina De Souza Campos* ("Women in São Paulo in the family and in the work market: Behavior and representations") examines trends in labor market entry among Brazilian women during the last century and their images of gender and family relations. The study relies on evidence from popular literature and from historical accounts of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as well as on informal interviews with women – both women now retired and younger women still participating in the work market. With an angle of vision dictated by the clear class divisions that characterize Sao Paulo society, De Campos' study sheds light on how ideology interweaves with the material situation of gender to shape consciousness.

Alienation among migrant South Asian women is the topic of the last two papers in this section. *Helen Ralston* ("Crossing the black water': Alienation and identity among South Asian immigrant women") emphasizes the difficulties encountered by non-Anglo immigrant women who aspire to become fully accepted citizens of Canada or of Australia. She explores discrimination in contacts with the government bureaucracy and in the work place. Despite official proclamations about egalitarianism and fairness, the establishment consistently alienates South Asian women in many ways. Qualifications from abroad are rarely acknowledged; language turns into an almost insurmountable barrier; and gender prejudice is honed to a refined tool of deprivation. Basing her analysis on a comprehensive theoretical background, Ralston demonstrates how the women resist these processes.

Across the border, South Asian women have to contend with similar conditions. *Margaret Abraham*, herself an immigrant to the United States from South Asia, extends our range of vision by describing how factors in their

personal lives undermine the women's efforts to feel at home. Her research on "Alienation and marital violence among South Asian immigrant women in the United States" provides enlightening details about how alienation in the new 'homeland' is reinforced by mental and physical cruelty in the family.

Section Three, "Alienation, Education, and Knowledge", has four articles, each relating to the interplay of alienation and education in a different way.

Matthew David ("Knowledge, information, and power: Information technology in academic life") deals with the contradictory situations confronted in the academic race to conserve, order, and retrieve knowledge. In his detailed description of the project, BLERBS, the British Library Ethnographic Research on Bibliographic Services, we are alerted to the dangers of alienation in our information society. The 'obvious' logic in a computerized library, the 'necessary' order of its cataloguing and the knowledgeability of the librarian-priests are a convenient framework for promoting capitalist principles of efficiency in the academe by "the replacement of ends [creating knowledge] with means". Alienation is a fore-ordained outcome of the systems of information technology bursting forth unless countered by relentless attentiveness and critique.

While the media proclaim that the internet has revolutionized people's lives, the beginner meets the computer as an additional source of alienation. Whereas most descriptions of the internet experience are formulated by experts whose accounts are corrupted, so to speak, by sophisticated understandings of the equipment, the experiences of beginners are under-theorized. The computer novice confronts a form of alienation that deserves minimally to be explicated. In the paper "Paradoxes of adjusting to the internet", *Deborah Kalekin-Fishman* details some of the social processes with which novices often have to contend.

Leena Koski ("From God to friendship: Changing moral orders in Finnish ABC books") takes up the challenging issue of how schools lay the groundwork for children's alienation. To examine the normative order which shapes the early years of schooling, Koski analyzes primers that were prepared for teaching the first steps in reading. She begins with primers used in schools in the early part of the twentieth century; goes on to the period immediately after World War II; and looks finally at the primers of the past several decades. As the title of the article intimates, Koski shows that in the course of the century, moral education based on a belief in the traditional Lutheran God has gradually disappeared. Instead, children today are encouraged to be moral for the sake of friendship and group solidarity. The interplay of the political context and education, with the implications for alienation, are discussed.

Interpreting Goffman's total institutions as venues of re-education, *Veli-Matti Uhlinen* ("Prison life and alienation") examines in detail the structures of prison life and the qualities of the symbolic interaction between prisoners and warders. His analysis leads to the discovery of opportunities for autonomy in unexpected places, as well as to a re-conceptualization of alienation.

Section Four, "Alienation in Systems", is devoted to papers in which alienation is viewed in terms of the macro-structures which generate pivotal experiences of alienation.

Vessela Misheva's "Inquiry into the origins of totalitarianism and the feeling of alienation", investigates a question which is probably the main unsolved issue of the century – that of totalitarianism. Although neither Hitler nor Stalin invented totalitarianism, the violations of humanity consummated by Nazi Germany demonstrated the horrifying potential of totalitarian regimes. And they prescribed the exigency of a comprehensive explanation. Analyzing alienation in terms of systems theory, Misheva draws on Ancient Greek sources which point up the bases of totalitarianism and its dangers.

Effecting a revolutionary change in Estonia from a communist regime under Soviet control to a liberal democracy, has led to a planned retreat from "intervention". This has institutionalized objective conditions of alienation for many sectors of the Estonian population. *Dagmar Kutsar's* "Increasing threats of alienation in a post-socialist country." marshals evidence from government statistics on social resources to draw a detailed picture of alienation as a deliberate part of government policy.

Sheila Allen ("Crossing borders: Learning from each other") discusses the regression of theory and practice related to migration in the course of the twentieth century. Instead of the vision of one world which was integral to the rhetoric of enlightened circles in the nineteenth century we are now witnessing a retreat to "notions of innate, inevitable, and immutable differences and hatreds" to explain inter-group conflicts in various parts of the world. Allen calls for a re-theorizing of the possibilities for re-education which are enfolded in the move from one context to another together with the devising of practices directed toward the elimination of alienation.

In the final paper of the volume, "Bakhtin the future: Techno-capital and cyber-feudal carnivals", *Lauren Langman* presents a stark comparison between the Middle Ages and the social world taking form before our eyes. He sketches an account of the wretched lives of the masses then and now, and then demonstrates that the carnivals which supplied relief from the constraints of misery in medieval times are undergoing a tortuous revival in the seductive attractions of simulated mass-mediated worlds of films, television, and

the morass of ‘computainment.’ Langman closes his paper with a glimmer of wry hope.

* * *

All these papers illustrate the diversity of theoretical approaches which are harbored under the heading of alienation. This is a kind of response to those theoreticians who have often worried about preserving conceptual purity. The concept of alienation has, however, escaped domination by its roots (Horowitz, 1996). “Words acquire their own meanings; they take off and transform themselves in flight” (LeRoy, 1965, p. 13); and efforts to enfolimitations are certain to be met with derision. Abandoning its asylum in abstract debates about the implications of Hegelianism or Marxism, the concept of alienation is now mobilized to aid in the theorization of circumstances which, rooted in action, are riddled with ambiguity.

Whether ‘real’ or ‘virtual’, the hope raised by Langman suits the shared purposes of the researchers. As the papers show, the practices of alienation are convoluted and varied; and by setting our sights on them, we uncover glaring grids of injustice. It is important to remember, however, that while analyzing the strategies of alienation, each paper specifies, or at least implies, the variegated modes of coping which are simultaneously at work. On the job, at home with families, in political frameworks, in leisure activities, people consciously defy the (sometimes) subtle offensives. The maneuvers which the deprived and the manipulated adopt and deploy, to some extent stealthily, are what they generally call ‘life’. By denying the full compass of the snares, people manage to extract comradeship and enjoyment from contexts which combine in alternative ways to ensure alienation. It is no secret that neither the tactics of “making the best of it”, nor the academic efforts at peeling off the layers of alienation analytically can wipe out imbalances. Could the manifold understanding of alienation demonstrated in this book, however, be pointing the way to a turn in consciousness which, although it cannot pledge control and change, still promises to augur inexorable action?

* * *

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D. K.-F.
Haifa, April, 1998

Note

¹ The conferences referred to were: Expert Seminars on “Socio-Cultural Problems in Border-Crossings: Comparing Perspectives in East and West” organized by Professor Pirkkoliisa Ahponen, University of Joensuu at Mekrijärvi, Finland, 26-28.3.1996; the Conference on “Crossroads in Cultural Studies” from sessions organized by Dr. Nikolaus Gousgounis, Pedagogical Institute of Athens, Greece at Tampere, Finland 1-4.7.1996; the Seminar on “Cultural Meanings and Alienation” organized by Professor Pirkkoliisa Ahponen at Ylöjärvi, Finland, 5-9.7.1996; and the Internet Conference on “Alienation and the Internet”, Faculty of Education, Haifa, 1997.

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PATTERNS OF CULTURE

Hedvig Ekerwald

REFLECTIONS ON CULTURE

In sociology, culture has often been reduced to being simple effects of social background variables such as class, ethnicity, or gender. To countervail this tendency the perspective of cultural studies is needed. In the eighties and nineties there has been a focus on culture in the social sciences, where concepts such as identity, text, discourse, social construction, images, and representations have been central. This paper discusses some of the lessons of these studies as well as some of the links between alienation and culture.

Introduction

Captain James Cook was killed by people on the Hawaii islands in 1779. First he came to the island and was welcomed, but upon his departure, one of the ship's masts broke and he had to return. When he went ashore a second time he was killed. Marshall Sahlins and Gananath Obeyesekere have taken this event as a basis for obstinate debate (Geertz, 1996). Obeyesekere asserts that Cook was killed as a human being. The assumption that the eighteenth century inhabitants of Hawaii took Cook to be a god characterizes their motives as if they were quite different from those of other human beings. This interpretation, according to Obeyesekere, is a European fantasy, a myth whose source is European civilization, conquest, and imperialism. Sahlins, on the other hand, says that Obeyesekere's interpretation strips the Hawaiian people of all the meanings they ascribed to their reality, of their unique culture.

In Obeyesekere's reductionist effort to present all human beings as being alike he is actually erasing Hawaiian history. Both anthropologists agree on the many filters through which they must look to get knowledge of the event. Still they disagree on the strength of culture, how much it can modify human nature, how widely it affects our perspectives on the world.

The questions underlying the debate can be put crudely as the issues of whether there are superior and inferior cultures, what influences on, and evaluations of, culture can be regarded as legitimate, and what the limits of a culture are. A less common problem concerns the causes of cultural changes and the type of determination to which cultures are subject. Responses to these questions have practical consequences.

The legacy of the sixties, for example, was equality. Although the intentions were good, there were negative consequences. Equality was taken to imply that any of us could know what was best for others and the ideology gave rise to excesses which, on other bases, might have been avoided. Among these excesses was the "green revolution," initiated from the West, which turned subsistence farmers in the third world into landless immigrants to the big cities. Another excess was the nationalist modernization projects, instituted among others by Maoism, which threatened minority cultures with extinction. A message we have had a chance to learn through the cultural perspective of the nineties is tolerance. If different cultures mean different worlds, one cannot force one's will (even presumably for the other's good) on others. The negative consequence of this message might be a politics of passivity.

In this article, I will illustrate the impact of culture on perceptions and how cultures divide groups. I will point out examples of five functions of culture pertinent to debates on cultural issues, namely differences of evaluation from the inside looking out and from the outside looking in; culture as oppression or support; the interaction of cultures; cultures and borders, with some passing remarks on culture and ethics. In discussing these points, connections with five alternative meanings of alienation (Seeman, 1959) are pointed out. Cultural debates concerning gender, class, and ethnicity are the bases for this article.

First a few words on definitions. In this paper, culture is used in the anthropological sense of a way of living and understanding the world. In addition, cultural artifacts are of special interest taken here as signs for the culture that produced them. In my definition, culture is the sum of attitudes belonging to a certain social group where attitude in turn is defined as an inclination or disposition to think, feel, and act in certain ways towards rel-

evant objects. This definition emphasizes emotional aspects, within the trinity of the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral facets of culture. Furthermore, it implies that you cannot speak about a culture without relating to the bearers of that culture. The definition does not, on the other hand, state that a social group has to share the same life conditions.

One of the most important concepts in the history of sociology, alienation, is not normally related to debates on culture. Alienation, this “appealing concept, standing as it does at the intersection of social-structural conditions and psychological orientation” (Kohn, 1976) can be taken as a specific theoretical concept within Marxism or as a general philosophical concept in Western philosophy. In Hegel’s writings, the *Weltgeist* as idea transforms itself into nature or material forms in the search of self-consciousness only to find this material form alien to itself (Israel, 1968). Weber relates to alienation from a historical standpoint, and describes how man is emancipating himself “from the cycle of the old, simple, and organic existence of the peasant.” At the same time, through the “universal rationalization and intellectualization of culture” man is being alienated from peasant life. There is an “estrangement of life-value from that which is merely naturally given” (Weber, 1970).

From Feuerbach, Marx developed his view of alienation as a cyclical process. Human beings project the values and norms growing out of human interaction onto fantasies of divine forces (Giddens, 1989). What we have produced ourselves comes back to us understood as the powerful ten commandments that God wrote on stone. Marx gives three causes of alienation: private property, the commodity character of labor, and the division of labor in society (Israel, 1971). All the results of work are there in front of us, the cities, the roads, the ships and air planes, the media and the computers. What Marx stresses, however, is not this objectification of work but the alienation of work; the products of work do not belong to the producers, but “to capital as a giant societal power that has established itself against societal work” (Marx, 1971). Other sources of alienation according to the American sociologist Gwynn Nettler (1957) are machinery, art, language, Original sin, the lack of religion, and civilization. He asserts that the sociological approach to alienation has its “cousin” in Freud’s analysis of *Civilization and its discontents*. But how do culture and alienation connect? Let us go back to the fifties when the idea of alienation had a “vogue” (Nettler, 1957). The experiences of World War II and the Nazi death camps “had traumatized the intelligentsia” (Bell, 1976). Political action was unthinkable. “The cultural intelligentsia brooded on themes of despair, anomie, and alienation.” The foremost au-

thor was Franz Kafka, whose work was written long before the war; Kierkegaard was “discovered”; people read Simone Weil and Camus, and they flocked to the plays of Ionesco such as *The chairs* “in which objects came to have a life of their own, as if the reified things of the world had actually drawn the spirit out of man and taken over his will.” The popular sociology of the time being was David Riesman’s *The Lonely Crowd* in which he expounded on the concept of “mass society” (Bell, 1976).

One of the most influential texts on alienation of that time was Melvin Seeman’s (1959) “On the meaning of alienation”. With his unstructural and untheoretical approach (Israel, 1971), he singled out five alternative meanings of alienation: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, and self-estrangement. In spite of the weak theoretical base of these facets of alienation they have been found useful in empirical research. In the following discussion of related to culture I will draw out relationships between alienation and culture through Seeman’s five sub-concepts.

* * *

The current preoccupation with culture has diverse roots. The social sciences stress the importance of shared social space as the origin of a culture. The concern is related to the tradition in Western philosophical thinking of interest in the link between what is in our heads and what is outside. The question of what exists “in reality” has been problematized since Plato and his cave. Twentieth century philosophy has devoted much attention to this question through the concept of perception (Russell, 1967). Interest in the distortions and biases of our perceptions has been followed by research in the psychology and the social psychology of perceptual-cognitive processes. The broad scope of the American attitude research of the fifties and sixties brought the biology-oriented perception school close to a cultural perspective. The persistent question is the puzzle of how differently we can look upon the world as long as we depend on our filters of perception (whatever they are made out of).

Another line of research close to cultural analysis is semiotics. The linguistic sign system analysis with Charles Peirce and Ferdinand Saussure as its forefathers, is based upon an understanding of meanings. It is in the nature of human beings always to paint their reality with meanings, whether reality of natural objects such as flowers and trees or of objects made by human hand such as parking lots, short skirts, and melodies. We attribute meanings without effort, unintentionally and continuously. Human meanings are learned

and unlearned, changing through time and space. The meanings vary from group to group and testify to differences in the filters for perceiving reality and to differences in culture.

Cultures may originate from social groups of the most varied sorts. We talk about women's culture, black culture, gay culture, working class culture, Swedish culture. Less often do we speak of the culture of the twenties, the culture of those who are oldest among their siblings, the family culture of those families where there are many children, the culture of a certain school, the culture of retired people. What do these oriented uses of culture indicate? Researchers have traditionally stressed that for a specifiable culture to be generated, there should be some shared group experiences. African-American culture derives from a shared experience of slavery, and collective subjugation to racism. Gender culture derives from the societal division of labor between the sexes, bringing with it different interests and different skills. But in current discussions of culture, concepts such as trans-nationalization and globalization have found links among geographically dispersed groups.

We See the World Through Our Culture

A strange culture may be as incomprehensible as an alien language. The more one gets to know a culture, the more regulated, predictable, and normal will it seem. Here are three examples to illustrate what I see as the main thrust of cultural analyses, namely the conviction that the world 'filtered' through my culture actually looks different from what may be denoted 'the very same world' viewed through yours.

A common prejudice is the notion that cultural differences between the sexes are definitive. Men are presumed to be realistic and women romantic. A short story building on this idea is "The magic moment" by Florence Jane Soman published in the Swedish weekly *Aret Runt* (*The Year Round*) in 1967, and analyzed by the researcher in Swedish literature, Lisbeth Larsson (1989, 1990). It is a vivid illustration of the capacity of culture to color reality, to imbue it with emotional meanings.

The story begins with the husband, Jan, thinking that his wife, Barbro, is annoying with her emotionality and her continuous efforts to make their home cosy. One day Barbro informs him that the following Wednesday is their Great Day. He takes it to be their wedding anniversary so he buys her a gift and invites her to dinner at an Italian restaurant. Sitting in the restaurant,

she is happy and exclaims about the wonders of the place, the atmosphere, the interesting people, and the food. He himself thinks the four other customers are there only to get something into their stomachs and that the spaghetti sauce tastes as if it came from a can. On their way back home Jan discovers that it is not their wedding anniversary, but the anniversary of what Barbro took to be a magic reconciliation after a terrible quarrel they had once had. Jan, the husband, gets so angry that he shouts at her in the street. He tells her that she is absolutely insane. He had spent money on gifts and a meal in a restaurant in honor of the end of a quarrel! He says: "Will you never come out of the dream world you live in? Will you never be able to see life as it is?" Blushing, Barbro responds with silence. After a quarter of an hour, however, she says that she agrees with him; she always exaggerates. How stupid it had been to celebrate such a memory! Moreover, the spaghetti did not taste good and the place itself was not congenial. The views that Jan ought to have welcomed do not impress him after all. He discovers that he needs Barbro's romanticism and tries to convince her that her approach was right to begin with. Much later, he manages to get her busy rearranging the furniture, something he had earlier regarded as pesky and unnecessary. When she asks for his approval:

He took his eyes from her face and looked round. And at that moment something happened to his eyes. It was as if a special lens had turned one degree inside his head. Suddenly the colors looked lighter and sharper around him. The air itself seemed to be full of a weak emanation and during a blind mad second he stood there seeing the room just as she did. And – it looked warm in the lamp light. It was a joyful, lovely, cosy room. It was the most beautiful room he had ever seen.
(Soman, in Larsson, 1989, 1990, p.78)

Another example that pinpoints the values that culture may bring with it is from another arena of life. It is taken from the debate on the cultures of sexual orientations, a debate which shows culture as embodied tastes. How we evaluate things is dependent on our local cultures, so the same act may seem repugnant to one and full of pleasure to another. Gayle Rubin (1972), an American feminist and sadomasochist, repudiates attempts to medicalize or politicize sexual variation:

People who are not into anal sex find it incomprehensible that anyone else could enjoy it. People who gag at oral sex are baffled that anyone else would actually enjoy sucking cock or eating pussy. But the fact remains that there are uncount-

able hordes for whom oral sex or anal sex are exquisitely delightful. Sexual diversity exists, not everyone likes to do the same things, and people who have different sexual preferences are not sick, stupid, warped, brainwashed, under duress, dupes of the patriarchy, products of bourgeois decadence, or refugees from bad child-rearing practices. The habit of explaining away sexual variation by putting it down needs to be broken.

(Rubin, 1987, p. 223)

The general thesis deducible from this is also that representatives of one culture are often blind to the cultural elements of their thinking and feelings, and that they often try to explain away other cultures as less natural than their own, instead seeing them as variations of the natural and the normal.

A third example of how culture governs our way of looking at life comes from Philip Greven's (1977) *The Protestant temperament*, a book which I would like to save from oblivion. To anyone influenced by modern child psychology the following example from the 1830's seems outlandish, but to someone who belonged to that religious culture, it was, or might have been, natural.

Greven (1977) writes about an account "of the breaking of a child's will" which is found in the *American Baptist Magazine* of 18. Reverend Francis Wayland reports an instance of critical interaction with his fifteen month old son, born in 1830. Wayland's conviction was that "In infancy the control of the parent over the child is absolute; that is, it is [to be] exercised without any due respect to the wishes of the child." Wayland had noticed that this child of his was "more than usually self-willed," but he had waited for the right time to subdue him. When the child reached the age of fifteen months, the right time had come. Early one Friday morning, when Wayland's son cried upon being taken away from his nurse, the father wanted to hold him until he stopped crying. The son held a piece of bread in his hand which the father took away. The son was hungry as he had not eaten since 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon of the day before. When the father then offered his son the bread, the child threw it away. Reverend Wayland writes:

I considered this a fit opportunity for attempting to subdue his temper, and resolved to embrace it. I thought it necessary to change his disposition, so that he would receive the bread from me, and also be so reconciled to me that he would voluntarily come to me. The task I found more difficult than I had expected.

(Wayland in Greven, 1977, p. 39)

The little boy was locked into a room all alone and the father visited him “every hour or two during the day” all through Friday and up to three o’clock Saturday. Most of this time the boy fasted. “He had fasted thirty-six hours. His eyes were wan and sunken, his breath hot and feverish, and his voice feeble and wailing. Yet he remained obstinate.” At ten on Saturday, he ate one piece of bread but still refused to come up to his father, so “I therefore ceased feeding him, and recommended my course of discipline.” The father writes: “All I required of him was that he should come to me.” At three o’clock on Saturday afternoon, after having been disciplined since early Friday morning, the boy “looked somewhat softened” and when the father put out his arms the boy came to him. The son kissed his father “and would do so whenever I commanded.” The father writes: “The agony was over. He was completely subdued.”

Although Reverend Wayland has his whole culture as a support behind what he subjected his son to, Greven shows that the father’s reasoning gives us insight into his cruelty. Wayland stresses that he had been invariably kind to his son during this whole process. He offered him food, he offered to receive him to his arms, and he never forced him. In his view:

To have received the child on any other terms would have been to allow that his will was to be my rule of action. and whenever he set out to have his own way, I must have obliged my whole family to have conformed in all their arrangements to his wishes. He must have been made the centre of the whole system. A whole family under the control of a child 15 months old! How unjust this would have been to all the rest, is evident.

(Wayland in Greven, 1977, p.42)

Given the underlying view that human nature is sinful, one can see the context within which Wayland tries to save his child from his own will. Because children are born in sin, they must be born again, this time in the “Spirit of God”. And indeed, as a grown-up, this son preferred his father to the rest of the family, and, furthermore, chose to become a Baptist minister like his father.

In Greven’s quotations from the private and public writings of the time he studied, the same battle between father and son recurs as a battle between the religious adult and his God where the human being must give up his own will totally in order to be reborn, the goal of the devout. Jonathan Edwards, “the most influential evangelical theologian in eighteenth-century America” (Greven, 1977, p. 32), warned against viewing children as innocent. “All are by nature the children of wrath and heirs of hell,” he wrote, and continued:

“As innocent as children seem to be to us, yet if they are out of Christ, they are not so in God’s sight, but are young vipers, and are infinitely more hateful than vipers” (ibid., p. 31). John Wesley, the famous English founder of Methodism writes: “Our nature is altogether corrupt, in every power and faculty. And our will, depraved equally with the rest, is wholly bent to indulge our natural corruption” (ibid., p. 66). Or as Jonathan Edwards says, “The inside of the body of man is full of filthiness.” The bowels “full of dung” represent the filthiness of the heart. The world outside the body is also “all over dirty...Our streets are dirty and muddy, intimating that the world is full of that which tends to defile the soul, that worldly objects and worldly concerns and worldly company tend to pollute us” (ibid., pp. 67-68). What the evangelicals preach recurs in the diaries of lay persons who knew how to read and write. Susanna Anthony in her diary complains about herself: “Woe is me because of the leprosy of sin, by which I am so defiled, that I pollute all I touch” and “O methinks I never knew the plague of my heart. It burst out like a putrid sore, that never was truly healed” (ibid., p. 68).

These were not simply factual statements; they were lived through mortification of the body, “constant rationing and denial of food and drink, occasionally through fasting, always through severe restrictions on diet” (Greven, 1977, p. 71). Some Quakers took it on themselves to crucify their flesh in memory of Christ’s cross. One evangelical, Cotton Mather, said he was “willing to have my Crucifixion go on with a perpetual Succession of Pains and Pangs, without any Prospect of any Outgate, but at and by the dying Hour”. What made it meaningful was to have “a Glorious Christ” living inside him (ibid., p. 84).

Are these outpourings so remote from our own ways of living? Of course there are similarities between these religious people and some fundamentalist groups today. But I would claim that there is widespread behavior today which can be re-analyzed in the light of Greven’s voices. I suggest that there is a Protestant temperament abroad which is quite similar to the temperament of the devout of former times. Today it is expressed in our preoccupation with health, slimming programs, and exercises. The self-scrutiny and anorectic behavior characteristic of the God-fearing in the 18th and 19th centuries, can be found among some of their descendants among middle class people of today. Just as religious reasoning, the basis of Wayland’s culture, assured him that he was right and the child “was therefore inflicting all this misery voluntarily upon himself”, thus does our scientific information about health tell us today what is right and wrong in life styles. When the

Swedish author, Sven Delblanc, first heard that he had cancer, a cancer that he later died of, his first question was, "Is it my fault?" The question "Is it my fault?" is natural to a world view according to which we inflict miseries voluntarily upon ourselves. The Protestant temperament/culture legitimates actions which are anathema to other cultures. Moreover, the emotions and cognitions behind those actions make up a network of significations which, again, are unique to that culture. These significations have many functions. In the next section, I will briefly describe some of the functions of culture.

Responses to Culture and Their Relation to Dimensions of Alienation

The functions of culture to be discussed here are connected to differences of evaluation from the inside looking out and from the outside looking in; culture as oppression or support; the interaction of cultures; cultures and border politics; and lastly, culture and change. In the view espoused here, misunderstandings of these often underlie communication breakdowns.

Noise or meaning. Tricia Rose (1994) asserts that rap music is "Black America's most dynamic contemporary popular cultural, intellectual, and spiritual vessel". Rap reinterprets social events to its listeners; it reflects the problems of Black people in a society with racism; it tells jokes; and makes musical and linguistic innovations. While srap music, Rose was introduced to the chairman of a music department. When this man had listened to her ideas he commented: "Well, you must be writing on rap's social impact and political lyrics, because there is nothing to the music." To his mind, rap music was nothing more than a social steam valve, an expression of social anger. "They ride down the street at 2:00 A.M. with it [the rap music] blasting from car speakers, and (they) wake up my wife and kids," he complained. "What's the point in that?" (Rose, 1994, p. 62). To him "rap music was 'noise,' unintelligible yet aggressive sound that disrupted his familial domain and his sonic territory" (Rose, 1994, p. 63). What Rose sees as a cultural product with a wealth of ramifications is simply noise to this professor. The difference in view is the difference between seeing a culture from the inside looking out or from the outside looking in. This function of culture seeming to be noise to outsiders can be connected to the aspect of alienation which Seeman (1959) named, 'meaninglessness.' For an outsider alienated from the insiders of that

culture, the encounter seems meaningless. From the social-psychological point of view, the outsider 'hears' a foreign culture only as noise.

Cultural support or cultural oppression. In some senses, every culture conveys values which contradict values in other cultures. Members of a strong culture tend to downgrade precisely those values which are important to people who belong to a 'weak' culture. Messages such as 'your music is just noise, simple and repetitive' reduce the self-confidence of those to whom the message is directed. In the case of rap music, it is possible in principle to respond by showing the complexity and the variations of the music attacked. Far more likely is a response whereby principles of value are inverted. There is a celebration of the simplicity and the flowing repetition of unchanging patterns.

For minority groups, there can be a nice feeling of being visible and appreciated when their culture is addressed by outsiders looking in. But there may also be a vague feeling of unpleasantness, or even mortal danger in these encounters. Xenophobia, racism, class oppression, sexism are systems for cultural oppression as well as systems for a more material oppression of minority groups for cultural reasons (death, illnesses, imprisonment, deportation, etc.) (Ironman, 1993). For majority groups, there is support in numbers; if only because of the availability of cultural resources. To get daily confirmation from the media that you are normal, natural, and interesting makes you visible and reconfirms your values. This pleasant function of culture is lacking in Sweden where most of the televised stories show American milieux.

The way a culture can mobilize resources for installing institutions such as colleges, encyclopedias, opera scenes, sports arenas, organizations, journals, etc. determines the strength of that culture and all its members. A culture lacking such resources is threatened and its members are weakened. This function of culture – being able to support or oppress people – can be connected to Seeman's sub-concepts of alienation, in this case to powerlessness. Finding one's culture encountered from outside, a compound kind of cultural oppression and cultural deprivation induces overwhelming feelings of powerlessness.

Interaction of cultures. The interaction of cultures can analytically be divided into four types, cultures of the same or of different dimensions criss-crossing in groups or within individuals.

One type of interaction takes place when cultures meet within an individual and “fight” for a dominant place in that individual’s identity. What is most important to me, my gender, class position, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or civic position? Tricia Rose describes her positions as those of “a pro-black, biracial, ex-working-class, New York-based feminist, left cultural critic”. Together these cultures add complexity “to the way I negotiate and analyze the social world” (Rose, 1994, p. xiii). I claim that the identity of which a person is conscious derives from those background variables or properties that are perceived as most ambivalent while the unconscious aspects of identity are influenced more by properties which are taken for granted (see Ekerwald, 1995). Cultures of the same dimension also meet within an individual. Take a working class child that grows up to be an upper-class man. In such a (class) traveler, two class cultures will meet.

The results of different cultures interacting within one person is in my view the most obvious example of the connection of alienation and culture. An individual at the intersection of different cultures is prey to several of the sub-concepts of alienation proposed by Seeman. Encounters with varieties of cultures spawn normlessness. Feelings of isolation are also likely. Most important, the last of the five alternative meanings of alienation suggested by Seeman, self-estrangement, may result from the interaction of cultures within a single person. Although self-estrangement is usually taken to mean not living up to one’s potential, Seeman (1959, p. 790) suggests that to be self-estranged should mean to be unable to find activities self-rewarding.

Another type of cultural interaction concerns meetings of cultures between individuals or groups. Such interactions may be uni-dimensional or multi-dimensional. Whole societies can be compared. Such a comparison is made by the Swedish-American anthropologist, Jonathan Friedman (1994). Friedman describes the cyclical character of commercial urban systems from “initial high local production and export of manufactured goods to final low production and the export of capital” where an economic crisis gives “a decline in hegemony followed by fragmentation and recentralization” (Friedman, 1994, pp. 20-22). In his view “there is an inverse relation between the formation of centralized imperialist systems and the constitution and maintenance of cultural identities” (Friedman, p. 37).

Although Friedman discusses this cyclical theory of cultural identity on the basis of commercial systems from 2000 to 1500 B. C., his analysis hints at an explanation of why modernist cultural hegemony is currently being fragmented into smaller essentialist cultures. Whereas a strong economic power upholds a strong centralized culture with ease, in economic decline a

minority's gains for giving up their original culture diminish, and pluralism becomes evident. In economic crisis not only are the economic gains for buying into the culture of the power-holders smaller, but psychological needs, stemming from the economical insecurity, for reaffirming older properties and seeking one's roots and original culture, grow.

These outcomes are not inevitable. Alienation is a potential risk in situations where cultures interact; but it is also possible that situations where cultures interact lead to enrichment. The ideological rhetoric of multiculturalism is based on the idea that people of different cultures who meet can exchange resources. This exchange may improve the quality of life of all the participants. I think that for human beings cultural curiosity is the base, the norm, and the natural state of species-being.

Culture, borders and homogeneity. Where does a culture end and another culture start? The topic of the limits of a culture is connected to the moral questions of authenticity and purity.

When I look out of my window I see a rowan tree. What are the borders of that tree? It soaks up elements from the air and the soil and uses these for its growth. In the autumn it loses its leaves which slowly return to the soil. What was formerly part of the tree becomes part of the soil around it; what was formerly air is there in the greenery; what was formerly water in the trunk is now evaporated outside the tree. The interaction between the tree and its surroundings is incessant. The constant, gradual process of molecules moving from air or water to leaves and trunk, and from leaves and trunk into the air and the soil is broken into digital units for description. The words tree, air, and soil are clearly disconnected, and language divides a continuous reality into one which is linear and made up of discrete elements.

Although the form of a word as a distinct unit tempts the speaker to see the parts of reality which the word invokes as similarly distinct units this is not the case. Reality is not made up of distinct units but more of a Herakleitian *panta rei*, and this is generally understood in contemporary science. Just as concepts are defined by each other in a linguistic system, and not by 'real' borders, so also are cultures defined by each other, not by tangible boundaries.

Many debates about culture concern borders between cultures. There are two different types of approaches concerning borders which can be mentioned here. The one focuses on purity, on ideal types of cultures in Weberian terms; the other focuses on mixture, or the mutual reshaping of cultures. An interesting phenomenon connected with the debate is the tendency for groups

to portray cultures as more pure than they are. An example of this is the 'censorship' of photographs by the Laps. When the plastic bag reached Sweden, the Laps found a variety of uses for them in the framework of their cultivation of reindeer. But to depict these mobile farmers as more exotic, their use of plastic bags was never shown in tourist photos.

Culture and change. Issues of borders are also connected with how cultures change. The above example illustrates change and opposition to change. A distinction can be made between analyses that stress changes in a culture from within, and those that emphasize influences from without. It is practical to look at cultures as easily differentiable entities, but in actuality there are gradual transitions between (geographically) neighboring cultures. Cultures differ, moreover, in respect to openness to the impact of other cultures and researchers differ in their evaluations. An example is the disagreement between the scholars Peter Schalk and Michael Vickery on the Angkor empire of Cambodia, where Schalk (1985) stresses Cambodian indebtedness to Indian culture and Vickery emphasizes the uniqueness of Cambodian culture. Japanese culture is held to be peculiarly open to influences. The Israeli sociologist S.N. Eisenstadt (1994, p. 17) argues that Japanese culture may be characterized by a capacity to adopt "ideas, artifacts, technologies, styles of dress, ideology."

Ethics in culture concerns both the epistemological level where the effects of cultural studies in increasing prejudice and statistical discrimination must be counteracted, and the ontological level where we live inter-culturally in a world where power ranks cultures differently. In our world with its gravely unequal human relations, culture needs specific attention. I suggest that in intercultural relationships we should strive for non-interference, respect, a desire to learn from one another, and a certain correctness which is antithetical to intimacy and spontaneity. Despite the high value of intimacy in many societies today, I propose that enacting a policy of polite distancing will produce better relations than a policy built on spontaneous intimacy. The non-interference principle may be held to be valid only as long as the other partner does not interfere in 'our' affairs. Recognizing that there is a dilemma of cultural respect and the right to criticize others' culture makes the balancing act easier. In evaluating cultural analysis, one must say that there is nothing inherently progressive or reactionary in describing peoples' cultures. Studies of culture may be used in both ways. This is especially evident when we draw out the relationships between culture and alienation.

I would like to conclude my analysis of alienation with a more optimistic view. In his book, *All that is solid melts into air*, Berman (1982) asserts that we have a ground for communality precisely through our “alienation” or our predicament of being uprooted from a culture. The person who has changed culture has become more “modern”, more reflective, and less authoritarian. Such uprooted people, people who encounter different cultures within themselves, are more common in the Third World, in the working class, and in peripheral groups of every kind. These people, who might be pitied for their cultural alienation, are in fact the groups who are capable of creating a sense of belonging to *Humankind* on that shared ground of being cut loose from their cultural roots. Alienation understood in this way and met with a political stance may result in humanism.

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Pirkkoliisa Ahponen

ALIENATION IN FINNISH CULTURE

“Finns weep alone at home in the evening.”

It is common to compare cultural qualities, i.e. values and habits or behavior of people, on the assumption that some cultural forms are typical in one special social group and not so common in another group. In this sense even expressions of emotions like crying, laughing, and smiling can be included among behaviors which are valued according to their special socio-cultural significance for the group in question.

The psychological aspect of emotions is felt and known to differ markedly among individuals, because emotions are expressions of our inner selves. The social dimension of feelings concerns how many sentiments we share with others, how many emotions we have in common with other members of our group, and how our emotions differ from those of others. In this respect, expressions of emotions and sentiments are culturally important because they have a communicative function.

There is, therefore, significance even in the preliminary results of a comparative international research project related to the habits of weeping among adults in 38 countries. When some comparisons were reported fragmentally in a leading Finnish newspaper (*Helsingin Sanomat*, 22nd March, 1996), the researcher in charge of the study on different “cultures of crying”, social psychologist Ad Vingerhoets from the Netherlands, was interviewed. He said that crying is a channel for discharging unused energy when one cannot find a reasonable and suitable voluntary way to act acceptably in an embarrassing situation. Yet, Finnish people, according to this report, typically cry

when they are alone at home, in the evening. For them, weeping is an expression of nostalgia, sorrow, or disappointment.

By referring to habitual crying¹ as an element of the Finnish culture, I would like to illustrate the paradoxicality of culture. The above statement confirms a “fact” which has long been accepted as a stereotypical feature of being Finnish. Weeping is not a seemly expression of sociality in Finland; according to a popular slogan, men and boys do not cry, because crying is something which is acceptable only for women and children, not for real men. In this respect, crying is an expression of alienation. Crying belongs to the life circle in which people are alone, separate, without any contacts. It does not signify any cultural behavior, and it is not included in the sphere of cultural politics, at least if cultural politics is defined as a construction of “we-ness”. On this basis, culture can be understood as a symbolic resource consisting of shared values.

In a recent book, Alasuutari (1996) says that by means of cultural policy we construct a conception of ourselves as a nation, a community characterized by specific features, a people with a culture comprised of significant values, experiences, and emotions which are held in common.² Togetherness, however, is characterized by the feeling of being included in an atmosphere where we can express emotions: cry, smile, and laugh with each other. Still, for a Finn, it is strange to cry in public. This example, a research finding which confirms a widely held stereotype, leads us to conclude that since it is so difficult for Finnish people to express emotions together, we are, perhaps, strangers to ourselves. If we are included in the circle of sameness, this circle of foreignness which, as Kristeva (1991) describes it, “creeps into the tranquillity of reason itself, and, without being restricted to madness, beauty, or faith anymore than ethnicity or race, irrigates every speaking-being, estranged by other logic, including heterogeneity of biology.”

In an Inclusive Culture, Exclusion Is Alienation

The Finnish habit of crying when alone quite clearly concerns how attitudes towards that which is foreign are formed. In this complex context, alienation refers to exclusion. We can find some interesting pointers in the Finnish language. The Finnish language is quite cunning with the word for “foreign-ness”. We use the same word for “guest” and “foreigner”. But people who are received as guests are treated well, politely, and hospitably. They (you) are invited to visit with us when we would like to be acquainted with

them (you), feel familiarity, even make friends with them (you) and include them (you) in our circle. Foreign people, on the other hand, are supposed to remain strange – alien, alienated, excluded. So far, the meaning of alienation in Finnish culture can be interpreted by taking these contradictory aspects into consideration. From these indications we can form a tentative conclusion. When foreigners are accepted they are treated well and they are allowed to feel familiar among us, at least in the best case; but all this is done on our terms and by means of strategies of inclusion. When foreigners are, on the contrary, rejected, the strategies resorted to are those of exclusion, and the foreigners are deliberately alienated.

If culture signifies an ideal community, is it possible to comprehend that expressions of alienation, more or less specific for a certain group, are cultural values at all? Or is it that in this case expressions are characteristic of something “extra-cultural”? This question is taken here as a starting point for contemplating the place of alienation in Finnish culture. If we accept definitions of culture as behavioral and symbolic expressions of inclusive cohesion; and from this point of view start to think about what culture really is, we have to take into careful consideration the form and quality of the ingredients which are included in cultural properties. In addition to their meaning for individuals the generality of their acceptance also has to be taken into consideration. But even accepting the idea that the identity of social actors is formed by some cultural ingredients which are experienced as “our common property”, I see it as at least equally important to point out that culture is created by the social agents who use these ingredients in actions which are beneficial for themselves and for their circles of brotherhood.

The crucial issue then is which cultural practices and factors are included in the symbolic properties of certain communities, valued by the dominant groups. and maintained by means of traditions with which societies align themselves (Jordan & Weedon, 1995, p. 5). The converse question, when strategies of alienation are taken into consideration, is how the inferiority of some ‘other’ culture is produced. Furthermore, the question concerns how disapproval of cultural elements, so that they are relegated to meaninglessness, leads to marginalization, isolation, and exclusion of the producers of these elements. Marginal cultures are doomed to be relatively invisible. They lack support from a group powerful enough to maintain them and to improve the possibilities for their appreciation. Totally meaningless – in other words, uncultural – culture is, of course, an impossibility. But if culture consists of the meanings given by subjects in their activities, it is important

to ask how the cultural fields of their activities are constructed and reconstructed.³

Membership in Culture

In the meaning-giving processes recognized as cultural politics, it is understood that there is actually a (cultural) tendency to emphasize participation as a value in itself. This is significant for the strategies by which cultural agents have tried to attain a place for themselves or, as Bourdieu (1992, p. 466) puts it, “to occupy a given position in social space.” This more or less horizontal strategy is used, in particular, by those actors who try to leap from marginality to the center of a certain field of cultural capital, or as close as possible to the center. But activity is a power strategy as such; social membership becomes defined in the search of meaning for common values. Activity means “being present” and having a voice. Passivity means non-attendance, and it is therefore a mechanism for fostering powerlessness, meaninglessness, and general alienation.

Culture plays a specific role as a denoter of social identity. This role or “mask” is derived, as Jordan and Weedon (1995, p. 5) point out, from the processes in which social inequalities are legitimated through culture. In this way, the relative domination or even hegemony of a certain group is made to appear logical, acceptable, natural or even prescribed by God. Social inequalities are produced in the incorporation of the fundamental structure of a society so that certain principles of division (e. g., age, gender, and class) are “common to all the agents of the society and make possible the production of a common, meaningful world, a common-sense world” (Bourdieu, 1992, p. 468). On this basis, it is important to attend to how the relationship to power is expressed and made visible in marginal cultures.

The most significant aspect of the integration-identity-alienation-exclusion circle is that it hints at the inevitability of strangers, outsiders. As culturally identified individuals, we are included in some social category and we are accepted as having political membership in a certain group and in its familiar circle. Alienation can, therefore be contrasted here with the way in which cultural identity is expressed, structured, and formed. Alienation is identical with the lack of identity. Without an identity one is excluded from the habitat inside which the social agents operate and which is constituted according to the processes which the agents set in motion (see Bauman, 1992, pp. 190-191; also Ahponen, 1996a, p. 200).

In saying this, I want to emphasize the creative and changing character of culture, to describe culture as a construction of its creators rather than as a stable set of determinative structures. Therefore, cultural estrangement must also be seen as an important aspect of that kind of alienation which is understood as lack of integration, disintegration of social identity or loss of common values (see Seeman, 1976, p. 288). However, the concept of alienation is a value-laden concept much like integration or inclusion (Horowitz, 1996, p. 18). Therefore, when we speak about alienation, we always have to ask critically what a group is alienated from, what it is integrated into, how it is included and what it includes. It is not fruitful to consider alienation as an essential inhuman condition in itself. Instead, we must see that under some social conditions alienation can even become, as Horowitz (1996) emphasizes, an inalienable right to withdraw, a source of creative energy if not an expression of personal eccentricity. Seeman (1976, p. 291) also notes how rejection of commonly shared values may signify expressiveness and spontaneity. This kind of dialectical thinking helps us to realize that nothing is acceptable or unacceptable as such, except if we adopt affirmative attitudes toward system-based common values or totalitarian arguments against individual differences.

Unique Finnishness?

I will now demonstrate how alienation, characterized as a process of exclusion, is inscribed in Finnish culture. In this way I will be problematizing the consensus about the uniqueness of Finnishness. Thus, I hope that the positive side of alienation will be illuminated as a possibility for the excluded, for minorities, for people in the margins.

As a unique nation, considered both from within and from the perspective of international comparisons, Finland is usually classified as a nation which is quite homogeneous socially and culturally. By common consent, being a Finn has been emphasized as a special value in this country. "We are not Swedish, we do not want to become Russian, let us be Finnish." This well-known slogan by A. I. Arwidson (1791-1858), one of the propagators of the national spirit in Finland in the nineteenth century, tells us something about the historical, geographical, and political situation in which "Finnishness" was formed. In a way, in the present-day perspective it is quite astonishing how ethnocentric the concept of "Finnish culture" is and how self-evidently Finnish culture has been seen as formed on an ethnic ground into

uniformity. The ethnic specificity of the Finnish people among the nations of the world and among European people has been seen as a cultural value as such. Finnish people are accustomed to identifying themselves as people who behave by nature like Finns. This refers to having a 'peculiar' language, a silent culture and rough manners. Even blue eyes and bristly hair have been seen as features which typify Finnishness. Expressions of concern about how Finnishness as a cultural value can be protected from foreign influences are common.

The special word for Finnishness in our language, "sisu", is actually impossible to translate into other languages. Characteristically, Finnishness implies patriotism, work-orientation, and perseverance. It is connected with a fondness for sauna, cross-country skiing, and long-distance running. But there is a down side. Finnishness also may be taken to mean frigidness, prejudice, and an atmosphere of silence. There is a complicated array of reified cultural representations. But when we examine these representations of national mental values, we have to ask seriously how close they are to actuality and what they illustrate. What do statements about the existence of some special Finnishness mean? How are the national values constructed and what end do ideas of national identity serve, especially if by these means a concept of a unique Finnishness is produced?

Marjo Kylmänen, a young researcher in the field of Finnish culture, has recently edited a book titled *We and others* in which cultural problems of Finnishness, Europeanism and hidden cultural racism are discussed from different perspectives. In her introduction Kylmänen (1994, pp. 6-7) emphasizes how important it is to notice that groups striving to find a common identity exert efforts to construct uniqueness and homogeneity. On the other hand, these efforts mean striving to make us different from others. Therefore this two-sided process always refers to a kind of cultural racism. The existence of a national identity presupposes that there is a restricted space, a territory which is surrounded by boundaries and inhabited by a nation. Local identities, regional identities, also even continental identities (Europeanism, Americanism, Occidentalism, Orientalism) can all be defined by a similar sense of space. Once ethnicity turns into an element of consciousness, the entity in question in every case is seen as homogeneous and different from the entity on the "other" side of the border. This consciousness is not a phenomenon which evolves spontaneously.

Towards Change and Tolerance

It is interesting to note that, as Stuart Hall (1996, pp. 466) points out in a recent article, “Western Europe did not have, until recently, any ethnicity at all, or didn’t recognize it had any.” The concern about how to be included in the “European cultural family” and to become European enough has been the topic of lively public discussion in Finland. The mobility of Finnish capital, labor, services, and commodities has gained Finland the approval allowed to the group of “best pupils” in the school of European modernization. Along with modernization, belonging to an ethnic group came, as Frankenberg (1993, p. 13) says, “to be understood more behaviorally than biologically.” This means that the strategies of exclusion have become more invisible than previously. However, as Frankenberg notes, “biological descriptors continued to underwrite conceptions of identity”. Concepts of social integration and cultural assimilation continue to define membership.

The importance of different kinds of cultural exchange, as well as economic exchange of qualified products, is increasing in the mobile transactions of today’s globalizing world. Different boundaries have become more visible and more moveable than ever before. Geographic, political, social, and cultural borders are crossed more and more because of peaceful intentions although borderlines still are carefully guarded. In the context of expanding globalization, the meanings diverse cultural identities and appreciations of localities have actually grown more important in culture. In keeping with these developments, a majority of the inhabitants of our country wanted to be part of the European integration process. But in addition to that, a majority are of the opinion that it is important to benefit from this process in a way that can improve the possibility of maintaining our specific character as a nation which has its originality, and ethnic roots (i.e. appearance, language, habits, etc.), a nation that does not want to lose the values according to which its cultural identity is defined, and which can preserve the cultural properties that are so valuable that they have the status of national symbols.

Finland is usually defined as a monocultural country with small minorities. It is also common to emphasize, as does Virtanen⁴ (1996, p. 13), the importance of the ethnic homogeneity of the population for the persistence of national symbolic values. Virtanen says: “Finnishness is changing only slowly because we know and understand each other.” He continues by saying that the basic ingredients of our identity have been conserved and

stabilized, and therefore immigrants encounter difficulties in their efforts to adopt Finnishness. In other words, they have difficulties in fitting in – in participating in processes of acculturation, the preconditions of being included. That is why it is especially important to discuss concepts of identity and ethnicity in the context of Finnish culture and to evaluate it in light of the dangers of cultural racism. The acceptance of cultural differences should lead to a climate of assimilatory attitudes, to strategies of acculturation, and overall to more tolerant behavior towards foreigners.

Minorities in Finland

Traditionally, there have been only small “ethnic” minorities living in this country. The Sami population, nowadays about 6,400 individuals, is situated in the northernmost communities in Lapland. The Swedish-speaking minority which, for historical reasons, enjoys civil rights which are highly protected, lives mainly on the coast. This group constitutes about six percent of the entire Finnish population of five million people. The Gypsies are a deprived minority which persists in maintaining its own cultural habits and language. It is calculated that in Finland there are some 6,000 individuals identified as gypsies.

Finnish people have not, however, been living in this home nest without any influences from the outside world. Finnish scholars, tradesmen, and other educated citizens have always maintained international contacts. There have been periods in Finnish history when masses of people moved in waves overseas, over the Baltic Sea, or over the oceans to North America and even to Australia. They maintained contacts with their relatives and in many cases came back to their home districts after some period of work, and especially to spend their retirement in their Fatherland.

The population movement has for long been one of emigration. Except for the evacuees from Soviet Karelia, who were re-settled in Finland because of their Fenno-Ugrian origin, after World War II and after the new border formations and political maneuvers (recently, the so-called “Ingrians” were allowed the status of re-migrants), immigration into Finland has been quite minimal. Only very recently can we notice growth in the numbers of immigrants received in Finland (see Appendix 1). Some groups of refugees are a kind of exchange with the number of foreigners in Finland, but still the quota of refugees is fixed at 1,000 people per year. In 1994 the total number of refugees was about 10,000 and the number of people who were

born abroad and were now living in Finland was slightly over 60,000. Most of them have come to work here, and many came because of marriage to a Finnish citizen. According to the 1985 statistics, about 80% of the foreigners in Finland were married to Finns (Jaakkola, 1994, p. 128).

Cultural Differences, Social Inequalities

Describing the position of Finland in the “Europe of regions”, Kalevi Kivistö, a former university lecturer and also former Minister of Education, until recently provincial governor in the province of Middle Finland, expresses the opinion that regional differentiation in Finland is based on social factors which have old cultural roots. According to Kivistö, ethnic and cultural differences have had no decisive impact on the regional development of Finland. The regions cannot, however, be characterized as homogeneous “administrative units” because there are clear differences between the socio-economical situations of the different regions. This is true even though special development policies for equalizing the social conditions in Finland were carried out during the recent period of modernization which was strongest in the 1960’s and 1970’s. According to this logic, traditional cultures are the key to regional identities, with tradition increasingly an ideological tool. Culture was not very useful for modernization policies, but in the post-traditional situation its usability may increase.

Eastern and northern Finland are apparently poorer and socially more deprived peripheries, compared to southern and western parts of Finland. This can be evaluated by observing the rates of unemployment, sickness and even mortality. It still is a fact that the rates of suicides and mental illness are higher in eastern and northern Finland than in the parts of Finland which are better off. It is, however, not very often asked how these differences arose and were strengthened. Kivistö’s notion of the significance of an older border based on the conclusion of peace, the Peace Treaty at Pähkinäsaari in 1323, is interesting in this respect (see Appendix 2). He notes that the region-political support areas are still defined according to lines drawn up in this boundary treaty⁵. If this is so, the social and cultural meanings of historical borders are more complicated than we ever believed. In some cases, the basis of culturally valued social differences is more evident and is revealed quite directly; in other cases it is very deeply rooted in our identity and covered with many mysteries. We have, of course, many conceptualizations about cultural diversities of different regions in Finland,

as well as provincial and local differences in comportment and in dialects. But the concept of a common ethnocentric ground of Finnishness is not challenged in this way; on the contrary, by these means it is confirmed.

The politics of equality, which Finland has followed as a norm in its modernization strategy, has aimed at the elimination, or at least the flattening, of the hierarchical structure of class positions as well as at the elimination of differences between gender-positions in working life. In this respect the Finnish model (based on the Nordic welfare state model) has succeeded relatively well. But a crucial problem remains; it is caused by the common meaning given to equality. It has often been understood as a synonym for sameness. 'Sameness' always needs, as Martin (1995) says, 'eliteness' as its counterpart for it to exist. It gains its meaning when contrasted to what it is not. In this respect our concept of democracy, which is based on the identity logic, is, perhaps, not sustainable. Social democracy is purported to be based on the elimination of social inequalities in culturally unique conditions. It demands a "politics of presence" in the sense that interests represented in corporations can be valued socially, through identification with the majority. It demands cultural assimilation of minorities, whose appearance is different from ours and whose habits are inconceivable in our terms. Acculturation is the positive strategy for making strangers a tolerated part of us, in the spirit of brotherhood.

Politics of Presence – Or Cultural Choices

Those who are tolerated can be accepted and patronized. This kind of relationship seems to hold out the hope that if the patronized group will it, they may become more and more similar to the dominating one. But, as noted by Anne Phillips in her book *The politics of presence* (1995, p. 8), "women do not want to change their sex and black people do not want to change the color of their skin as a demanded condition for equal citizenship, nor do they want their differences discounted in an assimilationist imposition of 'sameness'." This kind of condition is in fact a demand for deep-rooted changes in identity. The important point here is that, as Phillips continues, the politics which is based on the existence of class differences – even though its ideology is directed to their elimination – always leads back to the social conditions in which these differences were grounded and on which the ideal of unity based on sameness was asserted.

We can only begin to solve the complex problems of alienation and exclusion when it is understood that racism is a political concept, a useful term for defining the power relation between “us and them”. Therefore it is meaningful to discuss how the criteria of the ‘Own’ and ‘Others’ are formed and classified and how favoring of one’s own and implementing discrimination of the other are explained (Miles, 1993, p. 21). It is a fact that tolerance of cultural differences is a necessity in the present world and ethnocentrism cannot have a sustainable basis. Cultural differences are a source of human richness.

In the modern and late-modern, or post-modern world, our cultural identity is no longer based on traditional values. It is more and more a question of political choices which involve the selection of approved cultural traits. The core of the problem of making choices lies with the uses to which the word identity is put. It is more and more used as a tool for describing political clashes. An identity which connotes homogeneity and permanence and implies uniqueness and sameness (see Martin, 1995, pp. 5-6), is increasingly irreconcilable with the world which presents growing ambivalence through globalizing differences and diversities (Bauman, 1992). For Finns, the issue is now, as Virtanen (1996) also points out, what kind of Finnishness we see as valuable enough to preserve through rapid change. This topic has been prominent on the public agenda in various forms.

By postponing choices we find our identity threatened by the outcomes of ethnocentrist attitudes. The problem of racism is evident even though only a small minority of Finns protest against foreigners in a racist way.⁶ The attitudes against foreigners hardened once Finland officially accepted a larger number of immigrants and refugees than had been her wont. People who had a different appearance and curious manners could be dealt with as interesting exceptions as long as there were not too many of them. Intolerance was also sharpened by recent conditions of economic recession, when the unemployment rate reached a level of 20% of the total labor force.

Another element in the stereotype of the Finn is the tendency to worry about “what *they* think of me”. The Finn supposedly has a constant need to strengthen a low self-esteem. Faced with a relatively large population of in-migrants, Finns now are uncertain what to think about foreigners who are joining our circle. In this situation we have to find the “stranger in ourselves”, to learn to value more positively the relationships we have entertained with others, and to learn to define our culture as an ensemble of connections with other cultures (Martin, 1995, pp. 6 and 16). The mosaic of cultures in this world forms a creative essence of understanding, a basis of

realizing one's own culture, of identifying it interactively, of keeping it alive. This is the way to realize that there is always something of the Other inside of my Self. Recognizing the "stranger in ourselves" need not, hopefully, mean that everybody goes on crying alone. But, perhaps, instead of crying together, people will find their unused energy and through it will learn to live in a way which is individually creative and socially acceptable, avoiding embarrassment through the inevitable situations of uncertainty.

Notes

- 1 I have adopted this term as included in "habitual culture", a term which I evolved by referring both to Bourdieu's term "habitus" and Bauman's "habitat" (see Ahponen 1996 b, pp. 199-200). In my use habitual culture is complexly constituted of distinctions by means of which qualities of cultural capital are classified and classifiable practices produced (Bourdieu 1992, p. 170) but also by means of which freedom and dependency of the social "agents" are constructed and restricted (Bauman 1992, p. 190). As a setting in which, as Bauman says, both action and meaning-assignment are possible, habitat is more and more meaningful for the production of cultural identity as a series of valuable choices.
- 2 This kind of communion is clearly articulated in Siikala's (1996, p. 148) article on the interpretations of Finnishness, included in a recent book *Olkaamme siis suomalaisia (Let's be Finnish)*, published by the Finnish Kalevala Association.
- 3 This important aspect of constructivism has been much discussed after the publication of Berger's and Luckmann's pioneering work on *The social construction of reality* (1966). Now this aspect is much more generally accepted as a starting point for the reconstruction of a field of cultural capital or of a habitat which, in the words of Zygmunt Bauman (1992, pp. 190-191) means "the territory inside which both freedom and dependency of the agency are constituted" and "the setting in which both action and assignment of meaning are possible." Therefore, it is important to emphasize the constructionist aspect of habitual culture or cultural habitat.
- 4 Virtanen is a professor of history at the University of Turku.
- 5 Suddenly, in reading the article of Kivistö, I realized that I was born in that region, in a border-region.
- 6 Unfortunately, Joensuu, my home town, has recently been called the "most racist place" in Finland because a small group of "skinheads" there has terrorized peaceful citizens and people who look different.

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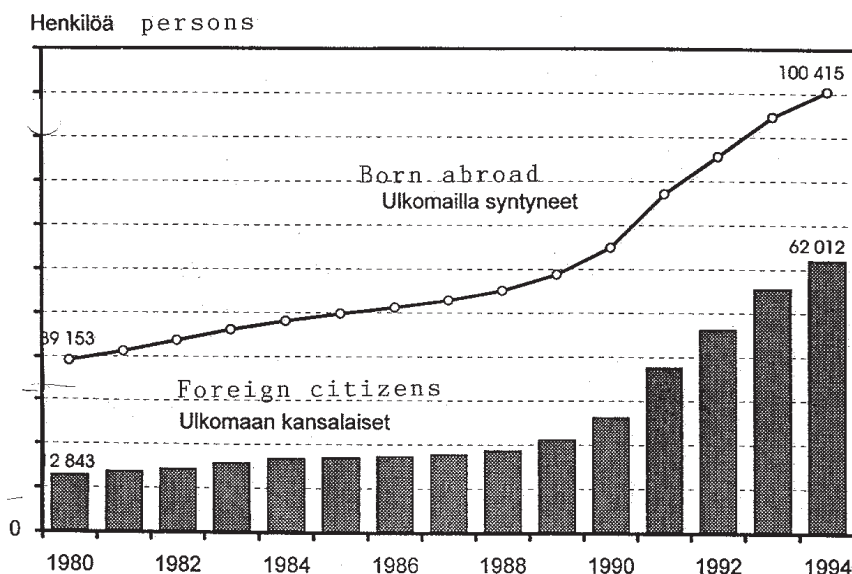
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Appendixes

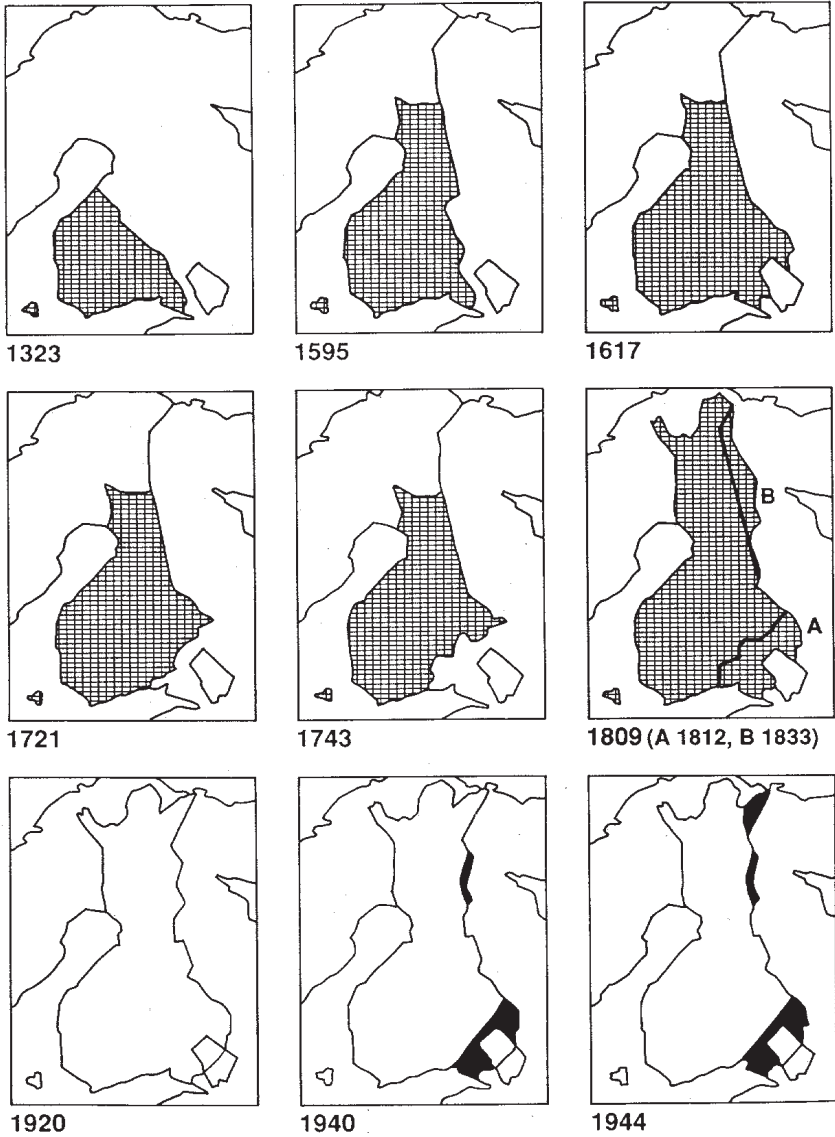
Appendix 1

Figure 1. Foreign citizens in Finland (figure by Jouni Korkiasaari, Migration Institute. Source: Virtanen 1996, 15).



Appendix 2

Figure 2. The areal shape of Finland since 1323. Source: Paasi 1996.



Devorah Kalekin-Fishman

ALIENATION AND MATERIAL CULTURE: CONCEPTIONS OF ISRAELI PALESTINIANS

When we speak of alienation we are actually raising issues of agency, human relationships, and structure. In a very meaningful sense, alienation is the lot of humanity. Although we have come to think of alienation as a consistently negative aspect of the human situation (witness the efforts at locating de-alienation, cf. Schweitzer & Geyer, 1989), the term has connotations which are positive as well. In the view of the eighteenth century philosophers who foresaw the revolution about to erupt in France, alienation, or the surrendering of some of one's rights, was necessary in order to establish a sovereign democratic state (Croce, 1955). Sociologists have developed involved arguments to show that only when a person is identified with 'others', and recognized as 'one of us' can s/he survive (Davis, 1949; Mead, 1982).

Among the negative assessments of alienation are interpretations in terms of arenas as detached as religion and economics. From the religious point of view, the otherness of alienation indicates the distance of human beings from the gods they have created and worshipped (Eliade, 1976; Niebuhr, 1955). Marx's extended treatment of capitalism and the ways in which capitalism leads people to alienation from their selves and their self-interest has been buttressed by many researchers and theoreticians (Blauner, 1964; Seeman, 1976). The odd ways in which even resistance to the capitalist structures ends in alienation have also been researched extensively (Apple, 1982; Willis, 1977; 1990). Psychologists have taken up the challenge and demon-

strated how the very structure of the psyche reflects the injuries of alienation. In psychoanalysis, the structures are explained in terms of the traumas of early childhood (Fromm, 1968). In social psychology, they are labeled according to situational learnings (Keniston, 1965). These approaches all proved very useful in describing the situation of university youth in the 60's as well as in interpreting the failures of schooling on several levels.

In broad theoretical terms, it is possible to model a world without inherent alienation. Marx (1967) pointed the way toward the ultimate resolution of opposing class interests through the historical evolution of conflicts between the owners of the means of production and those who depend on them. Weber (1964) imaged alternatives to the 'iron cage' of a rationalized and rationalizing system. Other theoreticians have sketched ways to overcome negative kinds of alienation through the augmentation of moral scruples (Gergen, 1985). Such improvement could be accomplished by 'natural' evolution, with the help of education.

In several of my researches I have explored the possibility of refining our understanding of alienation by examining the tendencies of social arrangements with which children and youth are confronted, on the one hand, and their reactions to those arrangements on the other (Kalekin-Fishman, 1981; 1987; 1993; 1996b). In my research into school regulations, for example (Kalekin-Fishman, 1996a), it was possible to show that by over-emphasis on norms and obligatory rules, school regulations exercise significant pressure for powerlessness, meaninglessness, and self-estrangement. Still, the effects on teachers and pupils involved in the implementation of the regulations cannot be summarized according to Seeman's (1959) social-psychological codification, or according to the prevailing interpretations of the effects of alienation on how people are inserted into the world.

A further revision of models of alienation is the goal of this paper. I will be exploring data about personal and collective selves of Israeli university alumni. The data were collected in observations of interaction and in interviews focusing on ordinary things in everyday life. The analysis will make it possible for us to draw conclusions about the interplay of different aspects of alienation in the formation of the individual.

In what follows, I will first outline some theoretical ideas on the formation of the self, introducing some perceptions about my own self. Then I will present findings from observations of classroom behavior and from open interviews with six Palestinian-Israelis – university graduates. The material will make it possible to draw some conclusions about the nature of the personal and the collective selves that have developed among the students;

and, in more general terms, it will be possible to point out some of the shades of alienation.

The Formation of the Self

Goldstein and Rayner (1994) describe the personal and collective self as a historical social structure which develops through dialogue with others. The dialogical relations are dynamic; changing as they in turn change participants' selves. It is, therefore, untowardly difficult to trace the nature of the variations. Yet, in a world that is increasingly characterized by an intermingling of populations, puzzling out the nature of the dialogue and the changes it leads to is of theoretical and practical importance. In this paper, I will attempt to trace the degree to which alienation can be discerned in the dialogical processes which characterize encounters between Palestinian citizens of Israel and the Jewish state in which they live. The data that I will cite are on two levels. One level is that of natural language. I will relate briefly to actual conversations I have observed between Jews and Palestinians – all student teachers studying toward accreditation in the same university. Then I will analyze the 'dialogue' between life styles, the ways in which the Jewish structures impinge on intra-group experiences of the Palestinians. The material that I will present was collected in the course of a project for promoting democracy and Jewish-Arab co-existence in the School of Education, and subsequently in interviews with Palestinian Israelis, alumni of the university.

A Personal Note

It would be nice to be able to say that some specific event or a precise theoretical predication 'caused' the formulation of the research question. Perhaps it is even more important, however, to be able to point out that the question I am exploring is not an academic ploy, but an exploration of issues that are of profound personal relevance.

The fact of the matter is that the topic of building bridges between cultures is a theme that has been a preoccupation of mine ever since childhood. Born in the United States of America, I was the first daughter in a religious Jewish family. Home was the realm of tradition, and that meant a kosher diet¹, strict observance of the Sabbath and of Jewish holidays, going to the synagogue, and attending 'Hebrew school' four afternoons a week, as

well as spending Saturday afternoons in rooms of the Hebrew school as a participant in the activities of a religious Zionist youth movement.

At the same time, real life was School, the public school conducted according to a taken for granted calendar that included Christian holidays and a few state celebrations. Friends from school were grouped into one of the possible sets of people from different religious groups.

From a very young age, therefore, my week was patterned as a series of entries and exits – border crossings. After exiting the red-brick building where we lived, I entered the many-windowed school world with its complex demands for studying and comportment, and for learning how to get along with school friends. Re-entering my home was ritualized in turn as soon as I had left the domain of school. Home meant complying with quite different rules and types of talk.

Entry into the youth movement signaled another type of exit from home. The movement was for weekends, and although it was part of the religious community, the interpretation of religious law that I encountered there was quite different from that of my home. Thus, the weekend was a time of escape from one religious frame into an overtly similar, but significantly different organization of experience.

The shape of each of the realms in which I functioned shifted as I went elementary school to junior high, although both were in the same neighborhood. There was a sharp turn when I went on to a high school whose students came from many different neighborhoods in the city, and then to a municipal college with an even wider catchment area. College friends were very important, but I had to be different. For me it was impossible to join my mates working in department stores ‘Thursday nights and Saturdays’ to earn pocket money.

Until I completed my studies for the B.A. degree, therefore, I was attuned to living in at least three different cultures concurrently. As I moved among the different worlds, I simply seemed to slip from dialogue to dialogue – consciously switching the mode of talk and the tenor of relationships. The migration to Israel made changes in the way my worlds were sorted. But essentially, decades later, I am still pursued by what is called my culture of origin, and, although I am Jewish in a Jewish state, I am still in several distinguishable ways, an American, and a representative of at least two types of American cultures.

In Israel, I have served as teacher, supervisor, lecturer, department head, project organizer, and perhaps above all, as a student-learner in my surround. Throughout, I have been concerned with how cultures meet. The

cultural diversity of Israel is a historical opportunity to observe and participate in bridging differences. It is wrong, however, to look upon the task as a purely pedagogical issue. In Israel, as in other countries, there is a burden of inequity – political and economic – which colors perceptions of cultural divergences. Hence, the educational notion of bridging differences is in fact a supremely political project, and success or failure has to be measured in terms of political aims. The tools of alienation theory are well-adapted to an analysis of these tensions.

Dialogues of Peers

For six years (1986-1992), I was involved in a project in which Arab and Jewish student teachers were encouraged to engage in activities that would boost their readiness for an active dialogue toward co-existence and enhance their ability to carry out such a dialogue. Participants in the project were all preparing for accreditation as teachers, and it was, therefore, reasonable to expect that this was an efficient way to ensure that the message of democracy and co-existence would penetrate the school system. Even before we could check our hypothesis about future practice, we discovered that we were dealing with vital educational and political questions that had to be solved in the university then and there.

While attempting to cope with some of these, I became interested in the more general question of how Palestinian students in a Hebrew-speaking university managed to deal with the contrasts (if contrasts there be) between experiences of what is essentially a Jewish academic framework and experiences in their own homes. First, however, I would like to refer to the dialogue that developed among the students in the course of the project.

Efforts at Bridging Differences

At the University of Haifa where the project was carried out, Jews and Arabs study in the same classrooms, eat in the same cafeterias, and undergo the same kinds of initiation rituals into academe. Rarely, however, do they form close friendships. The project that we conducted was actually an uncommon opportunity to study *together* and to talk about things that were personally meaningful. At the time of the project, all the participants (including the Arab students) were in the third year of their studies toward a B.A. degree at

a university where all the studies are conducted in Hebrew. There was no reason not to assume that in informal meetings Jews and Arabs could carry on dialogues easily. When we look at the protocols, however, we find that quite often this was not the case. There are many examples of failure.

The illustrations are all taken from protocols of weekend meetings in which Arab and Jewish students preparing themselves for teaching took part in a program designed to heighten their awareness of how instruction can serve education for democracy. Minutes of all the group's meetings were recorded by two experienced researchers (an Arab and a Jew), and the examples I will mention were culled from their notes. These weekends supplemented weekly workshops at the university and activities in which mixed teams of Arab and Jewish students observed classes in schools, drew up plans for lessons dealing with democracy and pluralism, and taught as a team in either Hebrew-speaking or Arabic-speaking post-primary schools.

The cases I will cite relate to the gaps between definitions by people from the different groups of materials that signaled personal or collective identity. Each case provides subtle cues to dimensions of alienation.

Different emphases led the members of each ethnic group to understand the term 'identity' differently. At a workshop session where the group leaders asked participants to describe their 'identities', the Jews described themselves in terms of personal traits. They attributed to themselves qualities such as kindness, consideration, helpfulness, friendliness, curiosity, intelligence, and so on. The Arab students, on the other hand, described themselves in terms of their collective affiliations: kinship, religion, ethnicity, and political party loyalty. Contrary to the intentions of the facilitators, this endeavor led to mutual reproach rather than mutual respect. The Palestinians accused the Jews of arrogance and snobbishness; they in turn charged the Arabs with stereotypical thinking.

The differential emphases on personal and collective selves were evident in the students' definitions of the functions of higher education as well. For the Jewish students, studying at the university meant self-actualization, realizing one's personal potential; while for the Arab students a higher education had social and political significance. They all agreed that higher education meant primarily "a chance to serve my people". Here the Jewish students reacted with cynical disbelief of the self-sacrifice implied.

Dialogues that are at most supposed to show minimal mutual understanding turned out to present problems because of the very different modes of conceptualization. After a night spent in a kibbutz guest house, an Arab woman greeted her Jewish colleague with a smiling and energetic "Good

morning". In response, the Jewish student merely nodded. The Arab student interpreted this as an insulting evasion, while the Jewish woman insisted that she just 'couldn't' converse before her coffee and had meant the response to be very friendly. The bitterness threatened to disrupt the morning's activities until there was decisive intervention by members of the staff.

Approaches to history are the salient arena for discovering modes of belonging and modes of estrangement. A significant incident exploded during an evening of 'showing something from our way of life that I love.' By chance, both a Jewish student and an Arab student chose to play recordings of folk songs. The Jewish student explained that she loved the song she wanted to present because her grandmother sang it to her often when she reminisced about the family's life in Europe before the Holocaust. The Arab student in turn played the song she had brought and told the class that this was a song her mother often sang. It was a song that she had sung in her childhood "before we were cast out of our village by the Jews in 1948". The statement caused a furor among the Jewish students. They argued that they had never "read about people being banished from their villages in history textbooks at school", and therefore it just was not true. Hurt, the Arab student said, "you believe your grandmother, why shouldn't I believe my mother?" There was no countermanding this simple statement, but each group remained isolated in their sadness.

The above misunderstandings that I have explored elsewhere in the framework of the politics of language-learning (Kalekin-Fishman, 1996b), are meaningful as measures of alienation. Initially, all the students involved, Jews and Arabs, were moved by good will (otherwise they would not have enrolled in the course) and by a certainty that they were all partners to the 'same' socio-political milieu. On the level of the things one does not think to problematize, however, the dialogues that are perpetual and do not attract attention, there is strong evidence of alienation in the sense of mutual estrangement, of mutual disempowerment, and (at least on the face of it) of an unalterable conviction that the norms which are 'in our heads' are the only guidelines for behavior that any person can contemplate.

Intercultural Dialogues as Part of Everyday Living

To explore the issues raised in the dialogues of the course more comprehensively, I decided to interview Palestinians about their own interpretations of the Arab-Jewish encounter in daily living. I therefore conducted open inter-

views with six alumni of the School of Education – three men and three women – a man and a woman from each of the religious groups – Moslems, Christians, and Druse. All were born and raised in Israel.

In general I was interested in how the interviewees understood their dialogue with Jews and with the Jewish-Israeli way of life. The point of departure for our conversations was the relatively bland topic of the Hebrew language, how they had learned Hebrew, and the degree to which Hebrew had had an impact on them. Language is, of course, a central axis of culture. In Israeli society, however, the Hebrew language enjoys a special status. The revival of this ancient tongue and its acceptance as an entirely viable *lingua franca* of a modern state is perceived to be a national triumph. The relationship of Israeli citizens to Hebrew is, therefore, a key issue in discussions of culture.

Five of the interviewees remembered their study of Hebrew, obligatory from the third grade on, as just another subject to learn. Hebrew was taught with all the explanations in Arabic; and outside the classroom, Arabic was the language of communication. Learning Hebrew became important only during the last two years of secondary school because the pupils knew then that they would need to use Hebrew for all their studies in the university.

The Christian woman still feels awkward when she speaks Hebrew. In her eyes, the study of Hebrew at school was an imposition and she had objected to it. But the price was high. At the university, she had to give up a course she was interested in because one of the course requirements was to make an oral presentation in class. She still felt that this was something she could not do adequately.

The Druse woman had learned Hebrew in a manner that was quite different. Growing up in a mixed town, she was acquainted with Hebrew almost from birth. She remembers her father talking to her in Hebrew even when she was little. Further on, her parents sent her to Jewish schools. As a result, despite having had private lessons in Arabic, she feels more at ease speaking, and even with writing, Hebrew than she feels reading or speaking in Arabic. The Druse man was massively exposed to Hebrew after secondary school, when he joined the army. In his view, the intensity of the experience has given him the feeling that speaking Hebrew is almost like second nature.

Knowledge of the language is not, of course, an end in itself. Students felt that knowing Hebrew was important so that they would be able to cope with the demands of an academic education in Israel. This purely instrumental end is legitimate and its achievement can be seen as a bid for ensuring that the person will not be excluded from developing a powerful self. I

wondered, however, whether familiarity with the language had had any impact on the kinds of social ties that the Palestinian students had developed.

The Druse woman, who had been immersed in the language as such, had not, as it turned out, had the same kind of immersion in social groups. Her parents did not allow her to participate in extracurricular activities or in social meetings sponsored by the school. She was not allowed to visit classmates' homes, or to invite Jewish classmates to her own home. Throughout her school career, her social life was carefully regulated and confined to territory in which the vehicle of communication was Arabic. The change came at the university where most of her friends were Jewish.

Whereas for the Druse woman the possibility of using language for expressive and social ends had evolved from the improbable to the probable over time, the Druse man had had a more contradictory experience. By joining the army he achieved access not only to a control of Hebrew as "second nature" but also to relationships that had never been dreamed of at home. As he put it, the military service caused a revolution in his life. He himself changed and changed time-honored customs at home. It became a true means of dialogue with men and women few of them from the Druse community. The telephone was both a metaphor and an instrument of the new self. He began to use it freely, and outsiders began to call him a great deal.

The Christians and the Moslems who had neither served in the army nor studied in Jewish schools, had a different experience of social ties. First and foremost, they emphasized the uses of the language for getting along with bureaucratic officials and for arranging all their affairs. Through their use of Hebrew, however, they were also able at the university to become acquainted with others, with Jews as individuals and real people.

At a deeper level, the issue at hand is that of the possibility of an intercultural dialogue between the Palestinian and the Jewish cultures and the nature of that dialogue. Culture signals the inner meaning of a group's way of life. It is not the property of people, but rather a generalization of their ideas and their deeds (Elliot, 1990). Since these generalizations are embedded in what is taken for granted and identified with what is 'natural', culture cannot be itemized. For the outside, significance is clarified at the meeting points of the abstract and the concrete, the symbol and the item. I assumed that by discussing the perception of how Hebrew and Hebrew meanings penetrate daily life, it would be possible to indicate what frames of meaning and what theoretical schemes (Giddens, 1990) of Palestinian culture are mediated by the contact with Jewish culture. I will, therefore, in the follow-

ing focus on primary domains of which students are aware in daily life: namely, their perception of a university education, the world of work, religion and orthodoxy, and the intimate world of friendship and family. In light of the centrality of these areas of living in personal decision-making, it may be possible to draw conclusions about whether and how alienation is entwined in the collective self.

Education is the bridge between the culture into which the interviewees were born and the culture institutionalized by the state of Israel. It is, therefore, of interest to fathom the governing view of education in general. All of the Palestinian interviewees, with no differences because of community of origin, agreed that education, and especially higher education, is of central importance. Two of the interviewees interpreted grades as signs of success. But the other four spoke of the fruits of a higher education in terms of status. The alumni expressed opinions about the place of education in the community – the collective self. They explained that it was important to belong to the intelligentsia, to have a capacity to deal with intellectual issues. The Druse woman claimed that of late, an academic education has become a source of pride and prestige equal to the traditional veneration of military prowess. The responses in which the personal self was the focus were different for men and women. The men I interviewed had no doubt but that an education can be redeemed in concrete rewards of money and prestige. They also insisted that a good education would provide them with access to community activism and to politics – a mode of serving their nation. By contrast with the decisiveness of the men, the women were far less clear about the purposes of a university education. Their responses were quite in accord with the feminist literature on the difficulties women have in directing themselves toward vocational success (see, for example, Epstein, 1981; Gilligan, 1982; Palgi & Rosner, 1980). The Moslem woman, a graduate student in history, had a very vague idea that ‘something’ would come of her studies, while the Christian woman interviewee had only an idea that she would enjoy some vague advantages. Again, the Druse woman was something of an exception in that she knew she wanted to continue with studies in clinical psychology. But even she was not so sure of how this would in fact come about.

All the students – women and men – expressed satisfaction in having succeeded in maintaining the status of student, an important step forward in its own right. In this, too, there was an ambiguity that the women had to confront. On the one hand, the women knew that they were advancing beyond the traditional role of women in their communities. They were proud

to be fulfilling what they called their mothers' dreams – cutting themselves loose from the traditional limitations. On the other hand, the very possibility of reaching the university was dependent on the good will of their fathers and brothers. In talking about how they had reached the university, they conveyed uncertainty, a suspicion that the achievements were precarious.

Work: All the alumni that I interviewed had trained for teaching, an investment that had the full support of the family and the community. While studying, however, they all worked at part-time jobs. In the university, they worked in the library or as research assistants. Some gave private lessons to pupils in need of help, although this was not always a paying job. The men I interviewed told of earning money for their studies during the summer, when they worked in the building trade or took on responsible tasks in small factories belonging to members of the family. As to the future, all three young men expressed the belief that an academic degree will make it possible for them to choose among highly respectable types of work, among which teaching was only one of the alternatives. One of the men mentioned some of the options – politics, social work, or perhaps going on to a doctorate in education.

Having completed their studies, they were now equipped with all the needed certification and the question was what work to invest in. While the men interviewees related to this issue in concrete detail, the women were for the most part uncertain. Weighing alternatives, the Christian and Moslem men could see that teaching does have at least one advantage in that it is a means for helping “my people” to get ahead. But in practice, they were also dubious. They were upset by the security checks run on teachers in the Arab sector. There were stories of brothers, cousins, uncles, who had been found to be security risks, and therefore could not get jobs as teachers. In the end, they had had to leave the country, and the extended family.

The Druse man had a somewhat different perspective. He was seriously weighing the possibility of joining the regular army as an alternative to teaching. He explained that the Druse are aware of the opportunities they have in Israel. But they are also conscious of the fact that as non-Jews they have to cope with limitations in many areas of living. The positive side is, in his opinion, that Israel is a country with rules and regulations. Because he is careful to learn what the rules are, he has been able, thanks to his army service, to find ways to realize all the privileges that are his by right.

Work was a peculiarly amorphous area for the women, although they, too, were hesitant about committing themselves to teaching. The Moslem interviewee was certain that teaching secondary school was not a suitable job for

her, but she could not point to a job that would be to her taste. The Christian woman “thought she would” teach a while as a means to earn money because having money was the key to independence. The Druse woman rejected teaching because she had an opportunity to study psychology, but she was not certain that she would in fact be a professional psychologist. While talking about work, she confided that to be “accepted for myself” was the most important consideration for her.

Religion: My questions on religious beliefs and on the commitment to religion inspired the identical claim in all six of the interviewees. Each of them asserted that they are not religious. It was interesting to learn, however, that in each community, ‘not being religious’ had a different significance.

The two Christians explained that they do not accept the theology of any specific sect. But for all that there are certain principles of Christianity that are beyond criticism. Among the fundamentals that they referred to were their faith in the Virgin birth and the Holy Trinity. They each also cited a commitment to the cross as a symbol of the effectiveness of prayer. The Moslems who insisted that they are not religious described the commandments that they do not observe. The difficulty, however, with Islam, to their minds, is that many of the religious precepts are embedded in community customs. Thus, they have to be very clear in deciding on their stands. The Moslem woman, for example, who claimed that she is free to choose her own way in almost every aspect of her life, ‘admitted’ that she does, for all that, fast in the month of Ramadan. She has chosen not to rebel against this custom which she interprets as a cultural obligation to the community (see Durkheim, 1965). From this point of view, civil loyalty obliges those who observe religious customs. The Moslem man is unhappy with this kind of consciousness and battles against it. He emphatically does not fast during Ramadan. In our conversation he went on to list the sins that he commits because he has weighed the issues. With some pride, he asserted that this kind of active objection requires a strong character in the face of community pressure in his village.

In this field as well, I found that the Druse interviewees had a different perspective. The Druse religion does not require specific cult activities. Religious philosophy does not touch them personally, and the individual Druse are not required to assess their deeds according to religious criteria. Families who identify themselves as observant adopt a modest life-style and reject the pleasures of this world. If they intend to be outstanding in religious life, they make weekly visits to the ‘hilweh’, the mosque of the Druse. Tradition-

ally, the hilweh is often hidden from the view of outsiders, and the exceptional religious behaviors of the most pious Druse are similarly not on show. The Druse university alumni, therefore, had no compunctions about relating that they have no contact with religion. Neither, however, ruled out the possibility that they would find interest in religion when they are older. The phenomenon of living as a secularist in youth and returning to the faith in middle age is well-known in Druse circles.

Friendship, marriage, and the family experience: The interviewees had two different views of marriage: an abstract view of marriage in general, and a different view, quite concrete, about their own future marriage. In principle, all the interviewees said that relations between men and women have to be redefined. They were all in favor of letting unmarried young people meet freely and enabling them to choose their partners for themselves. In such cases the young people would notify their parents of their decisions. In the course of the conversation, however, it became clear that the liberalism which they ostensibly wanted to adopt from what they saw as Jewish customs, toppled when they started talking about their own situation. All of the interviewees agreed that their parents will have the right to decide for them which relationship is a viable marriage arrangement, and the right to veto an arrangement of which the family did not approve.

The Druse man, for example, is gratified by the relationships that he has developed with both men and women among the Jews. The gratification shaded into uncertainty as he went on to describe them. He insisted that he was just like his Jewish friends, especially the soldiers with whom he had served in the army. He thinks that it is a good idea for a young man to make his own choice of marriage partner. For the time being, he said, he actually does act to suit his own tastes and he is resisting his father's pressure to marry now. But there was a reservation. He confesses that he feels completely free when he is away from home – when he is at the university and away from the village, i.e., most of the week. When Jewish friends, girls or women, call him at home, however, he understands why his mother hangs up on them. Basically, he concludes, somewhat inconsistently, that he accepts the system of match-making customary in the Druse community. Despite his differences with his parents, he realizes that marriage is a family matter above all. Mixed marriages are impossible because the couple is expelled from the community. He is not willing to risk such a fate.

In the eyes of the Christian young man, the reasoning is somewhat different even though the outcome is the same. In theory, the road to family

life is not too complicated. He almost left the church when he wanted to marry a girl in Europe, and thought that he could ignore his family's aspirations. In the end, however, he found that he was not capable of sacrificing family ties. He changed his mind, too, because marrying her might have meant living abroad – again, the difficulty was that that would be away from his family. He is convinced by his 'Arab' half that this is the way things must be. But, in his words, the Israeli (quasi-Jewish) half 'whispers' to him that there may be another alternative.

In relating to issues of friendships with men, and of marriage, the women did not express any interest in deviating from traditional forms. Like her male counterpart, the Druse woman chooses her friends freely while she is a student. This is possible because, for now, she (the only one of the three women) shares an apartment with a girl friend from the university. At the time, renting a flat was a daring step, but this arrangement is clearly only temporary. She conceded quite calmly that her marriage partner will be chosen in the traditional way.

The Christian woman interviewee thinks she would like to live outside her parents' home; but, in her perception, "she can do nothing about it." She cannot imagine what arguments would be convincing even in her own eyes, because it is clear to her that a decent woman does not live in an apartment separate from the family circle. She is familiar with the hazards, for, as she points out, Christian young women at the university often "lose their heads" in starting relationships with the opposite sex. To her mind, they adopt words used by Jewish students without really understanding them. What they call "going together" is, in her view, sheer immorality, rather than being modern. She will leave home when "the right man" comes along. Her plans are to marry in a church. Her husband to be will have to be Christian, but it does not matter whether the church is Orthodox, Catholic, or Protestant.

The Moslem woman wants, quite simply, to act according to tradition. Even though her family is not at all religious, she thinks that there is no point to "making people angry." She thinks of the tradition as a cultural duty to the community, and there is no doubt that everybody is obliged to carry it out.

Family living: As we saw above, the family unit is important in every context. The opportunity to study at the university presents itself only if the family supports the idea and finds ways to provide the student with financial support. The family is also called upon to approve of the disciplinary area that the student chooses. Decisions about work are made in accordance with

family norms and needs. Conclusions about marriage, and even friendship, have to be endorsed by the family.

In all the topics of conversation the interviewees tended to place the family and tradition together. The culture of Jewish-Israelis was called 'modern'. This culture is the set of practices par excellence that is likely to threaten tradition. There was interest, therefore, in discovering to what extent this culture, understood to be the production of the state, had penetrated day to day family life. In this connection I will cite things said in the interviews about clothing, food, and about items in the home.

Clothing. In the Near East, women's traditional dress is often very beautiful. Long dresses and long skirts are topped with highly decorated, embroidered blouses and jackets. When I asked the students about clothing, I found to my surprise that they had no interest in the topic. The women giggled, and told me emphatically that their mothers do not sew their clothes. They dress "exactly" like the Jewish students; they go shopping "like everybody else," and wear clothes that are fashionable. The Moslem woman compared her clothes with those of acquaintances who live in Nablus, and stated without hesitation that in Nablus, the women are at least a generation behind the times. The men waved the question aside and simply pointed to what they were wearing – the standard jeans and sweatshirt of the Israeli student – Jewish or Palestinian.

In relation to food, on the other hand, the interviewees all showed a heightened sensitivity. All the men and women told me that they like spicy food, with lots of different kinds of salads and "interesting" vegetable dishes. They were of one mind: Jewish food is insipid, bland, and tasteless.

The home is a mixed arena from a cultural point of view. The perception of comfort in the home was taken over in toto from the Jewish-Israeli milieu. First of all, the interviewees pointed out that their homes, like those of the Jews, are equipped with "everything that is necessary in a modern home". They mentioned refrigerators, washing machines, ovens, and so on. Necessary as they are, purchasing these items is a heavy financial burden. The Moslem woman spoke sadly about the things that her mother does not have. Since every young man has to outfit the house he builds for his bride with all the electrical appliances she wants, many Druse men have to postpone marriage for an unconscionably long time.

But the furnishings that make a house a home are not so easily summed up. The women interviewees had a very clear idea of how to furnish the house. When they talked about the different rooms in the house, they proved that the Jewish-Israeli home was a standard only to a limited extent. The family living

room, the heart of every Palestinian home, is distinctly different from the Jewish “salon”. In the eyes of the Moslem woman, the “Jewish” living room with its sofa, two arm chairs, coffee table, and two or three pictures on the walls, is a cold, alienated place. In a room of this kind it is very difficult, she said, to develop feelings of human warmth. In the home of the Druse woman there are two rooms where people can sit together. One is designed especially for the men – Druse or Jewish. This is the room with the standard gear of Jewish homes, with the addition of many decorations on the wall – tiles, flowers, and pictures. The second living-sitting room is furnished according to the Druse tradition. In this room the women of the family gather with their friends. This traditional family room illustrates the essence of family and community life, the core of every family, rich or poor. There are many rugs on the floor, but no decorations on the walls. There are mattresses on the rugs in no particular order. If there is a baby in the family, there is space for the crib or the cradle near the wall. There are lots of trays, and from time to time, there appear small cups of steaming coffee. There is also likely to be a television set. The warm atmosphere has been familiar for generations. In the eyes of the interviewee, this room is not only a room in which people come together, but in fact a room for living and a resource for life.

From this cursory glance at the ordinary, we see that the areas in which Jewish culture is recognized as predominant are the relatively external levels of dress and electrical equipment. Messages of Jewish culture are assimilated and integrated for instrumental purposes – appearing in public and convenience. There is, however, strong resistance to the influence of Jewish-Israeli models in expressive or spiritual affairs. In areas of living connected with emotions and family identity, the interviewees tended to reject what they classify as Jewish patterns of living.

The strongest resistance to Jewish-Israeli patterns of behavior appeared in relation to religion. There was no particular reference to, or interest in, Jewish-Israeli customs when students either supported or rejected their own religions. This is significant in light of the fact that taking a stand on religion was important to all six of the interviewees. The point of reference to which the interviewees keep returning is the family. The family’s structure, social status, principles, as well as the prosaic everyday habits of eating and spending time together were at the center of the students’ concerns. Jewish culture penetrates in the form of the Hebrew language. Hebrew terms infiltrate naturally when they talk about education and about political matters that are emphasized in the newspapers. But the values and the substructure of the family are not seriously threatened.

Discussion in Context

The data cited above were collected in informal interviews and investigated with tools of qualitative content analysis. The method of collecting data by means of conducting relatively free conversations is substantively apt, given that the collective and the individual self evolves dialogically. Through the protocols of the interviews, I was able to uncover different levels of coping with alienating circumstances. I would like to explicate this here a bit further.

From a low of 11% in the early 70's, the population of Arab citizens of Israel has grown to about 19% of a total population of almost six million. The degree to which one can speak of this large minority as alienated has, however, changed only in part. I would like to refer to macro levels of collective self-definition, political and economic resources, and opportunities for advancement. Then, I will trace these in individuals' consciousness. Finally, I will connect the phenomena with understandings of alienation.

In the Declaration of Independence (1948), Israel is defined as a "Jewish democratic state". The emphasis on the term Jewish is understandable in light of the devastating history of the Jewish people if only in this century. The state of Israel was founded as the one place in the world where Jews have the distinction of being unhyphenated natives. Despite the affirmation that as a Jewish state, Israel is a democracy, it cannot be gainsaid that this achievement inevitably places minority groups on a lesser plane. Rather than boasting an automatic collective definition, Palestinian-Israelis are constrained to start from clarifications of what they are not: not Jewish, not part of the majority in the state, not part of their own national majority in other states, not native speakers of Hebrew, and so on. They are fully entitled to civil rights, but these privileges, which peak during elections once every four years, are a rather pale substitute for a full-blooded repertoire of affiliative assets on which to construct a collective identity.

The political resources of the Arab minority in Israel are at best limited. From 1948 to 1965, Palestinian Israelis lived under the jurisdiction of a military government. For the last 30 years, blanket suspicion of what is called "the Arab sector" has been mitigated. The Arabs are organized in several political parties with different ideologies, some with sizable constituencies, and Palestinian Israelis do serve in the Knesseth, the Israeli Parliament. But never has there been an Arab Minister in government. Few Palestinian lawyers serve as judges; the number of district judges can be counted on one hand; and to date no Palestinian sits in the Supreme Court.

When the State of Israel was founded, the economic resources available to Palestinians were severely limited. After the war of 1948, the Palestinians left in Israel were, in a word, impoverished, dependent on a not highly developed agricultural economy for their livelihood. Under conditions of constant (Jewish) immigration, with limited opportunities for employment, and with most of the state's industry nationalized, there was no opportunity for Palestinians to take up positions of economic leadership. Over the years, however, agriculture has undergone radical development, and the labor market has changed drastically. At the same time, Palestinian Israelis have had access to education, including higher education.

Palestinian Arabs, the majority of whom reside outside the urban centers, have, consequently, developed their own economic affairs with great success. Construction and small industry have grown immeasurably (Statistical Yearbook, 1997). The average income has risen from 40-50% of the national mean, 30 years ago, to about 80% of that of the Jewish population today. There is a growing class of professionals – doctors and lawyers who practice their professions in hospitals and offices throughout the country.

There is no question but that the very definition of the State of Israel, as well as its precarious international position from its foundation, created a framework of alienating conditions for the Palestinian citizens. At the same time, the State created conditions for dialogue and debate between the majority apparatus and the minority's alertness to opportunities for accommodation and assimilation. By taking advantage of openings which presented themselves throughout the past half century, Palestinian Israelis have eluded some of the stipulations which keep them away from the centers of power and wealth. Still today, however, we cannot say that macro-conditions for alienation have entirely disappeared.

There is, therefore, a special interest in our examination of the precipitation of alienating conditions in social psychological reactions – possible areas of micro-alienation. The cases described in this paper show that accommodation to majority cultural patterns is not total. As the students repeatedly indicated, there are aspects of the majority culture that affect their modes of living and attract their attention. But in the large, they are protected from complete assimilation and this is by choice. Community frameworks, such as the family and the religious affiliation, cast an indelible shadow and seem as well to protect the interviewees from the onslaught of syndromes of alienation.

In this connection, the ways in which the students in the project defined their identity provides interesting evidence. Affiliation is the major factor in

their daily lives, as well as in the celebration of identity. Whereas the state does not supply a collective identity that is viable for the minority, the community and the family do. Despite the differences in the religious backgrounds of the interviewees, all of them are aware of intelligible systems of norms which guide their judgment and their actions. They are parts of a community and enjoy the fruits of belonging which include a security of self. The rhythms of life are familiar and cherished. There is a meaning to what happens and a foreseeable outcome. In sum, the interviewees do not give any sign of suffering from anomia, social isolation, self-estrangement, or meaninglessness.

The emblem of alienation that is not eliminated is that of powerlessness. Students who have completed courses of study in an Israeli university still have to contend with powerlessness on several levels. But even this is quite different from a 'pathology.' Academic studies cultivate a critical outlook that constitutes acculturation to a world that is quite iconoclastic. This is a burden with which it is perplexing to contend in tension a traditional community structure. The interviewees seem to have acquired a keen awareness of the degree to which they are powerless in the face of what they perceive to be the overwhelming poise and self-security of the majority. They are also aware of the gaps between the majority designs for living and the designs that propel and shape their own lives. Thus, while basking in the warmth of community and family, they cannot be oblivious to the limitations exercised over a perhaps mythic, but nonetheless lively goal of freedom.

In theoretical terms there is an anomaly. People are able to recognize the structural frameworks of alienation, and yet (thanks to the alienating patterns of human relations in the state), perceive themselves to be acting as free agents in many aspects of their lives. This perception, together with the grasp of the concrete limitations on action, signifies how alienation can be lessened. The person who knows how and where she is being forced into situations of powerlessness is not without defenses. The person who appreciates the strength of human relations and their contribution to her well-being is not adrift. The person who is attuned to discovering how and when to act, as well as to acting when it is possible is far from weakened by alienation.

It is likely that the post-modern condition with its tolerance for difference, its acceptance of fragmentation, and its allowance for making mistakes and remaking actions, is useful for the liberation of alienated minorities. Against the mosaic background of 'all kinds of stuff', the decisive pull of traditions and traditional forms turns out to be a formidable tool for tracing one's own place and bettering it.

Note

1 No mixing of milk and meat dishes either in cooking or in eating; no eating of pork or of any pork products. Constant monitoring of the procedures and careful selection of food stores where shopping could be done.

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Philip Wexler¹

RE-SELFING AFTER POSTMODERN CULTURE: SACRED SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Introduction

Some years ago, I tried to apply Marx's theory of social relations to an analysis of social interaction in high school. I argued that the basic categories of a political economy of social relations – alienation, exploitation and commodification – which I had claimed formed the basis of a critical social psychology (Wexler, 1983, 1996), structured symbolic interchanges in American high schools. Subsequently, building first on the alienation concept, I tried to show how class differentiated, social identity processes shared a common absence, lack, or emptying of the self (Wexler, 1992).

What I now want to suggest is that the historic emptying of self, which is equivalent to the effects of alienation described by Marx, as well as the “mechanical petrification” Weber decried in *The Protestant Ethic*, and the biopolitical regulation detailed by Foucault, is accompanied by a counter process: a filling or “re-selfing” antidote. This social identity process, is, however general its dynamic, historically embedded in particular socio-cultural formations. Re-selfing (or, as Fromm, 1964, referred to the counter-alienation process, “de-alienation”) now occurs under specifiable, though complex social conditions. Similarly, it is a multi-lineal rather than unified phenomenon. And, the relation between these socio-culturally shaped identity processes

and the social structural systems within which they occur, are no less ambivalent or unidirectional.

Resacralization: Between Commodity and Sacred

I have recently described these altered social conditions under the heading of “resacralization”, following Wuthnow (1992), Thompson (1990) and others. There are many empirical, though scattered, indicators of “re-enchantment” countervailing Weber’s “disenchantment of the world”. I have argued (Wexler, 1996) that postmodernism takes further, and transforms in quality, the modern contradiction between emancipation and control, or, in Weber’s terms, between charisma and rationalization.

The medium or channel through which the contradiction operates is itself contradictory and further polarized under the postmodern regime. For as modern individualism intensifies, so does the “hyper-socialized” “disciplinary society.” The pursuit of lonely, individualistic freedom for the self coexists with “colonization of the life world” (Habermas, 1987) and therapeutically coded extensions of the administered society that is Enlightenment’s ironic (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1972) and unhappy ending. The extreme point of rationalization – which, like sociology, has its cultural roots in Protestantism (Weber, 1958) – is the pervasiveness of the commodity form, the commodification of all aspects of everyday life. The extreme point of the counter tendency, ‘charisma’ in Weber’s term, is increasingly in what Wuthnow (1992) calls the “rediscovery of the sacred”. Between an overarching dynamic structural contradiction of processes of commodification on the one hand, and on the other, processes of re-sacralization (Thompson, 1990), are found a range of individual practices of adaptation and transformation which simultaneously reflect and presage their “intellectual sublimations” as cultural forms.

What occurs between polarities of commodification and sacralization? I have been arguing that the self is the central site of structural contradiction and that culture-creating movements increasingly are embedded in collective processes of self-transformation (for an expanded discussion, see Wexler, 1991). The primary social basis of a movement that works through the process of self-transformation is the contradiction between the subjective demands of consumption and production. The initial youth movement of the professional middle class, like historical movements generally (Alberoni, 1984; Foss & Larkin, 1986), required the sense of a new and other world, that included a radical reorganization of the self or ego. A new movement is possible that is created

from contradictory socially structured, subjectively experienced demands a social psychology which is experienced as ambivalence. Social contradictions are the precondition for the sort of ego ambivalence that Alberoni (1984, pp. 84-125) describes as the core of the 'nascent state'. The movement of reorganization or subjective realignment, the nascent state, is where "...one, Eros, violently seizing new objects in its grasp, and the other destroying the structures that imprison the former and investing the old love objects. Compared to the obsessive constraint that preceded it, the experience is one of liberation" (Alberoni, 1984, p. 102).

Ambivalence or internal conflict can, however, be contained by patterned methods of ego defense, as we saw in studies of the school/class self (Wexler, 1992). Cultural mediation of the self/society relation now performs that function. The analyses of Ashley, Langman, Lukes and others (Schneider, 1975; Slater, 1980; Wexler, 1991) describe post-modern forms of commodity fetishism. How the socially patterned defenses that contain ambivalence work from the mass culture to the organizational level (Hirschhorn, 1988; LaBier, 1989) still requires a more detailed description. The collective/self relation is mediated by culturally reinforced and culturally-represented obsession and compulsion as well as fetishism and addiction. The study of collective neurosis that postmodernism and its critics describe, corresponds to typical self dynamics in the consumption relation. The "spectacular self" is television's self (Kroker & Cook, 1986). Self-limitation and neurosis is, however, also created for the "working wounded" (LaBier, 1989) in the postindustrial workplace (Hirschhorn, 1988). Postmodernism sublimates necessity and performance as well as sexual desire; yet its representation, even critically, is of the culture of consumption. Still the work career is no less powerful a determinant of the life-world among the professional middle class than is its free-time commodified fetishism of visual imagination. While the self is spectacular or even imploded, it is simultaneously over-instrumentalized. If self-reflection is absorbed in pervasive media image and sound, practical action is rationalized into increasingly informationalized decision nodes. What Noble (1991) describes in the genesis of the "man-machine symbiosis" paradigm in military/ educational research is the endpoint of a more self-invested and self-mediated process of work-life. The consumer self is diffused while the producer self is condensed. One is fetishistically attached to its object, while the other is tied by disembodied performance obsession.

This contradiction is socially structured, between production and consumption, and subjectively experienced, between the happily dissolute and

seriously retentive self (Langman, 1991). The intense pressure toward self-reorganization will occur when the now protected boundaries of the institutionally split self give way to integrative forces. The press for integration is economic rationalization for a more efficient subjectivity. Ultimately, the quest for greater performance and productivity, under the intermediate guise of “healthfulness,” demands an end to defensive ego-wastefulness.

There is a way out of the iron cage: rationalization destroys the internal defenses that help reproduce it. The new movement is a deformed, revised holism – one that will have to redevelop self and social integration from the residues of the historic contradiction of an agonized leading class, and as we shall see, this holism cannot avoid a sacred hue. The localization of social energies at the site of the self of course prompts the direction of commodifying and not only ‘transformative’ possibilities, to self-dynamics. For “the agonized leading class,” the professional middle class, self-activity can be quickly territorialized as “life-style engineering” (Kellner & Heuberger, 1992, p. 13). They write:

Functional rationality now becomes sinister indeed. It permeates the private lives of people just as it dothe public sphere. It undermines all traditions. It makes even more precarious the individual’s quest for meaning and identity. The new professions apply an engineering mindset to the searing questions arising from the modern crisis of meaning and identity, a crisis to which modern production with its manifold tensions has significantly contributed.

These are the new professions of cultural workers, who, with a strongly individualistic and moral outlook help to create a “liberation market” of services for personalized, individual self-realization, by “creating” and distributing “designer life styles”. Significantly, Hunter and Fessenden (1992) write that life style engineering and personal self-realization is not merely a hedonistic activity as might be imagined. On the contrary, the search for self is very much a moral need, which is the condition for a new brand of post-industrial capitalist “moral entrepreneurs” who “...derive their livelihood from the production and distribution of new ways of thinking and acting morally” (Hunter & Fessenden, 1992, p. 161). Their moralities are generally secular, even body-centered, with special emphasis on the moralization of health (anti-smoking, animal rights). For, Hunter and Fessenden (1992, p. 187) argue, these new moral entrepreneurs work to produce an as yet inchoate new moral order, by and for the new class. In their words: “... it is to the knowledge sector, and to the categories of people we have called moral entrepre-

neurs in particular, that we must look to see how a newer moral order – one that greases the wheels of postmodern capitalism – takes shape.“

Existing simultaneously with the investment of social energies in the self-production of healthful re-moralized sectors of the new professional middle class within commodified postmodern capitalism, the self and its dynamics – what I call ‘individual practices’ – are contemporary versions of charisma that are expressed in anti-rational, individualized processes of self-loss, fusion, or transcendence. Following Freud, Lindholm (1990, pp. 60-61) explains charisma as a reaction and counter tendency to excessive “civilization”:

... the rationalization of society may actually exaggerate the human yearning for self-loss in the passionate mob gathered around the charismatic. This is because the ever greater restrictions of civilized life and bureaucratic organization of necessity increasingly frustrate instinctual demands - in particular the demand for ecstatic experiences of merger. Heightened repression means that charisma, which satisfies the desire for self-loss, will be revealed in an excessive and convulsive manner since, according to Freudian theory...

Lindholm attempts to specify the Freudian self-loss need as a social response, not simply to instinctual repression but to modern conditions of alienation and then to post-modern conditions of loss of self boundaries within an ideology of possessive individualism. Post-modernism’s “play ethic” is “more a precondition than a defense against charismatic involvement” since it contributes to emotional distancing and loss of self boundary markers (Lindholm, 1990, p. 87). (For a description of the post-modern self, see also Gergen, 1991.) The need for ecstatic self-loss or deep spiritual attachment and merger or fusion becomes a counterweight to a post-modern condition that continues and heightens modernity’s commitments to self, rationalization, and the dissolution of tradition while at the same time, adding the boundaryless narcissism and emotional detachment of post-modernity. Lindholm explores different paths, as varied as religious movements and romantic love, to underline how the “primal need” for passionate attachment and ecstatic loss in a charismatic object is variously, but widely expressed. This quest for “...a communion that offers not reason, but lived vitality,” this “electrifying blurring of boundaries” will continue to exist. “The question,” he concludes, “is what form these moments will take” (Lindholm, 1990, p. 189). A similar effort to discover paths out of “the iron cage”, although more in the Marxist language of alternatives to commodification, is expressed in the work of

Vincent (1991). For her, "... the real need is to grasp the emerging movements against the tyranny of abstract labour, in social relations as well as in intersubjectivity, in individuals' relation to their vital environment as well as to their action" (Vincent, 1991, p. 141).

It is not labor, but art, for all its "many dead-ends" that offers an "anticipatory force" a "going beyond immediate relations" of capitalist valorization and abstraction to a politics (Vincent, 1991, p. 140) "... that is no longer, in its essence, the strategy or tactics of conquering positions of power; it becomes a struggle for better conditions of action, for fuller communication allowing for a greater social inventiveness." Art is "subversion" and "nourishment", a secular sacred "inassimilable" moment against the persuasiveness of a commodified daily life. This same dynamic – the contradiction between emancipatory and controlling practices under postmodern conditions – is also described by Melucci (1989) in his theory of social movements. The dialectic, of course, is that the same "hyper-socialized" controlling system also creates needs and capacities that counter its reproduction. In a vein similar to Harvey's (1989) post-modern flexible accumulation capitalism, Melucci explains how "complex societies" dissolve time, space, and identity boundaries. Although control and pathologies intensify, so also does individual awareness and a sense of life possibilities and choice. Individuation proceeds along with both the disappearance of "grand narratives" and the prevalence of technologies of social control, creating along the way greater pressure for a meaningful life. The location of social contradiction on the site of the self, identity, is further localized in a dialectic of the body. At once medicalized in the therapeutic society, a "new body culture": "... reveals a human dimension which is neither reducible to instrumental rationality nor stamped with the sign of darkness or perversion" (Melucci, 1989, p. 123).

The dynamic is that: "Faced with this expanding control, it is as if the body is mobilizing the resources of 'nature' to safeguard a non-manipulated identity..." There is an "ambiguity" of the body – between liberatory self-consciousness and manipulated medicalization in which the body is "a resource of social control;" "bodily satisfaction is an effective guarantee of social control" (Melucci, 1989, p. 124). Individualism itself becomes the medium of a "post-material society" where the liberatory, transforming potential resides in a belief in the individual's right to a more meaningful existence, which serves as the social psychological basis of claims for freedom and democracy. The body crystallizes the contradiction and its possibilities, in a parallel to charismatic ecstasy and fusion, or to a politically subversive art. Habermas (1987) as well describes this dynamic; an alternative culture

arising from individual practices and leading to a new society, and leaves open for speculation the forms which potential “alternatives” to an administered, “colonized” life world might take. Alternatives may be “painful manifestations of deprivation in a culturally impoverished and one-sidedly rationalized practice of everyday life” (Habermas, 1987, p. 395). The dialectic here too is that it is precisely that the “system,” which increasingly places the “symbolic structures of the life-world as a whole in question, can account for why they have become accessible to us”. Following Habermas, Wuthnow (1992, p. 141) sees emergent religious movements as “protests against the growing bureaucratization and monetarization of the life world”. In an analysis which focuses on religion in America, Wuthnow (1992, p. 99) underlines that the new American religious movements consciously manipulate symbols and center especially on “questions of personal meaning and purpose”. Religion is not disappearing, adapting to a changing societal context. The continued, if not intensified, interest in religion, supports Thompson’s argument that: “The various social processes that have been held to characterize modernization and modernity can themselves generate countervailing tendencies – secularization provokes sacralizing reactions” (Thompson, 1990, p. 164). Both analysts see in either “re-articulated discourses” or “self-conscious manipulation of symbols” “striking revivals of cults of sacred community in the modern world“ (Thompson, 1990, p. 172). Re-sacralization is also subject to incorporation, rationalization, and commodification. Reducing the charisma of body and soul to a mundane level both can be seen in the example of the American mass movement for “recovery” (Kaminer, 1992). In what can only be described as “revival” movements, across America, both in small groups and in mass media, a disease of co-dependence has been discovered. All forms of compulsive behavior are described as addictions resulting from dependence on someone else’s behavior, particularly family members. Modeled on Alcoholics Anonymous, there is a standard liturgy, a “twelve-step method” (a methodology of salvation, in Weber’s sociology of religion) which can lead the “recovering” alcoholic, overeater, shopper, anything, to a “rebirth” of discovering the “inner child”. Combining religious redemption with a secularized salvation methodology of peer-guided recovery, the twelve step method is a ‘secular cosmology’ that is transparently both sacred and commodified, operating at the self-site, to offer bodily-centered redemption by lowering the meaning of individual identity and social relation to the level of the routine.

For Kaminer (1992, p. 3), it is “an ideology of salvation by grace”. More than they resemble group therapy, twelve-step groups are like revival meet-

ings, carrying on the pietistic tradition. From our point of view, the twelve-step method successfully merges secular and sacred, bodily and spiritual, and individual and collective needs. It is an effective social technology for postmodern salvation by reconstruction of meaningful and communicable mass, individually “recovered” identities. The twelve steps (1992, p. 71) begin with an acknowledgment of powerlessness, and go on to include statements of religious faith, and conclude with evangelical commitment to help move others from “denial to recovery.” Like the postmodern dialectic of the body, twelve-step methods are only part of a wider contemporary movement of “rediscovery of the sacred”; or, re-sacralization. The question is whether and how such individuated, if not quite “customized” dialectics become the bases of new cultures, which, from our point of view, would include social reflexivity, or a secular cosmology of a new social analytic. The key to such a cultural emergence is the articulation and elaboration of these individuated practices into a more general theory, or “theodicy”. Weber (1946, p. 280) criticized his contemporaries precisely for remaining at the level of individual experience, without articulating the structure of beliefs which they imply: “A religious revival [we might read, instead, “cultural renewal”] has never sprung from such a source. In the past, it was the work of intellectuals to sublimate the possession of sacred values into a belief in ‘redemption.’”

Toward a Re-Sacralized Social Psychology

Reversal of the position of the sacred in relation to profane, rationalized, and commodified social life provides, however contradictorily, an altered field of social action in the domain of socially shared self-practices. With that, it carries implications for the character of contemporary subjectivity, intersubjectivity, and objective, collective social organization. It is within the medium or channel of sacred self practices (or, in Foucault’s language, “technologies of the self”) that a mass, though relatively decentered, social movement now works on a series of processes aimed to re-fill the self emptied by modern alienation, rationalization, and commodification and by post-modern dispersion and implosion.

The types of “re-selfing” processes that I want to describe are analytically derived largely from descriptions of pre-modern and non-Western dynamics of self-transformation. The empirical hypothesis is that these types of “classical” modes or paths of self-transformation are now becoming prototypical in Western, post post-modern socio-cultural formations. In part, this

is the result of the end of Euro-centrism on this planet, and of cultural diffusion, (or, if you prefer, “globalization”). But, more importantly, the reason that the dynamics of relation between self, religion, and power (particular dynamics that Weber thought were typical only of “Asiatic” societies) are now relevant is because of a combined shift in our cultural premises (Sorokin, 1957), and in social organizational attributes of the information society (Melucci, 1994).

This cultural-social combinatory shift makes not only the self important – intensifying both the congratulatory individualism of modernity and the anxious self-dispersion of post-modernity – but defines self activity increasingly in terms of replenishing or renewing a “being” that has been, in turn, alienated and dispersed; and does that by various sorts of “spiritual work”.

Cultural re-sacralization – under conditions of simultaneous self-value and self-doubt, and in a socio-economic situation that requires meaning work on the self for inclusion in the productive sphere (during still another class polarization; now between working and non-working) – assigns personal, individualized responsibility for the reproduction of this symbolically constituted labor power to a “self”. In this circumstance, self-work is the central site of social action, contradiction, and transformation. Our discussion of re-selfing then – a typology of contemporary, re-sacralized forms of self-empowerment and transformation through the “technology of the self” (Foucault, 1988, p. 18) – is not a remedially psychological one, or a religious one. Rather it is directed toward describing post post-modern forms of politics and social change; which begin in the practices that counter alienation, or the destruction and death of a self-being.

Foucault’s interest in religion and self-practices centers on the transition from the Greco-Roman world to the early Christian one; mine will be more ecumenical, and more oriental. Marx, of course, coded religion in relation to the self as the exemplar of alienation and fetishism – a projective disempowerment of the human being; my view is that religion, engagement with the sacred, now becomes a central vehicle for undoing alienation, for replenishing and re-empowering self-identity. Weber’s position was that self-empowerment through self-sanctification could occur in the West only by self-instrumentalization and self-asceticism; my view is that the alternative religious type which he identified (Weber, 1946, p. 326) – but marginalized, as an empirical possibility – inner-worldly mysticism – succeeds inner-worldly asceticism as the religious foundation of contemporary culture.

The result of these differences is the view that pre-modern and so-called “oriental” religions increasingly define the character of self-work. This work

or 'technology' occurs not in withdrawal from everyday life, although its practices are more contemplative than ascetic, and its access to the sacred is more mystical than institutionally religious, while it remains within the everyday social world. This self-work operates against alienation and de-centering in order to replenish being; and this empowering self-renewal – which occurs through several routes – is the most dynamic contemporary form of social movement or politics. Finally, the effects of this individualized, but mass movement are not only contradictory with regard to the social reproduction and transformation of consumption and production relations, but they represent signs of an emergent social character and social structure – for which re-sacralization, re-selfing, and are transitional forms.

The political question is whether in the transition in domains of stratification, from cognitive skills narrowly conceived, to what Fromm (1994) called, in quite a different hope, the “arts of being”, the enlivening, renewing, and even empowering moment of “re-selfing”, a new collective self can break out of the institutional bounds of its utility as a post post-modern form of the reproduction of labor power. And, in doing that, whether it can articulate its premises and aspirations for “being”, to become truly sacred, by becoming fully “other” to the current socio-cultural order.

Alienation: Religion, Power, and Self

For Marx, despite inventive efforts by commentators to reclaim his theory of alienation and praxis for its religious foundations (Bannet, 1992), the relation between religion and self is the essential disempowering paradigm for alienation and fetishism. Religious practices take power away from the self, and, like the fetishism of commodities, empty human being of its capacities and potential. Yet, Bannet (1992, p. 124) argues persuasively that Marx's critique of religion can be attributed to his Jewish struggle to overcome, as she writes, “... the dualism of heaven and earth, of the spirit and the flesh, of mysticism and life, of idea and reality – a dualism which Marx and his contemporaries thought stemmed from Christianity...” Nevertheless, the effect for Marx (1956, pp. 170, 172) is to empirically identify religious action as alienating:

The more the worker expends himself in work, the more powerful becomes the world of objects which he creates in face of himself, and the poorer he himself becomes in his inner life, the less he belongs to himself. It is just the same as in religion. The more of himself man attributes to God, the less he has left in him-

self... All the qualities involved in the production of this activity, which really belongs to man, are attributed to the intermediary. Man himself becomes poorer, that is separated from the intermediary, as the intermediary becomes richer.

And, of the “intermediary” of first resort, Ollman (1971, p. 224) quotes Marx: “Christ is the intermediary to whom man attributes all of his own divinity.” In Ollman’s words:

God emerges from all this as the estranged power of a socialized humanity...that which mediates between man and his real life is seen to dominate both. Through religious activity, the individual’s potential for controlling nature is transferred to God, which in turn, reduces the actual control he is able to exercise.

In the Marxist tradition, religious practice leads not simply to the sort of incapacitating disempowerment of the full sensuous range of human being signified by “alienation”, or even to the loss of efficacy indicated in the “fetishism of commodities”. But, in Ollman’s words, religion leads to “self-contempt”:

Whereas religious activity directed toward the self is suicidal, directed toward the other, toward god or his ‘agents’ on earth, it is sacrificial. Prayer is a superstition which renders one helpless, and obeisance is total submission before the knife. Through unthinking worship, the repetition of empty symbols, the only god served is self-contempt.

(Ollman, 1971, p. 223)

The relation between religion, power, and self is evident. Religion, we might say, is a technology of self-destruction.

Inner-Worldly Mysticism: Self-denial and Self-deification

While religious practice can obviously follow the disempowering path described by Marx, a historical alternative is that instead of a projective disempowerment in the self-sacred relation, we can find an identifying, empowering relation between self and sacred. During a cultural movement of re-sacralization, self-capacity can be replenished rather than exhausted, as it is in the traditional Marxist model of alienation. Further, re-sacralization, however intertwined may be its roots with the current global capitalist post-in-

dustrialism, has as an unintended effect, the reinforcement of an unusual hybrid which Weber identified in his typology of religious action: inner-worldly mysticism.

Weber, in his critical sociology of modern industrialism, did not fully foresee the potentialities of any such inner-worldly mysticism. He was consistent in his attribution of the cultural foundations of the modern, bureaucratic, “rationalist” apparatus to ascetic Protestantism. Weber (1964, p. 183) writes:

This inner-worldly asceticism had a number of distinctive consequences not found in any other religion... The clear and uniform goal of this asceticism was the disciplining and methodical organization of the whole pattern of life. Its typical representative was the ‘man of a vocation,’ and its unique result was the rational organization and institutionalization of social relationships.

The polar opposite to asceticism is contemplation or mysticism. Weber is convinced that such contemplative, ecstatic mysticism generally does not engage this world, and certainly not in a socially transformative direction. There are exceptions, mentioned briefly, for example: “The transformation of a mysticism remote from the world into one characterized by chiliastic and revolutionary tendencies took place frequently, most impressively in the revolutionary mysticism of the sixteenth-century Baptists” (Weber, 1964, p. 175).

But, he follows quickly with the reassertion of the socially quietistic consequences of contemplative rather than ascetic mysticism (Weber, 1964, p. 175): “To the extent that an inner-worldly religion of salvation is determined by contemplative features, the usual result is acceptance of the secular social structure...” And, elsewhere, in his essay on “The social psychology of the world religions” (Weber, 1946, p. 289), he is even more emphatic, claiming that asceticism must be the modern religious cultural foundation: “In their innermost beings, contemplative and ecstatic religions have been rather specifically hostile to economic life” (Weber, 1946, p. 289).

Our point is that precisely this religious, inner-worldly ascetic foundation of modern culture is transmuting to an inner-worldly, ecstatic, contemplative, or mystical orientation. While this emergent foundation is generally integrated into maintenance of a post-industrial and culturally post-modern apparatus, its effects are multi-lineal, and, most important, set the cultural foundation for a very different range of potential socio-cultural movements and social forms. Inner-worldly mysticism, like the post-modern tendency which precedes and prepares it, depends on the erasure of boundaries, and

not on the Weberian and Habermasian modern autonomy of separate spheres. That is a transitional value of post-modern culture, seen as a decadent phase of modernity, and ancillary to post-industrial production, distribution, communication, and institutional restructuring.

Such practical examples as twelve-step revivalism, or baby-boom religion, or even the “culture of narcissism”, more generally, are only signs of what I hypothesize as a much broader mass cultural tendency: re-subjectification and re-symbolization, following narcissism, toward inner-worldly mysticism as the religious foundation of the new age, and finally, of late post-modern culture as a whole. In *Holy Sparks* (Wexler, 1996), I have explored the social, theoretical, and educational implications of such a re-sacralization. My point here is that esoteric and Eastern religious traditions provide grounds for contemporary theory and practice.

Yet it is true that certainly more than Marx, Weber saw the ambivalent effects of religion. In describing religious ecstasy, for example, he notes (Weber, 1964, p. 157) that its effects can be “...tending either toward greater intensity of life or toward alienation from life.” Even more important, from our point of view, than his identification of inner-worldly mysticism as, at least a logical possibility, or his canonical recognition of the multiple and unintended effects of religion (Weber, 1958), is his identification of a type of social action in which religion is an effective path of self-empowerment, -enhancement, or -realization.

In Weber’s historical sociology of religion, there is clear recognition that “methodologies of sanctification” are directed toward self-fulfillment and empowerment. Indeed, religious consecration is ultimately a methodology of “self perfection”. Not the projection of power, but the attainment of power through identification is the social meaning of early religion. The ecstatic becomes a more diffuse “habitus”, a conscious methodology of self-perfection. The relation between person and God is not the subsumption of self-being in God, but instead the appropriation of the power of the sacred by the self. In his analysis of types of religious social action that he calls, almost colloquially, “the different roads to salvation,” Weber writes (1964, p.158):

The ultimate purpose to be served by the planned procedure of sanctification remained everywhere the same purpose which was served in an acute way by the orgy, namely the *incarnation within man of a supernatural being, and therefore presently of a god. stated differently, the goal was self-deification.* [emphasis added]

Even more explicitly, Wexler tells us (1996, p.160): “Self-deification was the prevalent goal of sanctification, from the beginnings of the soma cult of intoxication in ancient Vedic times up through the development of sublime methods of intellectualist ecstasy and the elaboration of erotic orgies...”

In the West, however, this identificatory methodology of sanctification, of self-production by possessing god disappears, in favor of an instrumentalization of the self. The unbridgeable gap created by belief in a transcendental god supplants the earlier methodology by a self-surrendering method of identification by becoming god’s subjective instrumentality (Weber, 1964, p.159):

The goal of sanctification becomes oriented to the world beyond and to ethics. The aim is no longer to possess the god, for this cannot be done, but either to become his instrument or to be spiritually suffused by him. Spiritual suffusion is obviously closer to self-deification than is instrumentality.

Although, as we know, Weber goes on to argue for the historical sublimation of the experience of suffusion and possession by “methodical procedure” or more “systematic regulation of life” to insure “lasting grace”, in the face of a transcendental god – in other words, asceticism – he also recognizes pantheism, “contemplative mysticism” and its social possibilities:

In any case, the typical mystic is never a man of conspicuous social activity... Wherever genuine mysticism did give rise to communal action, such action was characterized by the acosmism of the mystical feeling of love. Mysticism may exert his kind of psychological effect, thus tending – despite the apparent demands of logic to favor the creation of communities.

(Weber, 1964, p. 176)

In the modern western world, the transcendental god has lead to an ascetic alienation from god, and to a transmutation of the ecstatic suffusion of orgy and mystical illumination into a methodical organization of practical, ascetic rationality. “Its typical representative was the ‘man of vocation,’ and its unique result was the rational organization and institutionalization of social relationships.” Yet, as Mitzman (1969) argues, and as we see directly from Weber, mysticism is seen as an alternative ethic to asceticism – although its realization in social life could be found now only “pianissimo”, in the cultivation of intimate personal relations. Socially, through the “acosmism of love”, mysticism leads to an ethic of “universal brotherhood”. But its time is not now. Weber (1958, p. 357) concludes his late essay: “And, in the midst of a culture that is rationally organized for a vocational workaday life, there is

hardly any room for the cultivation of acosmic brotherliness, unless it is among strata who are economically carefree.”

Mitzman (1969, p. 229) puts Weber’s countervailing, charismatic, mystical alternative to the present time of “specialists without spirit” into an eschatological time, translating Weber’s translation of Isaiah: “Morning will come but yet is it still night. If you wish to ask, come again another time.”

Re-Centering Self

Weber’s historical social analysis illustrates how the relation between self and sacred can be empowering: in ‘methodologies of sanctification’ aimed toward self-perfection as self-deification by identificatory possession of god in ecstasy and the habitus derived from its diffusion and sublimation. But, it was only in the ‘Asiatic’ societies, without a transcendental, all-powerful personal god, that the pantheistic, contemplative inner-worldly mysticism enabled incarnation and possession of the gods as a sacred method of self-perfection.

The re-sacralization hypothesis suggests that the religious basis of modern culture has ruptured its sublimating surface, and found expression in new age forms of inner-worldly mysticism. Not only: a dialectic of rationalization and charisma, or commodity and sacred; nor a cyclical appearance of an ideational-cultural in the wake of the collapse of the sensate era (Sorokin, 1957); nor simply a nostalgic re-assertion of the pre-modern as antidote to the tumultuous uncertainty of post-industrial post-modernism (Harvey, 1989). Instead there is the possibility that re-sacralization – and its inner-worldly mystical forms AND their place as methods of counter-alienating re-empowerment of the self – are integrally produced within the SOCIAL dynamics of late post-industrialism.

This is precisely analogous to Melucci’s (1994) view of the character of contemporary social movements. “Conflicts,” he writes (1994, p. 109), “move from the economic-industrial sphere to the cultural sphere. They focus on personal identity, the time and space of life, and the motivation and codes of daily life.” Melucci goes on to offer a social structural explanation for the salience of both self-work and re-sacralization under new social conditions. The information society and its struggle over knowledge codes leads, in the required emphasis on symbolic social processing, to a neglect of meaning systems for integrating these instrumental codes with an interpretation of personal experience. Knowledge evermore replaces wisdom, to the detri-

ment of effective processes of self identity production. As Melucci (1994, p. 112) puts it:

A split opens between the realm of instrumental knowledge, which efficiently manipulates the symbolic codes that select, order, and direct information, and wisdom as the integration of meaning into personal experience.... The result is the search for identity, the quest for self that addresses the fundamental regions of human action: the body, the emotions, the dimensions of experience irreducible to instrumental rationality. This search allows the rediscovery of an irremediable otherness (other people, the Other, the sacred), a silent void that escapes the ceaseless flux of encoded messages.

In his review of social movements that offer countervailing possibilities to the dominance of the symbolic code in the information society, Melucci (1994, p. 122) points to the re-sacralization tendency and to its historical relevance for self or identity processes, as one of the “shadows” offering wisdom against the “operational codes”.

In this appeal to the shadow, to the unsaid and the unsayable, lies the most profound meaning of the new spiritual urgency that drives the collective action of many groups. Where it is not a renewal of the message of religion, where it is not a specialized sector of the market in emotions, spiritual experience in information societies is an appeal to wisdom; it is a call to that encounter with the self that is never entirely expressible in operational codes.

Read otherwise, inner-worldly mysticism, as a mode of self-work, is brought to the fore as a functional ‘shadow’ within the information society. What I now want to suggest is that our analytical and empirical work of social analysis lies in specifying these identity processes, as paths, not of ‘salvation,’ but of potentially de-alienating self-renewal, is the premier site of collective action.

This work has already begun, perhaps not from such a distant starting point, in the last phase of Foucault’s oeuvre. As he wrote in one of his final essays (1988, p. 19): “I am more and more interested in the interaction between oneself and others and in the technologies of individual domination, the history of how an individual acts upon himself, in the technology of the self.”

Foucault (1988, p. 18) describes this analysis as:

technologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and

souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality.

In other words, secular, discursive, historical analytic descriptions of what Weber called the “roads to salvation”. Poster (1993) analyzes the evolution of Foucault’s work, particularly the move from the study of the dispersed subject in discourse, to a “hermeneutics of the self”, or even more precisely, to a study of the practices of “self constitution”. Poster (1993, p. 77) quotes Foucault’s *History of Sexuality* to indicate that self-constitution is concerned with:

... the models, proposed for setting up and developing relationships with the self, for self-reflection, self-knowledge, self-examination, for the decipherment of the self by oneself, for the *transformations that one seeks to accomplish with oneself as object.* [emphasis added]

What is additionally interesting is Poster’s suggestion that Foucault’s move toward the study of these processes of self-constitution should be explained, not simply biographically, but historically, as an effect of the character of current social conditions; expressed in Foucault’s shifting of his lens toward self-constitution, or, we might say, the re-centering focus on self-productive processes, the “work of the self on the self”. Poster (1993, p. 77) observes: “One could well ask if the question of self-constitution does not in fact derive its urgency and force from its problematization of the present, and that in turn is what raises the issue of its historical transformations.”

And Poster’s (1993, p. 79) answer is that in the ‘mode of information’: “...new language experiences pervade everyday life – electronically mediated language experiences in which the individual is structured to constitute the self and to do so in drastically new ways.” It is the new consumer self to which Poster wishes to draw attention as the object of inquiry.

What I propose is that this self-reflective, often conscious process of self-constitution includes not only the preparation of new age, informational consumers, but also practices of self-constitution in the languages and media of the re-sacralization processes that have emerged as a countervailing force or ‘shadow’ to commodified informationalism and post-modern post-industrialism. These practices, to constitute the self, move *in practice*, as Foucault does in theory, from dispersion and de-centering; or, from a post-modern elaboration of emptying modernist self-alienation, to a self-filling, a self-re-centering or de-alienation and renewal of being that I refer to as “re-selfing”.

Empirical studies of these practices, represented, for example, in the work of McGuire (1988), emphasize particularly religious healing movements. Here, I hypothesize paradigmatic processes of re-selfing, in order to set out a frame for additional empirical work. But, I also want to argue, by virtue of this typology, that we can describe the paths of inner-worldly mystical ‘roads to salvation’, re-selfing, by drawing on classical patterns of self-realization, and that, finally, these patterns are now enacted, with modified terms, in a post post-modern socio-cultural formation.

Re-Selfing

Despite the veneer, even the accusation of self-site politics as narcissism, contemporary re-selfing processes are self-work that are socially relational, and involve alteration in the character of relations not only between the individual and immediate others, but centrally, also to a wider social whole. While empirical instances of this process remain dispersed, and not fully theorized, (either by evident or more distant participants), I think we can suggest at least three analytic types of re-selfing, which may be combined in empirical cases.

The first emphasizes active self-transformation through ritual, behavioral action that is scripted by collective memory. The second is a more cognitively based alteration of meanings, definitions, categories, and collective representations which changes the self imaginatively, by mental re-figuration. The third is an emotional fusion of self and sacred, collective Other, an emotional re-energizing that is accomplished in part by the activation of historical, collectively (though esoterically) recognized visionary experiences.

Indexically, the first is a ritual re-creative process, the second, a cognitive re-positioning one, and the third, an emotional-visionary re-integrative re-selfing. All are transformative, re-creations of the self; and all are conversions in the sense that the old self surrenders or dies as a predicate of rebirth, revitalization and renewal. In this sense, I view re-selfing as a micro-cosmic model of revolutionary social change.

The empty self is re-filled, the alienated exhaustion of being is replenished by regenerative rituals that recreate the original, primordial plenitude of being in collective ritual in which a new, initiated self is reborn. This type is at the heart of Eliade’s (1960; 1969; 1987) comparative, structural, historical anthropology of archaic religion, and its meaning for the transformation of experience. The “cosmogonic” method, the eternal return to *‘illo tem-*

pore' is the core of the archetypal model of birth and initiation, which defines becoming a social person in archaic societies. Becoming social is entering the sacred, because the sacred is the real. There are a series of "spiritual transmutations", "spiritual re-generations" that engage an archetypal process for which tribal initiation is the exemplar.

These initiations include: "...seclusion, tortures and trials, death and resurrection, imposition of a new name, teaching of a secret language, etc." (Weber, 1964, p. 15). These are ritual, symbolic processes, that "repeat the exemplary deeds that were enacted at the dawn of time" (ibid., p.3). The re-actualization of the origin quenches the "ontological thirst". It is an "archaic therapy", a "symbolic rebirth" that obviates the "fall into time" in a return to the fully cosmicized, sacred time of beginning. In that sense, the rituals are a "... solemn recitation of the cosmogonic myth as a therapeutic method" (Eliade, 1960, p. 48). The self is regenerated, at critical stages in the life course by rituals that enact the beginning of time that is full of being. Re-selfing occurs as a replenishment of being because the collective rituals have "...reintegrated one into the original plenitude" (Eliade, 1964, p. 48).

For Eliade, this "creative hermeneutics" of sacred regeneration, of the "notion of life as perpetual renewal" is an explicit alternative to the historicized, desacralized European societies, which have expunged the "hierophanies", the manifestations of the sacred in every life action. His archaic sociology of sacred transformations has not only a retrospective, nostalgic interest, but a prospective one as well:

For some time now, Europe has not been the only maker of history: the Asiatic world is actively re-entering the stream of history, soon to be followed by other exotic societies...European values will lose their privileged status as universally recognised norms: they will be back at the status of local spiritual creations; that is, of cultural tributaries of a certain historic amplitude, conditioned by clearly circumscribed traditions.

(Eliade, 1960, p. 232)

Complementing Eliade's sacred structural existentialism, is work among symbolic anthropologists, like that of Fer(1995), for whom self-revitalization occurs particularly in an "argument of images", a "practical poetics" in which there is a "figurative displacement" that accomplishes a "metaphoric predication of new identities" (Fernandez, 1995, p. 22). Fernandez sees the practical poetics of establishing new self-consciousness as an antidote to the "inner loneliness of the individual" and disenchantment, expressly following

Weber and Marx. His anthropology of revitalization movements displays how the “...performance of images revitalizes”, and compensates for the “deficit of meaning” (Fernandez, 1986, p. 175). New self-consciousness is created in various re-categorizations, re-classifications by which groups replenish meaning and being by repositioning their collective representations.

What is held in common in these works of metaphoric transformation is a “returning to the whole”, an imaginative cognitive process, a “metaphoric movement” that effects categorical redefinition of the self by repositioning it symbolically from periphery to center of the social whole – compensating for the meaning deficit of alienation by representational re-positioning. The renewal of experienced being that occurs for Eliade by reintegration of the self with the surplus energy of the gods’ creation of the beginning, by a ritual eternal return, Fernandez finds in sacred social movements that renew being by displacements of categories and definitions, in order to re-position the individual as a new self.

The contemplative, mystic attainment of self-perfection via self-deification that Weber saw as historically marginalized in favor of a systematic sanctification methodology of regulative grace, in an ascetic instrumentalization of the self, renews the self in a possessive process: “... possession of, or mystical union with the divine. This is a distinctive organization of the *emotions* which seems to promise a certain type of knowledge (emphasis added)” (Eliade, 1964, p. 168).

In mystical traditions, this union is the full realization of the ecstatic moment, directed by visionary guides to its attainment. Here too, as in the ritual recreation of initiation or the new consciousness of category displacement that repositions the lonely, devalued individual into a new identity in central relation to the meaningful social whole, the self surrenders, dies, to be regenerated into the fullness of being. Lamborn-Wilson (1993) offers an ‘heretical’ hermeneutic from “the margins of Islam”, to explore a Sufi model of spiritual regeneration, that sublimates and transmutes erotic and spiritual energies – a spiritual, sexual hermeneutics that shows Islamic mysticism in the “flashes of prismatic light” (Lamborn-Wilson, 1993, p. 63) as a strategy of awakening the “desire for desire”, a renewal of self-energy, emotional being, on the mystical path of his interpretive “nomadology” of Islamic mysticism.

The “intoxication” of being is a “psychotopography of everyday life” (Lamborn-Wilson, 1993, p. 159), where self-renewal is finally represented in a re-contextualization of Islamic history as a “poetics of wandering”. For Wilson, the image of the transmuted self is in the ancient tradition of Sufi

travel. "It is always morning", he writes, "the caravan is always ready to depart" (Lamborn-Wilson, 1993, p. 159).

I have attempted a somewhat related transposition of Jewish mysticism (Wexler, 1996), in an effort to rethink the re-energizing of the self from the vantage point of Kabbalistic traditions. Beginning with Buber, I reread Scholem, Idel and Afterman, in the light of a sociological interest in re-contextualizing mystical union in social interaction.

The self-other relation, or social interaction, is not ideally an action of exchange or combination, or even of "meeting" and "dialogue", as Buber would have it. For the self is only an imagic crystallization, a substantial covering of inner sparks of light representing infinity that became separated and dispersed in the shattering drama of Creation. Their uplift and reparation is the latent force or drive of interaction, which insofar as it has a movement, is an instantaneously renewed moment of direction toward re-aggregation, or "in-gathering", toward re-unification and the wholeness of light or energy which is holographically present in every being.

In this paradigm of social interaction, time is understood differently, neither as monotonically linear "progress", nor as a religious foundation for secular Enlightenment, that mistakenly appeals, as Scholem observes, to Messianism for legitimation. Rather, time, subjective and social time, is seen as distance from infinitude. As Afterman (1992, p. 35) interprets Adam's Fall, it is a descent into profane time, "his awareness fell into finitude." The measure of life is subjectivized into a consciousness of the infinite and the whole. A "long life" is life lived with a certain quality of awareness, in recognition of infinity. Time as finitude is separated, or, in our terms, alienated time, in which the outer fragments of this-worldly vessels, "the ten thousand things", in the language of Taoism, are worshipped or attached to. Idolatry of the fragmented externals of the world is both a reflection and extension of the exile of the holy sparks, "Shekhinah's exile."

The immediacy of recognition of the infinite and eternal transcendental "holy sparks" concealed within persons is opposed to alienated time. This is Buber's mystical existentialism, the "incessant renewal" of the lived concrete moment. It is also opposed to the alienated, entropic, de-energizing time of separation, the movement against exile, the movement of return from the living whole. The movement of return is the re-integrative aspect of time both as exile and dispersion. It is time that proceeds slowly in uplifting reparation or "tikkun" through intentional, but ego-detached fulfillment of the "mitzvot" or commandments and laws which contain and direct diffuse and excess energy.

In Afterman's poetically condensed language, "the infinite is home". But, time does not move only to the counter-alienation of consciousness of the transcendental kernel of vital being; nor does it move only to the returning home where consciousness of the integrated and eternal is heightened by intended action and the collective rituals of temporal demarcation: the Sabbath, which is the preview of restored, harmonious, integral time; or the seasonal holidays, which more mundanely activate collective memory and ecological integrity. Time also moves across generations and worlds, in theurgies of cyclical and spiraling movements, "rollings" or "revolutions" of the wheel of individuated sparks and souls, in theories of reincarnation which imagine forms of interaction before and after the body dies. Concerning the Kabbalistic interpretation of time, Scholem (1991, p. 39) describes it as the movement of the latent divine energy behind the "sefiroth" or potencies that organize every level, from body to psyche, relation, and cosmos. The same ebb and flow, wave-like pulsation "...contains the ineffable that accompanies every expression, enters into it and withdraws from it" (Scholem, 1991, p. 41). "It flows out and animates Creation; but at the same time it remains deep inside. *The secret rhythm of its movement and pulse beat is the law of motion of all creation.*" [emphasis added]. This time, even in its most extra-mundane appearance, returns to this world, and the movement of interaction that is transcendental serves as an energizing moment of return to this-worldly social interaction. The drive for unification with the Shekhinah, or prophecies of celestial ascent to God's throne by chariot or ladder are always complemented by stories of return, to the social, inter-subjective world. Return is the only safe path in the mystical quest for unity through cleaving or communion with the divine. Indeed, the cleaving or "devekuth", is generative, not only the effect of ecstatic and meditative preparation, but also productive of new force, light, and energy. As Scholem writes (1971, p. 219): "This vital force, which is aroused BY *communion...*" [emphasis added] The person, according to Idel (1988, p. 170), is "...viewed as a vessel collecting the divine efflux... a vessel receiving the Shekhinah..." Mystical practices producing ecstasy are a prelude to unity or transcendental, divine bonding, which is itself a prelude to social interaction. As Idel (1988, p. 53) writes:

Furthermore, although *devekuth* is a preeminently personal experience, it serves here as an opening toward *other-oriented action*. [emphasis added] Mystical union, or communion, thus serves as a vehicle used by the individual in order to better serve the community; personal perfection is transformed into a means of contributing to the welfare of others. [These mystical unitive states are] attempts

undertaken by the perfectii to reestablish broken links between the divine and lower worlds by the mediation of their spiritual faculties.

Eternally experienced time overcomes the separation which is the condition of idolatry, or alienation. Indeed, Scholem (1991, pp. 69-71) argues that separation, isolation, or what we call alienation, is the very definition of evil.

...evil is nothing other than that which isolates and removes things from their unity, a process profoundly symbolized by Adam's relationship to the two trees in the Garden.... The two trees are fundamentally one: they grow from a common root, in which masculine and feminine, the giving and receiving, the creative and reflective, are one. *Life And Knowledge* [emphasis added] are not to be torn asunder from one another: they must be seen and realized in their unity.

And further: "... the perception of evil as an entity existing in isolation, and evil action as the separation of being from its proper place."

Mystical union redefines the character of social interaction as a transcendently mediated inter-subjectivity. Just as alienation is deeper than the appropriation of labor power, inter-subjectivity is interpreted as more than linguistically undistorted communication or empathy. Social interaction as inter-subjectivity is mediated by a third, normally silent term between subjects. It is not circumscribed by the "between-people" or the "in-between people", in Buber's view of relationality. Rather, it is the silent, but energized presence, the sparks or kernels of being within the shells of images and things, which is transformative, and indeed, finally, determinative of the interaction.

The later mysticism of the Hasidim refers to the look of the eyes through the soul's transparency which is transformative interaction. Another Kabbalist view is that the silent space more than the interpersonal action is the locus of energy which mediates the subjects. For in that silent space is the in-dwelling presence of Shekhinah that is already there, in nature and cosmos, in all beings, pantheistically, and as systematic potentialities, emanations or "sefiroth".

Accessing this energetic presence is especially the work of the perfectii, the pious ones, the "tzaddikim". Their "transparency", their becoming like glass (Afterman, 1992, p. 12), detached from the congealing and concealing idols of self and object images, allows receptivity of the "white light", "electricity", or as Idel puts it, more classically, "the light of the supernal emanations". To recontextualize Bernstein's radio imagery, the "relay" is the clear pious one, the "tzaddik", who "draws down the Shekhinah", only then to mediate inter-subjectivity and community by activating presence between the still spaces of mundane interaction, and in that way, revitalizing other-

wise petrified and alienated social relations. Scholem (1991, p. 127) writes of the Hasidic Master of the Good Name:

... the ideal figure is the man who fulfills the one central basic demand placed upon him: to live in constant communion with God (devekuth), so that even his active life will be filled with intention to raise the holy sparks that, according to the Lurianic Kabbalah, are scattered in all things and in all realms of being.

In Hasidism, an early modern revitalization movement influenced by the medieval Kabbalists, the “tzaddik” or pious one takes on added importance, and functions as an energy “relay” between the “shefa” or divine influx and a broader, this-worldly energy known as “hayyuth” or, literally, vitality or life force (libido). Scholem (1991, p. 130) observes:

The two notions – the influx flowing into the Tsaddik through his own communion with God, and the spiritual vitality always spoken here of his dynamic essence – become unified in *a single concept of vital energy flowing from the tsaddik to his contemporaries*. [emphasis added]

As if to underline the obvious connection to Freud’s theory, Scholem (1991, p. 139) cites the eighteenth century Hasidic master, the Maggid, who writes in 1770: “The Tsaddikim make God, if one may phrase it thus, their unconscious.” Further, our interest in “energy” and its relation both to libido and Kabbalistic and Hasidic theories of “hayyuth”, vitality, are also noted by Scholem (1991, p. 249):

It should also be noted that the Hebrew term ‘hayyuth’ used by R. Benjamin and all of the early Hasidic writers to indicate the realm of life belonging to the sparks of a person’s soul, corresponds precisely to what I have described above as the soul’s field of energy.

Social interaction is revitalized by a movement outward, toward the supra-mundane, and by its return, re-energized by glimpses of eternity and obliged by the task of reversing the exilic dispersion of energy that exists in the world as concealed potentialities.

... the ‘exile of the Shekhinah’ has existed in the world- that is the separation and cutting off of the Shekhinah from its constant union with the upper forces that she was supposed to carry and transmit to Creation. It is now up to man to fulfill this lack.

(Scholem, 1991, p. 185)

Both Lamborn-Wilson's and my own attempts are secular hermeneutics of revitalization that draw upon mystical paths of renewal by transcendental re-integration, and transpose that fusion to everyday life. The intent is to show that the "suffusion" which Weber saw as inevitably replaced by instrumentalization as the tactic of self-empowerment can now, in a post post-modern context, itself be replaced by technologies of self based in inner-worldly mysticism.

Re-selfing now already occurs in each of these modalities. Demonstrating their distribution and the inter-relation of types is, I suggest, the field for a new direction of empirical work on contemporary "technologies of the self". And, as a corollary, the work of transmuting a 'sacred social psychology' into a new language for theoretically understanding contemporary politics and processes of social change – "from the inside out".

Self and Structure

In addition to the empirical work, and the re-figuration of social psychology implied in the re-sacralization and re-selfing analyses, much remains in how to understand these processes in relation to more traditional critical social categories of consumption and production. Poster (1993) interprets Foucault's interest as an historically apposite problematization of self-production at a time when a new, consumer self is required for the information society.

I have suggested that re-selfing is a socially transformative, though microcosmic change process, that it is an empowering counter-process to alienation and mechanical petrification and disenchantment. But, even if there are such social processes for the re-filling of an emptied self-being, their implications for altering "the whole", the social structural frame in which they are happening are ambiguous.

We might, following Melucci (1994), identify such self processes as inchoate, incipient practices which are increasingly crystallized in new social movements, that in turn are both institutionalized and institution-altering. Or, following Poster and Harvey see only an anticipatory socialization that accommodates the emergent structure of a post-modern, informational, consumer capitalism. My speculation is that re-selfing types are part of a redefinition of the MEANING of consumption and production.

Selfwork is not simply preparation for a sign consumer node on the information network. Rather, self-work is ITSELF constitutive of what con-

sumption will become: less external object acquisition and more infrastructure and instrumental technology for “perpetual self renewal”.

Not simply immersion in the cosmogonic myth where the real is the sacred, but all re-selfing as the product of sacred self technologies. These technologies, which are ‘soft’, interpersonal, symbolic as well as hardware, object techniques, are consumed, adding to the cycle of capital. Their larger effectivity, however, is in the creation of the perpetually renewable, re-energized self, who is both the object and subject of capital.

Re-selfing is a post post-modern production of an entirely new form of labor power. It is labor power that dies in the alienation of instrumental corporatism, but is directly and immediately reborn in the inner-worldly mysticism of a suffusion of restored being that the new methods of secular sanctification provide.

This process overcomes the disempowering destructiveness of alienation, which at its limit, would incapacitate or de-activate not only consumers, but also the diminishing stratum of required producers. In this virtually *simultaneous* social production of death and life, the appearance of re-selfing methods delivers not only replenished being, but, in their internal emplacement within humanly destructive social apparatuses, in their evermore direct coupling to the entropic processes, these negentropies provide a new, social model of instantaneous immortality.

Indeed, their seductive power is not only in the memory of the fullness of some collective or individual (the value of the psychotherapies lies here) being, but that they become more dependent on the death-like self-destruction of alienation and de-centering in order to realize their affirmative potential. Life and death are yoked in dynamic tension within both consumption and production.

In consumption, the life, energetic drive, fostered by the instrumentalizing death of objectification of commodity and routine, presses for the perpetual invention and proliferation of new forms of re-selfing, which is consumable not only as objects, but also as technologies of the self. “Life-long learning” is only the earliest sign of the displacement of socialization by new social methods of self-production. In production proper, the social immortality of yoked re-selfing and objectification is accessible only to the surviving elements of the new class, leaving a growing proportion of the population to die various physical and existential deaths. “Life chances” takes on a new, literal meaning.

The surviving agents of production are re-selfed, even in the routinized objectification of sign production. A more relational, expressive, as well as

cognitively agile, re-categorizing self energizes to work the post-industrial apparatus. A new agent of production, not only perpetually renewing, but even in routine objectification, displaying self-power as recreation, repositioning and re-integrative emotional fusion, becomes normative.

Against this scenario, it is our hope that indeed, “it is always morning and the caravan is ready to depart.” But Lamborn Wilson’s fractal, drifting self, and my transparent, relational, sacred self are on a precarious journey in this new desert of being. How re-selfing can crystallize institutionally and what those institutions are going to look like is what is now unfolding. Whether, like Weber’s sixteenth century inner-worldly mystic activists, we can indeed “turn the world upside down”, or more accurately, “inside out”, also remains a possibility – but for us to articulate it, this possibility will first have to be more clearly realized in practice.²

Notes

- 1 For their stimulating conversation and intellectual support, I want to thank Paul Stein, of the Warner School, University of Rochester, and Basil Bernstein, of the London Institute of Education, University of London.
- 2 At the completion of this paper, I read Thomas Csordas’ (1994) *The sacred self: A cultural phenomenology of charismatic healing*. Csordas describes and brilliantly analyzes precisely such practices.

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FAMILY AND GENDER

Loek Halman

FAMILY PATTERNS IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE: RESULTS FROM THE EUROPEAN VALUES STUDY 1990

Introduction

Family life in the closing decades of the twentieth century has changed dramatically. The traditional family patterns have been unraveled and a great variety of patterns has emerged. The events in the domain of family can be regarded part of more general encompassing processes of social and cultural change. These processes, commonly denoted modernization, include rationalization, industrialization, urbanization, specialization, differentiation and so on. All have shaped the contours of contemporary modern or post-modern society. Traditional society has gradually but irreversibly transformed into a modern affluent order.

Secularization and individualization are key notions in this process of change. Secularization denotes the development by which the former influential role of the churches on everyday life diminishes significantly. People do not anymore accept as taken for granted the moral and behavioral guidance of the churches. Religion is assumed to be no longer the “sacred canopy” dominating all parts of social life (Berger, 1967). Religious institutions, religious activities, and religious moods of thinking have lost their social significance (Wilson, 1996, p. 16).

Individualization refers to the process by which increasingly the individual has gained freedom and autonomy. The individual not only has become more independent of the churches, but from other social institutions as well. The individual can make personal choices in far more life situations than before.

It is this increased and still increasing individual freedom and autonomy that has worried many people in contemporary society. Bellah and his associates have argued that ultimately it will destroy social commitment and agreement on moral issues (Bellah, 1986, p. vii). The emphasis on the individual and the lack of clear moral guidance from traditional (religious) institutions (MacIntyre, 1981, p. 181), are regarded a real threat to morality, collective solidarity, citizenship, and social cohesion. Tradition has lost its plausibility and self-evidence and, as Himmelfarb argues, this resulted in “a condition of the most profound and serious moral meaninglessness. What has resulted is the rise of a kind of terror mixed with the most extreme selfishness” (Himmelfarb quoted in Tester, 1997, p. 120). Although this decline of tradition has increased the scope for independent actions, it is often assumed that modern individuals are more powerless than people in traditional societies. “In contrast to the traditional world, it is supposed, where the individual was substantially in control of many of the influences shaping his life, in modern societies that control has passed to external agencies” (Giddens, 1991, p. 191). People in modern society thus encounter feelings of powerlessness, normlessness, and meaninglessness. In other words, they have become alienated.

The question is, however, what is true of all such ideas? What empirical evidence can be found for the belief that an increasing number of people reject the traditional views and pursue only individualistic stances? What is true of all the grand narratives predicting a society of purely individualistic citizens? Is there really a moral decay and a decline in traditional family values?

In a recent paper (Halman, 1995) we have empirically examined the belief that morality is on the wane in contemporary individualized society. We concluded that such ideas cannot be confirmed. Most people in the countries of the Western world appear rather strict in their moral convictions. An ethos of “anything goes” seems not to be the dominant ethos in contemporary Europe. Our analyses substantiated the idea expressed by, for example, Zygmunt Bauman (1995), that morality as such is not on the decline, but that the sources of morality are switching from those imposed by traditional institutional religiosity to personal convictions.

The current paper addresses the question to what degree family patterns have changed. The processes of individualization and secularization are assumed to have had an impact on demographic behavior and that they have

changed family values. The demographic transitions have been described extensively and we do not want to repeat them here. We direct our attention to the values and attitudes in the domain of family. Using the data from the European Values Study we investigate the view that traditional values in this domain are on the wane and that individualistic orientations are increasingly favored by people in contemporary Europe.

In the second section we briefly describe the main topic of this paper: individualization and the assumed consequences of this process for values and attitudes in the domain of family. In the third section we present some empirical data which corroborates findings of other research projects. Although the variety of family types and forms of cohabitation has increased, this does not imply that marriage and family are outdated institutions. On the contrary, as we will show, a great majority of the populations in Europe still favors the traditional views in these domains. The conclusion, presented in the fourth section, is that the theories predicting a decline in traditional values seem to be wrong. They appear too general, and do not take into account the different routes modernization can take. What seems to be the case is that people are indeed increasingly free to decide for themselves in accordance with their own preferences. But when it comes to making choices, they opt for the traditional ones.

2. Individualization and Changing Family Life

Both individualization and secularization are important processes of what is called the modernization of society. “Modernization“ is both an expansive and contested term, but it generally embraces a variety of developments which have shaped the contours of contemporary modern society. Modernization processes like rationalization, industrialization, urbanization, specialization, differentiation, have shaped the conditions for a gradual but irreversible transformation of traditional society into modern (affluent) society. The closing decades of this century have witnessed what is often called, post-modernization. In contrast to modernization, which can be regarded as “a transfer of authority from family and religious institutions to political institutions”, post-modernization denotes a shift of authority “away from *both* religion and the state to the individual” (Inglehart, 1995, pp. 384-385).

The basic values in the traditional, pre-modern order were primarily rooted in, and legitimized by tradition and institutional (Christian) religion. In the modern and post-modern affluent order, values have become subject to

individual freedom and personal autonomy. Increasingly, the individual has become free and independent of traditional social and religious institutions. The role of the churches and their leaders has diminished tremendously. Religion is no longer influential as the grand narrative that provides the ground of moral theories, moral views, and actions. "The discourse of modernity rejects the *imposition* of a substantive notion of good and right, as ordained by a God" (Wagner, 1994, p. 8). Instead, the individual wants to decide for himself what is good and bad, what is beautiful and ugly, what is right and wrong. The "autonomy of choice and moral responsibility for self-initiated action replaced collectively defined status and social duty. Both moral and political authority were decollectivized and relocated in the personal projects of free individuals" (Heller & Wellbery, 1986, p. 5). Modern people are considered to be personally responsible for their behaviors and lifestyles; and their decisions and preferences are based primarily on the realization of personal interests. The individual's aim is to "fulfill private ends, largely through relationships seen as instrumental, and whose principal characteristic is the possession of individual rights that have priority over societal needs" (Crittenden, 1992, p. 3). The individual has become the main point of reference in the shaping of values and attitudes, and self-realization, individual development and personal happiness have become the main wellsprings of individual actions.

Individualization can thus be summarized as "a liberation from social constraints which limited and channeled the ways in which human beings could draw on the historically available enablements" (Wagner, 1994, p. 185). In modern, affluent society the individual has grown to be the key-decision taker (Barker, Halman & Vloet, 1992, p. 5).

Individualization can be seen as a process leading to ever higher levels of individualism, i.e. that people become increasingly emancipated from the forces which dominated society earlier. Individualization reveals itself in the gradual transformation of traditional and civic values. The decreasing adherence to religious values, the decreasing civic morality, the increasing permissiveness, the decreasing willingness to legitimate moral convictions by a Christian world view, the increasing emphasis on personal development and achievement in working life, the change from a materialistic value orientation to a post-materialistic preference in the socio-political domain, are all taken as signs of individualization (Halman & Ester, 1991).

In a differentiated, post-traditional order, the signposts established by tradition are blank by definition. Without a compulsory tradition, there is no option but to choose. Modernity is furthermore characterized by its re-

flexivity, which refers to the susceptibility of most aspects of social activity to chronic revision in the light of new information or knowledge. "Even the most reliable authorities can be trusted only 'until further notice', and the abstract systems that penetrate so much of day-to-day life normally offers multiple possibilities rather than fixed guidelines or recipes for actions" (Giddens, 1991, p. 84). Thus, values are no longer a "one possibility thing" but have become a world of options in which the individual is the main point of reference. "Lacking external referents supplied by others, the life-span (...) emerges as a trajectory which relates above all to the individual's projects and plans" (Giddens, 1991, p. 147).

Since the various social roles have become functionally differentiated, an increasing number of people will select their values 'à la carte'. This is reflected in the multitude of their religious beliefs, their political ideas and actions, their ways of cohabitation, and so on (Beyer, 1994). People increasingly feel free, and actually they are increasingly free, to choose the convictions and practices they like.

In the domain of family and marriage, the processes of individualization and secularization are considered to have changed the patterns of family life. Individual autonomy and self-fulfillment are given priority, partly at the expense of duties and commitments traditionally connected to family, the church, and community life. The traditional model of the family in which the man was the main breadwinner and his female partner was primarily engaged in domestic labor and (child-)caring duties is no longer the sole pattern of living arrangements. Women's liberation, their participation in the labor market, the changing roles of males and females, are all indicative of a process of ongoing liberalization and individualization of personal lifestyles.

Proponents of what is called the theory of the "second demographic transition" have argued that the current low levels of fertility in the Western world reflect behavior that is rooted in an ever-growing individualism in Western societies. In their view these societies are becoming increasingly more oriented to the individual at the expense of a traditional family orientation. The changes which are seen as the cause of the second demographic transition have been concisely summarized by van de Kaa as four related shifts. "Reflecting the shift to progressiveness and individualism, the sequence involves shifts from marriage toward cohabitation, from children to the adult couple as the focus of a family, from contraception to prevent unwanted births to deliberate self-fulfilling choices whether and when to conceive a child, and from uniform to widely diversified families and households" (Van de Kaa, 1987, p. 9).

Demographic trends such as the decreasing number of people who marry, the rising rate of divorce, and the low number of children seem to confirm the direction of these fundamental shifts. These changes in values are denoted in evolutionary terms “from altruism to individualism” (Van de Kaa, 1987, p. 5; Lesthaeghe & Van de Kaa, 1986), suggesting the incompatibility of individualization and the preservation of traditional familial solidarity. People increasingly opt for themselves and for their personal benefits, and, as a consequence, reject marriage and traditional family life. Women’s liberation in particular is seen as crucial in establishing a non-family orientation (Shorter, 1975; Lasch, 1977).

Following the ideas of the proponents of the second demographic transition theory, individualization can thus be seen as the engine behind the dramatic changes in patterns of family life. The traditional family roles have gradually been replaced by a multitude of non-traditional forms of relationships. Marriage has lost its monopoly on the relation market as the only acceptable way of living together and has instead become an option. Other models of cohabitation have become socially accepted and practiced. In other words, there has been an “emancipation of alternatives” (Van den Akker, 1982, p. 47). This emancipation is indicated by the rising proportion of those choosing to live alone and of younger as well as older couples living together, permanently or as a preliminary stage to marriage. “There has been an increase in households which represent variants in relation to classical definitions of the family: single individual households, couples living together not married, single parents, gay couples, ‘reconstituted’ families containing children of earlier unions of one or more of the adult members, and so on” (Rapoport, 1989, p. 56). Marriage is no longer regarded as a lifelong commitment. Divorce is “acknowledged as a ‘normal’ end of a marital union” (Boh, 1989, p. 283). A divorce is in some cases even considered the best solution, not only for both partners, but also for the(ir) child(ren). Parenthood has become an option too, and remaining childless is considered perfectly acceptable, particularly because a woman’s desire to pursue her career in the labor market has turned into a right. Whether or not to have children and decisions as to the actual number of children have become a matter of personal preference and free choice. “The transition from a way of life in which few restrictions were imposed on fertility to a new era of birth control in which having children has become subject to voluntary choice is a momentous one” (Wrong, 1977, p. 64). As a consequence, in all industrialized countries a decrease in fertility can be observed. Large families have become less and less popular among a growing propor-

tion of the (young) population and the new standard for the number of children became two (Boh, 1989, p. 286; Klinger, 1984, pp. 110-111).

Not only has parenthood become an option, but the function of parental socialization has changed fundamentally, too. The family is no longer the authoritarian institution as described and criticized by Horkheimer and the Frankfurt School, for example (Horkheimer, 1982). The family has turned into a democratic institution in which children and parents have rights and duties (Slater, 1969; Van den Akker, 1989). The relationship between parents and their children has become more and more egalitarian (Lasch, 1977). Parental roles in general have changed since child-rearing became less a process of disciplinary supervision and more a question of personal attention to the emotional and relational aspects of a child's development. As a consequence, the distance between child and parents has been reduced significantly. The family has become more child-oriented and child care has become more demanding (Fox-Harding, 1996, p. 4).

Together with the change in (parents') educational styles from authoritarian towards egalitarian and democratic under the influence of individualization, there has also occurred a substantive change in educational value orientations. The once important values of obedience and discipline have been curbed whereas feelings of responsibility and independence have become increasingly important. Among others, Klages notes a significant decline in what he called the traditional "Pflicht- und Akzeptanzwerte" and an increase in "Selbstentfaltungswerte" (Klages, 1985). In other words, individualization is causing a shift in educational values from traditional values emphasizing order, authority, discipline, and obedience, towards modern, individualized or expressive values, such as autonomy, creativity, emancipation, and permissiveness.

The demographic trends in the western countries show similar developments in marriage rates, number of divorces, varieties of cohabitation, and levels of fertility (Bumpass, 1990; Population, 1992, p. 1186). Northern European countries, Sweden and Denmark in particular, are considered to be forerunners of the demographic developments while Southern European countries are seen to be lagging behind. Van de Kaa speaks of a 'standard' sequence of changes in family formation, and within Europe, countries (West and East) can be tracked roughly according to the evolution so far in these countries. However, differences between countries have diminished (Lesthaeghe & Van de Kaa, 1986; Lesthaeghe & Meekers, 1986; Monnier, 1986; Rindfuss & Vandenheuvel, 1990). "How much the European countries have in common is shown by the fact that there is a clearly discernible

trend which characterizes the development in all European countries to a greater or lesser extent: They are moving in the direction indicated by the forerunners” (Hoffmann-Nowotny, 1987, p. 161; Roussel, 1992, p. 146). Since the changes in demographic patterns have occurred first and foremost in the Nordic countries, and since these countries are indeed more individualized in many respects (see e.g. Ester, Halman & De Moor, 1994), it is indeed to be expected that these Nordic countries will show a more individualistic patterning of family life than Southern Europe and Ireland. The questions to be answered in this paper are whether these ideas, formulated in the wake of developments which took place during the sixties and seventies, still hold in the eighties and nineties which “are marked by the defense protection of falling living standards, neo-conservatism and pessimism” (Elliot, 1996, p. 1). In other words, the dramatic changes in the direction of a sexual liberation and increasing permissiveness and diversity may not be salient today. It is reasonable to ask whether, after all, the old patterns have persisted. Even though orientations may have shifted, it is not certain that behaviors have not remained rather traditional. The ethos of “anything goes” seems not to signal complete laxity in behaviors associated with family. In the next section we will explore this possibility. Have the old patterns survived or have new patterns emerged as predicted by (among others) the proponents of the second demographic transition theory?

Empirical evidence

What empirical evidence can be found for the view that people’s orientations, attitudes, beliefs, and values regarding family have changed? Do people in contemporary western post-modern society indeed reject the traditional views and favor the individualistic stances predicted in modernization theories? Survey data from the European Values Study will guide our investigation of these ideas.

Data

The project of the European Values Study, launched at the end of the seventies, was an initiative of Professor Jan Kerkhofs of the Catholic University of Louvain and Professor Ruud de Moor of the University of Tilburg (for more detailed information, see Ester, Halman & De Moor, 1994). At the end of the seventies they established the European Values Systems Study Group,

a small group comprising mainly social and political scientists. Their aim was to undertake research on fundamental value patterns in Western Europe. The EVS questionnaire was developed so as to measure values in important domains of life such as religion and morality, economic life, politics, work, family, marriage, and sexuality. In the EVS questionnaire, several questions concerning specific domains were included (for more details and the questionnaire items, see Halman & Vloet, 1994).

This group succeeded in conducting a large scale survey in all the countries of the European Community in 1981, and in Spain (at that time not yet a member of the EC). The research project aroused interest in many other countries, where colleagues and research institutions joined the project and used the same questionnaire. As a result of this collaboration, data of the participating non-European countries were exchanged with those of the European Value Systems Study Group. In this way comparable surveys became available outside western Europe (the Scandinavian countries), from Hungary, Malta, the Soviet Union, the United States, Canada, Chile, Argentina, Japan, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.

A second wave of surveys was fielded in 1990 again in all the countries of the European Community (except Greece), and in Hungary, Czecho-Slovakia, the Scandinavian countries, South Africa, Japan, the United States, Canada, while in Austria, Switzerland, Poland, Bulgaria, the Baltic States, and the former German Democratic Republic the survey was conducted for the first time by associated research teams. The analyses in this article are based on the data from the EVS surveys in Western European countries gathered in 1990. The sample sizes from these countries were (see also Ester, Halman & De Moor, 1994, p. 28; Halman & Vloet, 1994, p. 7): France 1002, Great Britain 1484, West Germany 2101, Italy 2018, Spain 2637, Portugal 1185, Netherlands 1017, Belgium 2792, Denmark 1030, Norway 1239, Sweden 1047, Northern Ireland 304, Ireland 1000, Iceland 702. Although we only present figures for 1990, we have shown elsewhere, that during the eighties hardly anything changed with respect to people's orientations towards family and marriage. If changes were noted, they were barely significant and thus not worthy of attention (Van den Akker et al., 1994). Because West and East Germany have been re-united, we have, just for information, presented the figures for the former German Democratic Republic separately. These figures demonstrate that the differences are, generally speaking, rather small. However there are some differences which are worth mentioning. Most of these differences can be attributed, at least that is our perception, to differences in the social, political, and economic regimes people in East and West

have experienced for a long time. The sample size in East Germany was 1034 (see Ester et al., 1994, p. 273).

Results

The data we have analyzed indicates that traditional views are remarkably alive, even in those countries which are commonly regarded as the forerunners of modernity and demographic transformations: in the Scandinavian countries.

Family in modern society

The idea that family has decreased in importance due to the process of individualization can not be substantiated from the survey data we have at our disposal. Even in countries where the demographic changes seem to reveal the disappearance of traditional family life, a traditional family pattern has not vanished at all. Large majorities of the populations in Europe not only regard family as very important,¹ they also share almost unanimously the view that an emphasis on the family in the near future would be a good development!² The percentages shown in Table 1 speak for themselves.

Table 1. Importance of the family: Proportions of respondents saying that the family is very important and that more emphasis on the family in the future would be a good development.

Country	Family very important	Emphasis on family is good
France	82	90
Great Britain	88	88
West Germany	71	87
East Germany	84	92
Italy	88	93
Spain	84	88
Portugal	65	95
Netherlands	80	67
Belgium	84	85
Denmark	88	95
Norway	88	95
Sweden	87	85
Northern Ireland	94	92
Ireland	91	94
Iceland	91	96

Source: Van den Akker, Halman & de Moor 1994, p. 107; EVS 1990

Of course, from these figures it can not be concluded what kind of family people had in mind. A wide variety of family types is, e.g. the married couple with or without children, unmarried couples living together with or without children, one parent families, reconstructed families including children from earlier marriage, gay couples etc. (Rapoport, 1989, p. 56). Apparently the traditional family pattern is a social norm that still exists, and as such not much seems to have changed in the domain of family. As Prinz has noted, “the nuclear family, a cornerstone of society, is flourishing and is indeed probably more widespread than ever before” (Prinz, 1995, p. 2).

The preference for a traditional family pattern emerges also from the answers to the question whether one thinks a child needs both a father and a mother in order to grow up happily. For a vast majority in all countries it is clear that a child needs both parents. This level of support is even found in the Scandinavian countries, in many respects the forerunners in modern views on primary relationships. Rodger seems to be correct when he states that the two-parent model of the family is regarded as “essential for the normal development of children” (Rodger, 1996, p. 149).

Table 2. Place of children in a woman’s life: Proportions of respondents approving of a single woman having a child and that a woman needs a child in order to be fulfilled.

Country	Approval single woman having a child	Child necessity for women
France	39	75
Great Britain	36	21
West Germany	23	45
East Germany	34	67
Italy	39	67
Spain	62	51
Portugal	40	61
Netherlands	38	12
Belgium	32	46
Denmark	67	82
Norway	27	23
Sweden	25	21
Northern Ireland	25	32
Ireland	23	26
Iceland	84	42

Source: Van den Akker et al., 1994: 108; EVS 1990

Does this mean that after all hardly anything has changed? Are those who have described the changes in the orientation to the family mistaken? Insofar as the consequences of the suppositions people have about the preferred family pattern is concerned, the answer to the question should be affirmative. However, they are not wrong in their view that individualization has proceeded. Individualization understood in terms of increasing personal freedom and personal autonomy is reflected in the high percentages of people who disagree with the idea that women have to have children in order to be fulfilled.

Finally, it can be noted, however, that growing emphasis on the individual and personal choices is not unlimited. As soon as children are involved, their well-being becomes highly important. This appears from the widespread disapproval of women who may want to have a child without a stable relationship with a man, and also from the widely shared opinion that, in order to grow up happy, a child needs both parents.

Marriage

It has been argued that for a long time marriage was the only legitimate way of cohabitation and that in contemporary individualized society marriage is no longer the dominant model. However, even in the contemporary (post)modern era, marriage has not lost much of its popularity. It is least popular in France where no less than 71% of the population thinks that marriage is not an outdated institution. In all other countries, including the Scandinavian countries, larger proportions of the respondents share this view. Although an increasing number of people of Western societies opt for no marriage and for alternative living arrangements, approval of marriage appears still to be firmly rooted in contemporary societies.

This positive evaluation of marriage does not imply that divorce is rejected. On the contrary, in all countries except Denmark, divorce was increasingly accepted (Van den Akker, Halman & De Moor, 1994). This favorable attitude towards marriage in combination with the rather widespread acceptance of divorce may be understood as a sign that precisely because marriage is so highly valued, divorce is accepted in the event that a marriage does not fulfill expectations. An interesting case in this respect is Iceland where the score for justification of divorce was second only to that of Sweden, but where at the same time the idea that marriage is outdated was hardly supported. The only conclusion from this result seems to be that the indissoluble marriage bond has disappeared as a social norm. In modern times

Table 3. Support for marriage and acceptance of divorce: Proportion of respondents sharing the opinion that marriage is not an outdated institution and mean scores on the statement that divorce is justified (10 point scale: 1=never justified; 10=always justified).

Country	Marriage is NOT outdated	Acceptance of divorce
France	71	5.6
Great Britain	82	5.3
West Germany	85	5.7
East Germany	85	5.1
Italy	87	5.2
Spain	86	5.3
Portugal	77	5.4
Netherlands	79	6.1
Belgium	78	4.9
Denmark	82	5.9
Norway	90	5.3
Sweden	86	6.3
Northern Ireland	86	4.1
Ireland	90	4.1
Iceland	94	6.2

Source: Van den Akker et al., 1994, p. 103; EVS 1990

marriage has been “reconstructed as a terminable arrangement” (Elliot, 1996, p. 12).

Traditionally, sexual relationships were reserved for those who were married and served mainly for procreation, but as Elliot argues, marriage and sex have become separated and are no longer closely connected. The invention and introduction of contraceptives together with the growing acceptance of the use of contraceptives resulted in a (sharp) decrease in unwanted pregnancies. As a matter of fact, even before the introduction of modern contraceptives people also made every effort to limit the number of births. In traditional society fertility was not “left exclusively to strictly biological and demographic factors” and it was not “a result of ‘irrational’ behavior” (Saporiti, 1989, p. 198). However, in traditional society, what can be called “birth-stimulating social control” was dominant, ranging from “religious doctrine to moral codes, law, education, community customs, marriage habits, and family organization” (Saporiti, 1989, p. 199). Modernization is assumed to have reduced the impact of these factors. Children have become

an option and as such the meaning of procreation has changed for women and men.

The theoretical understanding of sex and marriage is clear-cut. Marriage was meant to regulate sexual behavior (Schelsky, 1958, p. 27). Sex outside marriage was regarded as a criminal act and/or a sin. However, strong evidence is lacking (see Shorter, 1975). In certain areas of Europe it was more or less a custom that a woman was pregnant before her marriage, if only to assure the (future) husband of her fertility (Boh, 1989, p. 277). Nowadays pre-marital sex is more accepted, adultery seems less depraved than before (Thornton, 1989, pp. 883-887), and homosexuality is for a growing part of the population in contemporary society no longer a sin, but increasingly accepted.

However, the empirical evidence for these positions is not very strong (see Van den Akker et al., 1994, p. 114). Homosexuality is one of the issues that seems to be accepted slightly more than adultery and sex among minors³ which still appear to be unacceptable for a large proportion of the populations in Europe. Sex under the legal age of consent is almost unanimously regarded as “never justified” by people in the Scandinavian countries.⁴

Parenthood

As we have observed, parenthood seems to have lost its self-evidence. In traditional societies parenthood was beyond dispute; in contemporary individualized society parenthood is a matter of free choice and personal preference. This approach has been called the separation of childbearing from marriage (Elliot, 1996, p. 12). However, we can note that well over fifty percent of the respondents a majority in European countries, with the sole exception of Denmark, regard children as still important for ensuring a good marriage. Children are not a necessity for a woman's fulfillment (see Table 2), but children are important for satisfaction in the family.

As far as parental roles are concerned the prevalent view is that they have become liberalized and democratized (Slater, 1969; Van den Akker, 1989). The distance between parents and their children has been reduced. Increasingly parents regard their children as equal and the child has attained a distinctive social status within the family, as well as in society. The duties of parents towards their children appears from the question whether or not parents should do their utmost for their children. Doing their utmost for their children means making a real sacrifice in the sense that they will be

Table 4. Parents and Children: Proportions of respondents regarding children important for a good marriage, endorsing the statement that parents should do their utmost for their children, and agreeing with the statement that a child has to love and respect his parents irrespective of their behavior.

Country	Children are important for a good marriage	Parents have to do their utmost for their children	Child has to love and respect parents
France	65	81	77
Great Britain	58	74	68
West Germany	44	54	62
East Germany	64	71	77
Italy	64	79	84
Spain	73	78	83
Portugal	65	84	77
Netherlands	54	68	42
Belgium	55	64	76
Denmark	42	52	47
Norway	61	73	45
Sweden	61	63	51
Northern Ireland	69	82	80
Ireland	62	73	78
Iceland	66	50	61

Source: EVS 1990; see also Van den Akker et al., 1994, p. 111.

restricted in pursuing their own happiness and well-being. Although it can mean that parents are hindered in their search for personal unfolding and self-fulfillment, large majorities of the people in Europe share the idea that it is their duty to do their best for their children even at the expense of their own well-being. Even in most individualized Nordic countries, there is a majority favoring this view. In sum, as far as parenthood is concerned, most people express the traditional stance – that children come first.

The traditional authoritarian parent-child relationship meant that a child always had to obey and respect his parents, regardless of the parents' behaviors. Rights and duties were, so to say, socially assigned and the parents simply imposed their will on their children. It is generally held that the situation has changed dramatically and that obedience and respect have vanished in favor of the view that parents have to earn respect (Lasch, 1977). However, again, the empirical evidence is not strong. On the contrary, the

autocratic view seems to prevail in most countries. Except for the Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands, a large majority of the respondents share the opinion that children have to love and respect their parents regardless of their behavior.

Educational values

Respondents were presented with a list of eleven qualities which children could be encouraged to learn at home, and they were asked to choose up to five qualities which they regarded as especially important. In Table 5, we have a summary of the responses. Although obedience is regarded as important in the relationship between parents and their children, it is not accompanied by the view that children have to be obedient towards all other people in society. Most highly valued are good manners – children should know how to behave, responsibility, and tolerance – respect for differences. The most frequently mentioned qualities can be regarded as “the virtues of a less constrained sociability within which others are rather distanced from the subject” (Timms, 1992, p. 62). Those qualities that “require sustained interaction with others to their development” (Timms, 1992, p. 62) such as imagination and religious faith are less frequently cited as important. Associated with this perception is the finding that a relatively low proportion of respondents in the various countries valued traditional educational merits such as: obedience, hard work, and thrift.

On the other hand, it cannot be concluded that the individualized features associated with modernity are valued much more highly than the traditional ones. Independence, imagination and determination, which are termed modern (Stoetzel, 1983, p. 29), are hardly mentioned more often than the traditional options. Of course, there are significant differences between countries as far as which qualities are preferred. Respondents from East Germany, like respondents from Iceland, for example, differ remarkably from the other countries in regard to the idea of saving money. This finding may perhaps be attributed to the financial situations in those countries at the time of the interview. As noted, it can in general be concluded that social and moral elements seem to have maintained important qualities according to large majorities in Western Europe.

Table 5. Qualities that are considered important for children to learn at home.
(in %)*

Country	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k
France	53	27	53	72	23	78	36	38	13	39	53
Great Britain	89	43	29	48	18	79	26	31	19	57	39
W. Germany	67	73	15	85	32	76	45	49	20	8	22
E. Germany	69	67	18	84	27	72	61	55	13	8	26
Italy	79	31	27	82	15	66	29	27	37	39	34
Spain	83	36	29	80	41	75	27	21	28	5	44
Portugal	82	24	67	77	20	69	31	23	26	28	45
Netherlands	79	48	14	85	22	86	29	31	15	22	33
Belgium	72	36	36	72	18	69	36	39	16	28	37
Denmark	66	81	2	86	37	81	19	30	9	50	20
Norway	77	86	7	90	31	64	22	33	14	10	31
Sweden	78	36	5	89	40	91	48	33	6	29	25
Northern Ireland	95	37	29	38	14	80	25	18	44	49	56
Ireland	75	43	28	61	14	76	22	26	57	53	35
Iceland	90	89	79	94	49	93	69	75	50	75	68

* Interpretation: a = good manners; b = independence; c = hard work; d = responsibility; e = imagination; f = tolerance, respect; g = thrift, saving money; h = determination; i = religious faith; j = unselfishness; k = obedience

Gender roles

Traditionally, a woman's place was in the home. Nowadays, in most western societies women have increasingly entered the labor market, due to the processes of modernization and individualization in general and emancipation in particular. This change in women's role is thought to have caused major changes in work and family orientations, particularly among females. "The shift – which is a result of men's and women's work-roles – from the traditional model of the family with the husband/father as breadwinner and the wife/mother as a full-time housewife to the dual-work family in which both husband and wife are employed outside the home is considered one of the most significant changes in family patterns" (Boh, 1989, p. 266). This shift is assumed to be caused by the increased desire of women for personal growth and emphasis on self-fulfillment. The acceptance of women's participation in the labor market has increased. "There is now wide acceptance in both East and West European countries that married women are legitimately oriented to working outside the home" (Rapoport, 1989, p. 58). The question is, however, if this acceptance is reflected in people's orientations towards female roles.⁵

Generally speaking, it can be concluded that most Europeans are of the opinion that women should contribute to the household income and that they can achieve independence by having a paid job. The traditional view that women are best suited for taking care of the household and the children is somewhat less widespread among people in Europe, particularly in the Northern countries. A minority in Europe shares the idea "that women are unlikely to be satisfied with a life centered purely on home and hearth" (Ashford & Timms, 1992, p. 65). However, as soon as children and their welfare are considered, the support for egalitarian gender roles is less strong and less convincing. The participation of a women in the labor market should not be at the expense of a child's welfare. On the whole, the patterns of responses demonstrate that high proportions of the populations are not absolutely against women's participation in the work market; but their activity is not welcomed with great enthusiasm either. A rather mixed pattern of traditional and modern orientations appears in the answers to these gender role questions.

Here, it is clear that patterns of values are different in different European countries. These differences are apparently related to differential patterns of women's actual labor market participation. Boh (1989) has demonstrated that Europe has a differential pattern as far as women's participation in the

Table 6. Proportions of respondents agreeing with the statements about gender roles (% agree strongly and agree)*

Country	a	b	c	d	e	f
France	73	65	68	60	79	80
Great Britain	70	55	45	60	68	70
West Germany	41	84	51	54	75	64
East Germany	55	80	52	36	74	87
Italy	63	78	72	56	74	80
Spain	66	57	55	59	78	83
Portugal	76	84	62	49	80	98
Netherlands	69	63	41	56	55	30
Belgium	74	61	61	67	70	67
Denmark	83	32	25	55	81	71
Norway	69	46	51	53	75	74
Sweden	73	74	-.**	62	74	87
Northern Ireland	71	44	53	70	70	83
Ireland	63	53	59	72	61	70
Iceland	82	52	71	71	43	68

Source: EVS 1990

* Interpretation of variables:

a = a working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work;

b = a pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works;

c = a job is all right but what most women really want is a home and children;

d = being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay;

e = having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person;

f = both the husband and wife should contribute to the household income

**Note: In Sweden the item was formulated differently.

labor market is concerned. Following Boh, four “women employment patterns” can be distinguished, based on a combination of women’s participation and intensity of this participation (full-time or part-time). The *low-employment pattern* or “housewife pattern” is characterized by “a low participation of women in the labor force” (Boh, 1989, p. 270). It is particularly found in Spain, Italy and Ireland. The *medium-employment pattern* seems to represent the situation in Portugal, France, West Germany and Belgium. Its main features are moderate participation and low proportions of part-timers. A *high part-time pattern* seems to be characteristic of the situation in The Netherlands. Most of the Dutch working women are active in part-time

jobs. Finally, a high percentage of the women in Denmark and Great Britain actually work outside their homes. Both countries have a *high employment pattern* or a 'radical pattern' (Boh, 1989, p. 270).

The responses to the EVS survey show that the high degree of women's participation in Denmark is indeed accompanied by a more widespread rejection of the traditional role of women in terms of gender roles. Still, even here there is only a mild conviction that women should provide for the household income together with the male partners. Respondents in Portugal, France, Belgium, and Ireland more frequently state that they agree with the traditional female gender roles, but they have different opinions about the necessity of women's contribution to the household income. The case of Germany also shows that more factors should be taken into account for explaining the attitudinal differences. For the responses of Germans resemble those of the people in Ireland more than those of respondents in Belgium, France, and Portugal which they were expected to be close to. Spain, Ireland, and Italy are also far from homogeneous in their attitudes towards female employment. Further, the high proportions in Eastern Germany agreeing with the statement that both men and women should contribute to the household income and, compared to Western Germany, the rather low rate of agreement with the statement that being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay, seem to demonstrate the impact of the increasing levels of women's unemployment in the former German Democratic Republic and the sheer economic necessity that women work outside the household.

All in all the conclusion seems to be that assessments of the value of women's participation in the labor market depend upon several objective factors. Participation is praised according to whether or not a woman's earnings are considered additional income for the household; whether or not they are a means for a woman to achieve independence; and whether or not the health and welfare of children are at risk. Support for women doing paid work is highest when there is a need for additional income, and even when work outside the home is a means for gaining independence. But people are more reluctant to accept women's engagement in paid work once children are involved. So, equality yes, but this equality and women's participation in the labor market is not unconditional. The condition is: no children, at least as long as these children are still very young.

Conclusions

It seems as if Elliot (1996) is right to a certain extent in his claim that old patterns persist. This observation is substantiated by our analyses. However, his idea that they have reasserted themselves during the nineties because of falling living standards, neo-conservatism, and pessimism have been challenged. When we compare the above findings with our analyses of the 1981 values survey, we find that the responses at that time also showed support for traditional patterns. The only conclusion to be drawn from this is that traditional patterns did not *recur*; they never disappeared! What seems to be the case is that developments during the sixties and seventies heightened individual freedom, emphasized the openness of society and extended opportunities in the domain of family and marriage. But in their actual choices people still appear to prefer the traditional models.

Coupled with the finding that today's European societies are not undergoing a moral decline, it seems safe to conclude that many of the hypotheses on societal change in general, and the negative interpretation of the changes in particular, cannot be confirmed. Predictions of a decline in moral standards, and an increase in an ethos of "anything goes" have not been confirmed. Although indeed the overarching claims of traditional institutions have disappeared, and people have gained freedom and autonomy, the traditional views have remained remarkably alive. Normlessness does not seem to be widespread and as we have seen, people seem to be rather content with traditional family life. It seems as if they do not consider family life as a kind of bodice that limits their opportunities. As such we think we cannot find strong evidence for feelings of uneasiness, normlessness, meaninglessness, and other signs of alienation. Realizing that people in contemporary society are living in a more permissive and liberal society, where they are freer than ever before to make decisions on their own without being forced by traditional rules of social control imposed by traditional institutions, the conclusion cannot be other than that alienation in the domain of the family is not characteristic of European society today. As others have noted "both men and women within the family have changed their behavior patterns less than might be expected from the external shifts" (Fox-Harding, 1996, p. 22). In people's minds, the old patterns have survived the flow of modernity!

Notes

- 1 The respondent was asked to indicate how important family is in their lives. The answers ranged from Very important, quite important, not very important to not at all important.
- 2 The item was one of a longer list of various changes presented to the respondents who were asked to indicate of each of these changes if it were to happen would it be a good thing, a bad thing, or that the respondent did not care. The item was “More emphasis on family life”.
- 3 Unfortunately the EVS questionnaire did not contain an item on pre-marital sex. The items related to sexual behavior were sex of minors and adultery.
- 4 This may be to the translation of the item in the Scandinavian countries: it is explicitly formulated in the sense that an adult has a sexual relationship with a minor.
- 5 The items on gender roles in the EVS questionnaire focused mainly on women’s roles and not so much on male roles. It has been asked if one agreed strongly, agreed, disagreed or disagreed strongly with the following five statements:
 - A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.
 - A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works.
 - A job is all right but what most women really want is a home and children.
 - Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.
 - Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person.
 - Both the husband and wife should contribute to household income.

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Anna Mikheyeva

THE ROLE OF SUBCULTURES IN THE SPREAD OF THE PHENOMENON OF COHABITATION IN THE SIBERIAN COUNTRYSIDE

Problem Statement*

The interest scientists (Maddock, Hogan, Antonov & Matskovsky, 1995) show in demographic processes in Russia, and in the trends of marriage, divorce, and fertility has been intensified by current developments in the sphere of family and marriage. On the surface, this situation seems disastrous with an ongoing steep reduction in the indicators of fertility, a spread of out-of-wedlock births, and a high rate of divorce. The conditions are often described by scientists as a crisis in, or even as the collapse of, the social institutions of family and marriage. The problem of free cohabitation and out-of-wedlock births is quite justifiably discussed in terms of “poverty feminization”. This is signaled by socialization difficulties in single-parent families headed by the mother, juvenile and teenager crime, prostitution, and so on.

For all that, the phenomenon of the spread of off-modal forms of marriage such as cohabitation, consensual unions, step marriages has been marked by researchers in nearly all advanced nations. In those societies where over a period of several generations men and women have had free choice of mar-

riage partners, independence in decisions on the number of births and on the timing of child-bearing; and where the family is of an egalitarian and nuclear type, cohabitation is widespread and accepted by the public with tolerance. These informal groups represent a form of resistance to alienation in the demographic sphere at the current stage of modernization. The level of public forbearance in the face of this form of family depends on whether the transition from the “traditional” to the “modern” type of family has been or has not been completed.

In Russia the ongoing changes in family forms have been an object of dispute only since the mid-sixties, mostly in connection with the drop in fertility and the rise in the rate of divorce. The “revelation” at the end of the eighties and the beginning of the nineties, of other aspects of the non-normative composition of the family – factors such as out-of-wedlock births and widespread different forms of cohabitation – coincided in Russia with the general social and economic crisis and the adverse effects of structural contingencies. Stinging negative statements about a “sweeping drop in fertility”, “moral corruption”, and the “collapse of the family” heard throughout Russia, imposed on the public the idea that these processes were set in train by quite unexpectedly situated events, namely by the economic crisis. But the norms and patterns of people’s mating and family behaviors are characterized by a high sustainability. This leads us to believe that the current features of the transformation in the institution of the family have resulted from a long range process (probably over more than 50 years) of demographic development inherent in industrialized society as such. These changes are objective, legitimate, and relatively independent of concrete difficulties experienced by a society at a given period of its development.

Table 1. The rate of out-of-wedlock births to all births in percentages.

Siberia		Russia		Estonia		Sweden		France		USA	
1970	1994	1965	1994	1965	1988	1963	1995	1963	1995	1960	1992
17	21	12	19	14	23	18	50	13	35	5	21

Prinz, 1994; *Population of Russia*, 1997

As Table 1 shows, the rise in the percentages of out-of-wedlock births has been similar in countries which are very different from one another. The similarity of these processes in many countries has given specialists grounds for conclusions about the beginning of a new stage in the world demo-

graphic development, what has been called the second demographic transition (Lesthaeghe, 1995; van de Kaa, 1987). The time sequence of these changes has also been denoted. First, there is a drop in the birth rate; then, there is a rise in the divorce rate. After that, there is a rise in the proportion of cohabitations, and, lastly, higher rates of out-of-wedlock births. These characteristic processes are the trend in Russia and in Siberia. I have reached this conclusion through investigations of patterns in rural family formation in Russia as a whole and in Siberia, in particular the demographic trends from 1959 to 1989 (see Mikheyeva, 1993).

In my investigations, I have found that the processes and trends toward out-of-wedlock unions in these highly traditional regions are practically the same as those occurring in European, urbanized, and modernized nations in this very same period. Still, rates of off-modal patterns in mating, family, and reproductive behavior of the Siberian people are still far behind those in regions such as France, Sweden, Germany. But the similarity of demographic trends may indicate the presence of deep-seated grounds for new types of behavior.

The first problem addressed in this study is how to define what is meant by non-traditional forms of family life (behavior). Out-of-wedlock children, divorces, pre-marital sexual connections are phenomena known to have accompanied monogamous marriage over centuries; so, the “non-traditional” forms of family behavior are not new, and in different periods and in different cultures and subcultures they may have been even statistically dominant (Bosanats & Kallistratova, 1983). It is also difficult to give a universal definition that would tell us what form of behavior belongs to tradition and what does not. The institution of monogamous marriage is not a measure of traditional family behavior in the cultures of all societies or communities (Oakley, 1972). While studying the phenomenon of cohabitation in the rural population of Siberia, I came to the conclusion that through this out-of-wedlock form of family, people manage to hold on to traditional matrimonial attitudes (Mikheyeva, 1994). Following their bent, in the past and in the present, they have turned to non-conventional forms of marriage to resist the solitude and the alienation which originated in patriarchal, communal stereotypes and prohibitions.

It seems reasonable to define “non-traditional” models of family behavior in the light of existing cultural norms, i.e. as behavior not socially approved by most members in a given community. The cultural approach (Lorber, 1994) presupposes that most societies view the socio-cultural predestination of men and women as radically different. The content of sexual, mari-

tal, and family relations of men and women is, in a certain manner, associated with the form of the family. Therefore, when analyzing the gender aspect of modern sexual morality, this association was revealed through a comparison of male and female stereotypes in those forms of marriage which are morphologically opposed to marriage according to the law. In some cases, legal marriage is absent, rejected in favor of some other form of family life, such as free liaison or cohabitation.

In recent decades, just such a form of family behavior as cohabitation (consensual union, common law marriage, concubinage) has, in many Western countries, become a statistically significant alternative to the married family. By the mid-1980's, the percentage of cohabitation among all unions was as follows: Sweden 19.9%, Finland 11.4%, Norway 10.8%, France 8.8%, the Netherlands 7.7%, Great Britain 6.2%, Germany 4.7%, Austria 2.9%. In the long run an increase in the proportions, with a still greater decline in the percentage of married families is expected (Prinz, 1995). When people in fact continue to prefer a nuclear family, cohabitation is usually viewed as an alternative to traditional marriage. The only difference is that in one case the couple contracts a legal marriage, and in another they do not. But this is only a partial description. Students of cohabitants emphasize the changes in sex-role attitudes between the partners by comparison with those of married couples (Clarberg & Stolzenberg, 1995). There, cohabitation is often not only a rejection of legal marriage, but actually the result of a transition from traditional, patriarchal gender relations to relations based on equal rights and partnership between the sexes. The traditional marriage vanishes; marriage and cohabitation steadily converge in life style and in the division of power between the partners. Changes in the framing of the partnership are accompanied by the appearance of a new form of nuclear family.

Cohabiting partners have also been shown to evidence patterns in occupational activity, money earning and management, relations with kinfolk, sharing of domestic duties, and fertility which are quite different from the patterns followed by spouses who have opted for a legal union. For this reason, we may hypothesize that individuals choose a particular form of living together because they have certain values and attitudes. There are also factors which affect the possibility of an individual entering the matrimonial state instead of choosing a consensual union. These include sex-role liberalism, emphasis on the importance and the significance of free time; the role of money (marriage is associated with birth and education of children, with owner-occupied dwelling which is rather expensive), an interest in achievements outside the home, especially among women; other factors

include race, sex, religious affiliation, parent family, employment, income, and age (Clarberg & Stolzenberg, 1995).

Regulation of Sexual Behavior

Among the present changes in the family sphere, the most noticeable are those taking place in people's sexual behavior. Sexual behaviors prove to be regulated by different types of social norms, i.e. law, custom, morality, stereotypes .

The difficulty in the investigation of sexual morality as a system of norms regulating men's and women's sexual behavior is that the norms are often ambiguous and not uniform. Moreover, they vary greatly from community to community because they are associated with many other cultural factors. Among them are rules regulating the definition of background and place of residence; the class-related structure of society; specific features of the economic life of the society; the level of the social forces of production; the size of a community; religious beliefs; the presence or absence of exchange of property in contracting the marriage. Other factors which have a decisive influence include the differentiated values assigned to boys versus girls; the degree to which women participate in earning a livelihood; the degree of rigidity in sexual socialization; and the culture's attitude towards maternity and child-birth.

Over the last century great changes have occurred in sexual morality; these changes were caused by the advent of contraceptives, the increased economic and social participation of women, as well as by the rise of new attitudes toward personal freedom in general. In Western countries the sexual revolution of the 1960's as well as other emancipatory movements can be described as the "intensity peak" in these changes. A study by sociologists in Finland shows that in the course of one generation an almost absolute taboo on the exhibition of sexuality turned into total liberalism, allowing not only pre- and extra-marital relationships for men and women, but also much more intrepid experiments. The generation born between 1957 and 1973 was, however, described as "ambivalent" because of the contradiction between the prevailing values and attitudes – mostly of a traditional nature – and the free-floating practices in the sphere of sexuality. The end to sexual liberalism is attributed first of all to the spread of AIDS, and to the psychological need for more intimacy in sexual relationships (Haavio-Mannila, Roos, & Kontula, 1995).

As a matter of fact, if we look at society as a whole rather than at the vanguard or at marginal groups, sexual morality is characterized by rigid norms. Sexual morality is sustained and reproduced by cultural codes of other spheres. “Religion, language, education, and culture (both elite- and mass-related) set up a certain conception of women and men and accentuate it. In the result, established are certain moral norms based on gender differences” (Lorber, 1994). Therefore, the existence of a “double standard” in sexual morality as a general cultural phenomenon is made possible only because women acknowledge the validity of these moral norms.

Traditional marriage stereotypes include: first, gender (sex-role) stereotype determined by the family status of the man and the woman; second, a stereotype of marriage as such, i.e., the contrast of the married to the non-married family (therefore, included is also the stereotype of a non-married family). Under such a role arrangement “each marriage is two marriages – ‘his’ and ‘hers’ that often do not coincide” (Maddock, 1994). Modern studies of the stereotypes in the sphere of marriage focus mostly on current deviation from the (culturally-based) “ideal” of the division of labor between men and women in household work, in out of home employment, in raising children, and in all of the couple’s responsibilities. In these spheres the process of men’s and women’s roles converging is especially vivid.

The stereotypes of married families in contrast to non-married ones are conventionally based on the opinion that only the family based on marriage can best satisfy men’s and women’s needs in intimacy and domesticity, can give confidence in the future, in the partner’s fidelity, and guarantee the normal socialization of children. So to live in marriage is not only moral but also a strategy for the good life. Since, the social stereotypes of marriage are based mostly on value assigned in a given cultural system, marriage and belonging to a married family have been a prerequisite for social ascent in many societies, both historically and at present. Reciprocally, the negative stereotype of non-married families may have resulted from the belief that this family pattern is peculiar to deprived social groups, marginals (Lewis, 1975) and that in a one-parent family the child cannot be socialized into the right gender role. It is not quite clear, however, if the ‘right’ gender role into which the child is socialized will be adequate to the reality in which the next generation will have to shape their family life. Historical developments may make it impossible to reproduce those gender stereotypes and behavior patterns that were common for the parent generation.

Basically, the stability of stereotypes depends on actual behavior. Therefore, the spread of family patterns alternative to marriage in all walks of life

contributes to the erosion of traditional stereotypes. It becomes difficult to speak of well-defined family patterns as a necessary and regular feature of a particular social group. The deterministic statement that the married family is “good” and the non-married family “bad” in every respect disappears. This leads to the relativization of the married union. Legal marriage no longer can improve social status or be a value in itself.

Co-habitations in the Siberian Countryside (Socio-Demographic Situation)

How far has the process of liberalization and egalitarianization in sexual morality, in the sphere of marriage gone in Russia? How widespread are new conceptualizations of stereotypes? Statistical spread of alternative family forms allows us to question the possibility of describing the Russian population as nearly traditional in the sphere of family behavior. According to the micro-census data of 1994, in which the percentage of free unions in Russia among the West Siberian rural population was recorded for the first time, 12.3% of all unions were found to be cohabitations. This was much higher than the percentage for the urban population – which is 8.3%. The percentage of out-of-wedlock births is 18.5% of all births. Though the attitude towards the legal marriage is changing markedly, we can hardly assume that there has been a decline in the value and attractiveness of marriage for all social groups of Russian and Speople. An indirect confirmation can be found in the dynamics in the rates of legal marriages and divorces from 1989 to 1994 as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Changes in rates of marriage and divorce from 1989 (100%) to 1994.

	Marriages		Divorces	
	Russia	West Siberia	Russia	West Siberia
Urban population	78.3	73.4	117.1	111.5
Rural population	77.3	86.2	121.1	132.0

Population of Russia, 1997.

As Table 2 shows, the number of new marriages is decreasing, and dissolutions are increasing. An increasing number of Russians are refusing legal marriages but this does not mean that they reject family life as such. This is shown, for example, by the increased number of out-of-wedlock births as indicated in Table 1 above. Then, what specific elements of the culture of Russian society and what cultural transformation are behind these processes? What is the current state of sexual morality, gender relations, stereotypes? It is possible to make some assumptions.

For one thing, the liberal norms of sexual morality in Russia as a whole and in Siberia, in particular, have been induced by specific historical circumstances. Of great importance was the Soviet propaganda for gender equality. Concretely, industrialization during the Soviet period enabled almost 100-percent participation of women in social production, especially because of the post-World War II disproportion in the numbers of men and women. Secondly, among the population of Siberia there is a high percentage of people (36%) who are defined as “poor” (Monitoring Economic Conditions in the Russian Federation, 1997). This is a group with an orientation of defiance toward generally accepted moral norms. Thus, they espouse early sexual contacts, free unions, and allow a high frequency of abortions (Lewis, 1966). The third factor seems to be the current crisis situation of Russian society. At this historical juncture, we are witnessing some erosion of moral norms and stereotypes together with the growth of marginal strata and groups, with no compunctions about overturning conventional restrictions in sexual and family behavior. All of these factors together and each in particular, present an obvious mechanism to overcome individual-community alienation.

The Results of the Empirical Study

The objective of this study was to reveal the content and proportion of different norms of gender sexual morality and stereotypes in the field of marriage among different groups of the West Siberian rural population. The survey tool was a questionnaire that was an adapted fragment of the questionnaire “The Family and Gender Relations” (Economic and Social Change: The Monitoring of Public Opinion. Bulletin of Information, 1996). The questionnaire was distributed through the mails and the rate of return was 31%.

At first the questionnaire was supposed to be completed by an adult member of the family, but when designing the sample the family was chosen as the unit for selection. This step aimed at obtaining answers from both men

and women. In line with this conception, two forms of the questionnaire were sent to each family's address.

The sample of the study was made up of two parts. One part of the sample was formed by the total number of extra-marital families compiled during previous surveys on the basis of lists available at local soviets of the given four villages of the Altay region in Siberia. The size of the first part of the sample was 118 cohabiting couples and 27 out-of-wedlock (one-parent) families (i.e. N=263). Second, there was a representative sub-sample of all the households in these villages. Constructed according to principles which have served as guidelines in the previous surveys (Mikheyeva, 1994), the size of the second part of the sample was 480 with questionnaires distributed to 240 families. The data collected in the survey (230 completed questionnaires) were analyzed statistically by the *SPSS.PC+* package of statistical software.

The movement along the scale "traditionalism – vanguard" was measured by a quantity combining "agree – disagree" answers to statements about the form of family and marriage suggested in the questionnaire¹ and "condemnation – support" answers concerning sexual extra-marital connections. The variable "form of marriage" could take values from 0 to 8, but its average value in the responses of the men was 3.4, and of women, 3.2. This is to say that rural men and women respondents have about the same opinion about legal marriage and the traditional distribution of roles. Women, however, are more severe in their judgments of extra-marital relations.

Table 3. Percentages of answers "Always wrong" and "Almost always wrong" to the questions about out-of-wedlock sexual connections:

	Women	Men	All
Sexual connections of young (under age 16) girls	81	66	75
Adultery of married women	75	54	66
Sexual connections of young (under age 16) boys	51	66	57
Extra-marital sexual connections of married men	46	58	51
Women's sexual connections before the first marriage	45	25	36
Men's sexual connections before the first marriage	15	22	18
Women's sexual connections before the next marriage	14	12	13
Men's sexual connections before the next marriage	8	11	10

The data presented in Table 3 allow us to conclude that women's attitudes are more traditional than men's, but the severity of their opinions is corre-

lated in a complicated way with age, marital status, and the concrete situation they are to assess (see next paragraph). Both women and men are more exacting with regard to members of their own sex. But on the whole even in relation to under-age males, men are slightly more liberal. Men seem to attach less significance to gender-based morality than women do. So we can conclude that it is women who made up a “self-discriminating” group are the chief carriers and reproducers of gender duality of morality as a cultural phenomenon.

It should be noted that the most significant factors of differentiation are gender (chi-square significance 0.07), age (0.01), education (0.03), position (0.05), and urban experience (0.02). All these factors may combine into a complex cluster-factor. Therefore, the average age of rural men who give the most liberal assessments is 42 years of age, of women 40 years of age, and the average age of persons with the most traditional marriage-family stereotypes is 64 and 56 years of age, respectively. But, according to our data, it is impossible to say with confidence that “traditionalism” increases with age: the highest percentage of liberal assessments among men account for the age group 50-59, whereas the most severe assessments were given by women in the 30-39 age group. In the 20-29 and 40-49 years age groups of women, attitudes towards avant-garde models of family and to extra-marital sexual relations were less extreme.

The factor of education also seems to be associated with age characteristics: the highest degree of conservatism is in the group with elementary education, but most such respondents were aged rural people. In contrast to this, the highest scores for liberalism in regard to moral norms was expressed by highly educated rural men and women. Among men, the factor of education is less associated with gender stereotypes, whereas among women this association is more significant. Therefore, educated rural women are the ones quite liberated from the traditional unification of sexual and family behavior and, in turn, like other groups of women, they, too, are patient with men's ‘avant-garde’ behavior. The factor of “position” (officials, specialists, white collar or blue collar workers, being unemployed, being out of the labor market, pensioners) is still, despite the changes in social structure, closely associated with the level of education. Therefore, it is normal that among managers and specialists, as the most educated group in the rural population, there is the highest proportion of liberals in the sphere of norms related to marriage and the family. And the highest percentage of adherents to traditional stereotypes is among the white collar workers and the pensioners.

In the research, the transmission of moral norms and patterns in the sphere of marriage was operationalized as 1) an effect of the parent family type and 2) an effect of the respondent's urban experience. The data obtained did not demonstrate any effect of the parent family type ('complete,' one-parent, two-parent, step). But the presence in the respondent's biography of urban experience proved to be significantly associated with the level of conservatism-liberalism in moral norms and in marital-family stereotypes. The explanation obviously can be (on this point of the study), first, new urbanites' adoption of vanguard urban patterns, and, second, their marginalization in the city which further eroded their traditional moral norms and patterns. The most liberal norms were held by those who arrived in the rural area as adults, and the most conservative were held by people without urban experience. The mean scores were attained by the rural-born with urban experience.

Conclusions and Discussion

The analysis of the empirical data allows us to draw the following conclusions. For one thing, it is possible to speak about sub-cultures in terms of the norms common to these groups instead of a general assumption of defiance of common norms. As we have seen, sexual morality does not exist as a system of common norms at the level of the rural community. There is gender duality in sexual morality as a general cultural phenomenon. The gender sexual morality of rural communities of Siberia is in the process of transformation from total prohibition to absolute freedom in sexual life. Moral prohibitions are being dislodged by conditions taking form in social structural spheres. Furthermore, rural men and women as gender groups have a different sexual morality. This morality contributes to the definition of a gender sub-culture which serves to regulate the behavior of its members both in regard to more stringent prohibitions and in regard to more freedom in the relevant domains.

Moral norms and stereotypes are displayed in rural communities in different forms of sexual and family practices. Since there is a kind of cross-generational rural and cross-territorial (town – village) translation of sexual moral norms and stereotypes in the sphere of marriage, it is possible to speak about the assimilation of parallels. The "urban" and "rural" sexual sub-cultures are apparently becoming more like each other.

* * *

All told, the current spread of off-modal forms of marriage such as cohabitations and free unions (primary or step) together with the spread of extra-marital births in Siberia and in Russia as a whole seems to be associated with trends toward liberalization, toward more rights obtained by men and women, and toward increased value they attach to their personal uniqueness. These phenomena, however, provide evidence as well of a kind of anomie, an embarrassed confusion and perplexity, experienced by the Russian public. So the family may assume a form perhaps not commonly approved of and different from the traditional structure. But often it is in these forms that the quite traditional or even ritualized drive of men and women to be married, to form a complete family can be realized. The erosion of communal norms, the spreading sub-culture of off-modal family forms makes it possible for many rural people to cope with the alienation arising today in practically all spheres of life in Russia.

(Translated from Russian by D. I. Shtirmer)

Notes

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- 1 Such statements were, for example, “Married people are generally happier than unmarried people;” “The main advantage of marriage is that it gives financial security;” “People who want children ought to get married;” “Both the man and the woman should contribute to the household income;” “A man’s job is to earn money; a woman’s job is to look after the home and family;” “It is better to have a bad marriage than no marriage at all;” “One parent can raise a child no less successfully than two parents together;” “It is all right for a couple to live together without intending to get married;” “It’s a good idea if a couple intending to get married would try before that to live together for some time;” “The married family is in all respects more successful than a one-parent family or cohabitation;” “Two decades ago cohabitations and out-of-wedlock connections were a very rare phenomenon in the village.”

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WOMEN IN SÃO PAULO IN THE FAMILY AND IN THE WORK MARKET: BEHAVIOR AND REPRESENTATIONS

Introduction

To analyze the question of women in the family and in the work market in São Paulo while considering the relation between the socialization process in the family and alienation, we must first examine the idea of alienation¹ itself and, further, its relation to socialization. By considering how, in the past, women of different social classes were educated in São Paulo, as well as how they are educated today, we will be able to understand women's representations of their positions in different areas of living. This is a study based on the use of qualitative methodology, developed in two stages. In the first stage, we relied mainly on secondary sources of information, on publications of the second half of the 19th century. In the second stage, we collected data through oral reports culled in interviews with women (ages ranging from 60 to 75), of different social classes who worked in São Paulo and, at the same time, had a family life beginning with the first half of the 20th century. Our assumption was that the economic and social changes which occurred within Brazilian society and, more specifically, in São Paulo, as of 1930, when processes of industrialization and urbanization became more intense, were certainly reflected in family life and, more particularly, in the lives of women who had been "pushed" – even when they did not want

to go out to do some work they liked – into the work market, in order to help support their family. Nevertheless, the education they received at home, which transmitted and still today transmits the strong values and behavior patterns in use within society, or as Bourdieu says, the *habitus* with which they were indoctrinated from childhood on, remains so strong that the representations offered by these women still often reflect the hopes of women of the past, mainly those of a higher social class.

The *habitus* concept developed mainly by Bourdieu, allows us to have a deeper and more dynamic idea of the process. Bourdieu (1972, p. 175) calls our attention to how important a family's social class is, as it determines the nature of the *habitus*. That is to say, the social position, through the *habitus*, conveys an understanding of what behaviors, thoughts, and habits of thinking are to be accepted, and of what, in daily perception, looks senseless, unthinkable, impossible, crazy, or dishonorable. These conceptions are based on a perception of compatibility and incompatibility with the normal and experienced horizon of daily procedures of the group or social class. Reproduction is facilitated by restrictions on competence and creativity, which are conveyed by the *habitus* itself. Because of this, praxis always moves between coercion and possibility. A dialectic between external structural objectives and the internal *habitus* is always present in the practical logic of daily affairs (Kraemer, 1994).

Women in São Paulo during the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

During the second half of the nineteenth century, with the first signs of urban concentration, there began significant changes in family life and in the life style of women belonging to the main social classes. Although the stereotype of the patriarchal family as the family organization which existed in Brazil during colonial and imperial periods is widespread, we know today, on the basis of research,² that this kind of family organization was only found in the higher classes. Even there, the patriarchal family had different characteristics in the various regions studied.

Although the São Paulo woman of a higher class still lived in a rural world, a profile of her activities shows that she actually enjoyed a masculine way of life. This was mainly due to responsibilities she assumed as she had to take care of her slaves and her property. The image of a matriarch was

reinforced because of women's physical appearance. Women were worn out after having undergone several miscarriages and given birth to several children. Moreover, women suffered because of the high mortality rate of their young children during the first years of life.

The transition to city life marked a radical change. Women no longer had so many responsibilities, and, as research shows, they were allowed to enjoy a life style which encouraged them to become languid and romantic. The city offered a substructure of commerce, which led young girls to occupy their afternoons with strolls, in which they were usually followed by slave chambermaids. Information was readily available, and they had time to read romances, mainly French novels, which were very popular at that time. A climate of sentimentalism and fantasy was reinforced by the fashionable attentions of young men, whenever they appeared in public. The ideal feminine image was then related to kindness, innocence, sensuality, and perfection. And, as the stories show, marriage was then considered the union of a lovable and passionate partner with the woman he loved. By the end of the century, this ideal behavior was completely absorbed into conventional society's imagination. But, as reality of a married life did not meet their expectations, women were frequently disillusioned, and, as time went by, their lives were tinged with sadness and melancholy (cf. Campos, 1988).

Family Structure in São Paulo: The Lower Classes

In São Paulo, nuclear families, based on simple non-integrated structures were the rule, and there was only a relatively small number of characteristically large families (Correa, 1981). During the period of time studied here, women were faced with a multitude of social, political, economic, and cultural constraints specifying how they should behave in São Paulo society. Still, they took on several forms of social participation, which were often expressed by acts (strategies) of accommodation and resistance to the circumstances of the family wherein she was included and of the wider society within which she needed to survive. Not only was it necessary to ensure biological survival. The social survival of women rich and poor who lived in São Paulo during the nineteenth century: white, mulattas, black, free, freed slaves or slaves, often depended on their ability to combine personal talents with tactics of discourse supporting men's points of view.

The fact that couples of several racial and social groups had small numbers of children reinforces the thesis that there was a tendency toward sim-

plification among the families of São Paulo. At the same time, this contradicts the idea that there was a high rate of fertility among Brazilian women to counter the high rate of child mortality prevailing at that time.

The predominance of couples with a small number of children and even with a single child, and the small proportion of subsidiary members of the family gave the family of São Paulo a simplified structure (Samara, 1985). When the children married, they left their parents' home to live in their own houses; and in the event that they did stay in the family home they became responsible for the care of their parents and for administering the family affairs. By no means did this signify that bonds of solidarity among relatives, friends and godchildren had disappeared. Weddings and baptisms, as well as cooperative enterprises emphasized those bonds among relatives, which often, through the alliances made, showed their strategies for the maintenance of their status and even for increasing the family's power.

Within the society of that time, the many strategies for social survival used by the black female slaves, the *mulattas*, and the impoverished white women, as well as the strategies used by the dominant social class in order to maintain its position, were based on solidary relations in the family and on the inter-penetration of material conditions for social existence. Marriages, therefore, had a social function of outstanding importance. This was so even though marriage was practiced by only a portion of the population of São Paulo in the nineteenth century. Illegitimate unions were the in many circles, and large numbers of people did not marry at all.

The Family Structure in São Paulo: The Upper Classes

Only a small portion of the population of São Paulo presented a more elaborated family structure. It was based on work connections. For this kind of organization, it was usual to own slaves and employ other servants, in a wide range of services. They were tied to the local families through personal bonds, although they could even have independent economic activity. Urbanization made it difficult to keep and support a large number of slaves within the area of a home; therefore, families maintained only those who had some responsibilities connected with the domestic sphere. It was usual for the owners to sell the services of their slaves to whoever required them.

Therefore, according to Samara (1986), the matrimonial union, circumscribed by a cordon of values such as blood purity and maintenance of the socio-economic position of its members, had a contractual character for

women of the white upper class. Moreover, within a society where women were referred to as 'wife' and 'mother', marriage was of vital importance. It was a consolidation of these positions among the small number of options which were offered to women. As weddings were expensive and a solid economic position of the engaged couple was required for a wedding to be accomplished, members of the less fortunate strata who lacked funds frequently resorted to common law marriages, or consensus relations, which followed no legal procedures.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, abolitionists and doctors interested in public health began to publish criticisms of mothers who did not give their children enough care. They were berated for not breast feeding the babies and for leaving this task to paid wet nurses. This was, in effect, an attempt to give a new dimension to the role of women of the upper classes in relation to their children, to advance the re-education of the bourgeois mother. Nevertheless, in order to carry out the "natural functions" of motherhood, the bourgeois mother still required the help of the ex-slave for her housework. This made it necessary for the bourgeois mother to send her own child to a child-care establishment, even though she supported the idea that slaves and ex-slaves should have the right to take care of their children. In the complex web of the family conventions, it was inevitable that she begin to look for work outside the home. This was a means for ensuring her child's quality of life, and probably even that of her husband. These needs generated a new institution, the day nursery where children would be "kept" during the day, making it possible for their mothers to work.

The rise of the capitalist system and the concern of the State for the "number of its citizens" created circumstances which required a redefinition of the role of the family and that of women. In an effort to preserve the social order and to maintain the State, a sterile female figure was idealized. Her destiny was marriage, the care of her home, and motherhood. Her most important function was that of the family procreator, the heart of the construction of the bourgeois order (Kusnezof, 1989).

The image of an honest, virtuous woman, fulfilled in her marriage, the guardian of public and private morals, was synonymous with the conceptualization of the bourgeois mother in purist rhetoric. She was the antithesis of women of the lower social classes who walked alone in the streets, went to dances and low amusements, whose conduct was regarded with suspicion. She was also an antithetical image of women whose social position was closer to that of the upper classes, but whose social behavior was not socially accepted by the dominating class. These were women forgotten by

all except by psychiatrists at the Juquery Hospital of São Paulo who had diagnosed what were considered their quasi-pathological behaviors as madness (Cunha, 1989).

The Beginning of the Transformation

Even after the abolition of slavery, women were still ousted from civil society. The State granted the right to vote to the male population only. Under these circumstances, the high class white women were politically inferior to male ex-slaves who, in accordance with the law, could pursue the right to vote. Only in 1932 was suffrage granted to women. Marriage continued to be almost the only life option for women of the higher classes, as it represented maintenance, protection, and social recognition. The only other option was to join a religious order, and this meant even greater confinement for a member of the female population (see Campos, 1988).

This profile of submission was not a predominant factor among women of the less fortunate classes. They were much better prepared to develop activities which would allow them to support themselves, whenever they felt unhappy with their married life and decided to escape it. This was not an uncommon situation in their social milieu where such mobility was understood and allowed. At the same time, the existence of legal weddings led lower class women to believe that there was a model of an ideal family structure, that of the higher classes. Although they were not raised so strictly as young women of the upper classes, and had no slaves to accompany them in the streets; the ideal of a nice, modest girl was apparently a vivid one. Steady families looked for such young women as marriage partners for their sons, and many young women were guarded by watchful eyes, so that they should not stain the family image. Even single women who lived alone or with their children could try to maintain a good image with a change in name (see Dias, 1984). To preserve anonymity, they adopted last names such as Anunciação, Espírito Santo, Deus,³ etc.

Among the slaves who were able to move to the city, there was a search for liberty as a consequence of the greater autonomy which was given them, as well as a search to integrate a normative model of behavior which was socially recognized and held adequate. This model was represented by religious marriages among the blacks, the liberated slaves, and even among those who were still slaves. Thus, the freed black women could offer services which were considered dignified. Therefore, the socially accepted model of female

behavior became an ideal for all women, irrespective of their social class, whenever there would be conditions for them to act according to this established standard model.

Women in São Paulo during the First Half of the Twentieth Century

In the 20th century, a new social and economic order dawned. This order was permeated by individualistic ideological trends, peculiar to capitalist society, and there was an upsurge of new values which interfered significantly with the family organization. This ideology affected marriage as an institution, with a re-translation of the couple's social duties. Developments were slow because of the tension between the new circumstances and the conditions still shaped by some of the old values. From the end of the nineteenth century, and mainly from the beginning of the twentieth century, the significance of marriage changes drastically. Formerly it was an institution designed to preserve the social-political-economic values of the families in order to guarantee the "social heritage". Under that ideological shield, a wedding was not meant to reflect personal choice among those who were directly interested, nor was there any need for affection between the couple. The new developments enjoin liberty of choice for couples, and assume that love is the main criterion for their mutual preference.

The Research

Seventeen open interviews were carried out. The interviewees were older women selected according to the specific criterion of their having lived and worked in São Paulo, during the early years of the twentieth century. The activities they performed differed in accordance with the social class to which they belonged. They were chosen through requests issued among people of a wide spectrum of places and classes, asking them to name a person they knew who suited the rescriteria.

Interviews held with older women allowed us a glimpse into the world of women during the first half of the twentieth century. Based upon the assumption that it was not usual then for women to perform activities outside their home, except when it was really necessary, the sample we selected in-

cluded both women who had worked for a salary in permanent and fixed activities as well as women who did not receive salaries for their work, but took on volunteer activities which took them out of their homes. Such activities included charity or church work, which they carried out for a relatively long period of time in the past, or still perform today.

Complete freedom was given to the interviewees. We were interested in knowing what made them work at these activities and how they managed to fit their housework in with the activities they assumed outside the home. We were especially interested to know if these outside activities contributed to a different understanding of women's position in society.

Activities performed by these women indicate that we are still considering a pre-industrial segment of society. Their work was done in traditionally female activities, work which was considered adequate for women who needed protection. As noted above, it was much more usual in those times for women in the the lower social strata to take on paying jobs for, as we learn from the interviews, the social ideal which still prevailed in society and in the woman's mind was that women's main duty was to take care of her children and her home. Therefore, those who first directed themselves to the work market were those who needed to contribute, even in a supplementary way, to the family income and not those who wished to develop some kind of professional activity. In the higher social strata, only women who were single or whose husbands were absent from home sought paying work outside the home.

As we take into consideration the origin of their families, the majority of the women interviewed (twelve) belonged to the middle class, but with some differences among them which allowed us to separate those from a higher social strata (six) from those belonging to the lower strata (six). Only one woman among those interviewed belonged to what we could call the upper class, and the remaining three were of the low class.

The criteria we used to define the class membership of the women interviewees were basically the work performed by the head of the family, his level of instruction, and the size and location of the family home. For the most part, the educational attainments of the women we interviewed was low. In their youth women did not usually proceed with their studies up to the university level, even when their families belonged to the more wealthy upper class. Four of the interviewees reached a relatively high level of education, while three of them (one single, one was already a widow and the other separated from her husband) reached the level of a secondary school education only much later on by completing their studies or by participating

in external courses or the equivalent. With reference to their fathers' instruction level, only two reached the highest instruction level, one of them being a Hungarian and father of two of those we interviewed, and the other was the father of the only one of those interviewed whom we could consider as belonging to the upper class.

The nature of the work these women did must also be considered in deciding on how to assign them to a social class. Four of those interviewed (one of them of a slightly higher social level) took on very simple functions, with little prestige and a low salary. They could, therefore, be considered as *lower class*. One of them, although she had been certified as an accountant⁴, spent all her working life as a baby-sitter in rich families' homes, and three others were workers in textile industries. We must add that, to increase their family income, usually two of these workers also performed domestic services during certain hours of the day.

The Family Influence in Professional Activity

There is a persistent line in the life story of almost all the women we interviewed. The reason why they started to work was the absence of their father (due to his death or his constant traveling) or great financial hardship in their families of origin, when they were still single, and the hazardous financial situation of their own families, after their marriage. Two exceptions are the woman who developed a career in a government bank and another who belonged to the upper class. This last interviewee devoted herself to administering a business in order to collaborate closely with her children. In this case, her work appears more as a means to keep her family united and to strengthen their economic power. These two women came from families with a higher level of educational attainments, and in the first case, her father as well as her husband encouraged her to maintain her activities.

In general, the women were not confronted by many obstacles from their family, to keep on working after their marriage, even when their economic situation was already stabilized. The security provided by a government job, whether in a bank as in the first case, or as teachers in other cases, was basically the reason why. Still, some of the women, especially those who did not hold well-paying or specialized jobs, quit working outside their homes as soon as their husbands obtained a better financial situation. In those families, the pressure from their husbands as well as from their mothers, was always very strong and several avow that they finally gave in. Family influence was sometimes exercised in favor of joining the work force. In this

society where women usually did not study, it was often due to family pressure that a woman remained at school and started an independent professional career. In such situations, it was always the figure of the father, when he gave importance to female education, who had the greater power to influence his daughter's way of life. This indicates how important was the father's will in significant family decisions.

The Received Upbringing

Regardless of the social class to which those interviewed belonged, they reported that their up-bringing had always been undeviatingly directed to “good manners”, to respect and obedience towards their elders and to their husbands. As far as formal education is concerned, study was only considered important for certain families, usually those where the father had relatively high educational attainments. In the group we interviewed, only four obtained a college degree, always under severe circumstances, for one after she became a widow, for another after her divorce. Usually the *Escola Normal*⁵ was the highest level of study reached – and only by a few of those interviewed. Apparently all the families valued formal education greatly. But the possibility of being admitted to an institution of higher education, of being able to study for a lengthy period, or of studying at the best schools was related to the social class of the interviewees. On the other hand, not to have studied at school was not considered an indicator of a low social class. In the upper class girls were still being taught at home, by tutors. Cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1972) was then apparent in their knowledge of music and foreign languages.

The Roles of Women

The ideal that marriage should last forever was dominant in the families of all the informants. Only three of them confessed to having taken the initiative of abandoning their husbands, as they had to endure a very difficult domestic situation. Yet, they encountered such great opposition from their parents that two of them returned to live with their husbands, as “that was their place”. During the interview, however, one of them confessed that she was genuinely relieved when her husband died, for only then did she feel really free – not to lead a different life, but just to laugh and dress as she wished.

Regarding responsibilities at home, although often the woman might be holding a full-time paid up job and actually contributing to the domestic expenses, even sometimes earning more than her husband, there never was

a division of domestic labor. Housework continued to be her exclusive responsibility. Even those who encouraged their wives to keep on working, did not offer any collaboration in the work at home. It was inconceivable for them, and even for the woman herself, that a man could do some of the chores. The only help they could get from their husbands concerned the purchase of goods for the house, which they might do alone, or by going along with the wife whenever she went shopping. Fathers could also occasionally look after the children when the wife had not yet returned home after work.

To look after their children while they were at work, women of a higher economic stratum could usually get the help of a maid. Women of the lower social classes were helped by their mothers or other relatives (younger sisters or aunts). There was a very close relationship with the family of origin, due to their need for their mothers' help or for psychological support in dealing with a difficult husband. The relationship with their husband's family was not always very easy. The conscious or unconscious conflicts among the sisters-in-law or disputes with the mother-in-law herself, in order to gain greater influence in family affairs, could even reach the point where families were split. Often, financial conditions were disruptive, and fights over money occurred among family members. The women usually did not have a very large set of friends and recreation was very restricted. Amusements were generally limited to family parties, church events, or occasional visits to friends. Family parties were greatly appreciated, and there were always birthday celebrations and Christmas parties, even among the lower class families. This clearly indicates a consensual wish to preserve and reinforce the unity and integration of the family as a group through the relations that were sustained at least on these special occasions, where ties were renewed. In the same way, women emphasized family solidarity whenever there was a moment of need, even when, as mentioned above, the marriage bonds had already been broken. A request for help was usually directed to the family of origin, and this ensured that family ties would always be stronger on the female side. Whenever the husband's family was mentioned, it frequently brought to mind some bad events regarding mistreatment and exploitation.

The Interviewees' Representations

All those interviewed were questioned regarding what they thought about women's main role – today and in the past. They all stated that to take care of their children and their home was considered by them to be the main task for

a woman, and there was no specific mention of their role as mate or as a wife. This might be because they believed that the husband as an adult did not need her very much, once his basic requirements (food and clothes) were taken care of. The development of the couple's relationship was certainly not, to her mind, one of the most important issues of a marriage.

When taking into considering the present social changes, interviewees expressed the belief that it would be convenient for women to have some professional activity together with the role of mother, on the condition that this activity would not harm her life's main activity. Although they consider it inevitable that a woman would take a job whenever she had to "help" her husband, they still believe that this usually endangers the family situation. This conceptualization of the conjugal relationship explains why interviewees abandoned their work as soon as possible, or retired as soon as they had completed the minimum period of time required by pension law. The traditional family model, where women had a rigid education, was highly valued, at least among the group of women we interviewed, and it must have been the means of social integration among the lower social strata. This belief was certainly a factor that helped in obtaining the social advancement that could be seen within the group. Confirming the importance of the value of the family and the effectiveness of its internalization was the report of the sole unmarried woman of the group who referred to the lack of prestige an unmarried woman suffered in her social milieu.

The Transmission of Roles and Representations

All of the interviewees stated that they have been much less strict in raising their sons and daughters than their parents were with them. Still, they are concerned about transmitting to them the same values that were emphasized during their own education. The concern with their sons' education was significantly directed to formal education, as they all tried to give them a minimum of a high school level certificate, and in many cases, even a college degree. This may be related to an improvement in the social-economic position which can be clearly detected among all the interviewees. They all enjoy good economic conditions today, much better than the conditions of their families of origin or of their own during the first years of their marriage. This certainly reflects the transformations which, during the period of the study, occurred within the Brazilian society, mainly in São Paulo. As the economy expanded, there was extensive structural mobility, and this can be noted through the life stories of those interviewed. Under-developed occu-

pational areas allowed several families to consider starting their own business. In one family, for example, there was a joiner who had been an employee and decided to open his own business. Another family purchased real estate and then rented lots in order to increase the family's income. Furthermore, having directed their children to higher levels of education, the families enjoyed the fact that the children's generation could work for higher salaries and gain greater social prestige.

Conclusion

A great ambiguity can be discerned in women's attitudes throughout the past 150 years, and this ambiguity has been reinforced during the twentieth century. Women were required to lead lives which were quite *secluded*. They were to be dedicated to their children and their home, always taking care of their husbands, thus allowing him necessary conditions to perform his function of provider for the family group and in some cases to fulfill a more prominent role in society, to undertake public activities of greater or lesser importance. Whenever the father or the husband could not satisfactorily fulfill his "instrumental" functions (Bourdieu, 1985), the woman had to leave her domestic surroundings and place herself in the work market, but she could not leave behind her other functions and lose her "qualities" of dedication, purity, and obedience. Possibilities for her to escape this pre-established model existed, but these should preferably be looked for covertly, without abrupt reactions or formal confrontations, in order to increase her chances for success.

In many ways, therefore, the family was an obstacle to the development of women's professional identity, and this occurred with a great number of those interviewed. In accordance with the woman's point of view (as well as with that of her husband), her work should be considered a supplement to that of her husband. The only exception was that of the interviewee who was divorced, had studied, and had had a career as a school teacher. She insisted that she had always supported her family group alone. For most, the roles of man and wife are complementary, but since they were not considered equals, the complementarity was hierarchical. Women were subordinate to men and conspired with them, allowing them to distinguish themselves whenever there was an opportunity.

The class situation of the interviewed women prepared them in distinct ways to fight for survival or to maintain the achieved status. It is important

to emphasize that some of the educational values found were common to all the women we interviewed, and these did not depend on the interviewees' class situation. We can confirm, therefore, that a gender *habitus* dominates the *habitus* of social class. In the reports that have been analyzed, we can see that the determinants of actions were based not only on previous experiences within the family of origin, but also on the specificity of reference given the interviewees by their gender position. Class conditioning itself might be detected in the way the dominating class imposes their values and conduct on those of the subordinated classes. But we find that it is possible to identify aspects of behavior and representations that are the same among all the women in our sample, unconstrained by their class position.

This was established in the interviews held with women who participated in the work market in São Paulo during the first half of the twentieth century. This model of gender behavior is the element most deeply set in the memory of these women, and to date they still maintain their belief that it represents adequate feminine character and should be kept unchanged. Even women who have led a very active life outside their home and whose daily life at home itself has been extremely wearing, cling to the image that women's main function should be to take care of their homes and their children. The ideological disposition persists, notwithstanding all the social changes and transformations which have occurred in the city of São Paulo, where the interviewees have lived for most of their lives. Even when interviewees admit that today there is a need for women to work in order to help their husbands, they add that this is a factor which damages family life and "if it is not necessary, it would be better for them to refrain from work [outside the home]". The interviewees' idea concerning their position in the construction of a nuclear family (even when there are some negative, disagreeable experiences in their family of origin or in the family founded by them and their husband), the wish to have children, the visualization of a woman responsible for the unity of her family and the integration of its members, the image of "effort even with sacrifice" is a deeply set feminine attitude. Thus, we can see that alienation in the form of self-estrangement was a constant feature of the female world at the beginning of the century, and can be found even to date. The constant submission, setting aside their own hopes, the effort required to do double work – at the place of work and at home, always to be seen as their husbands' collaborators and to construe their labor outside the home as a "help" to the family, and even more, considering that this way of life is their main social character, can only be ex-

plained as alienation. This is especially evident in those representations by which women of all the social classes were saturated. Overwhelmed by the strangeness of their own feelings, the power of the socialization process forced women to turn inward.

We must here emphasize that in occidental society, but within Brazilian society in a most particular way, women and young people in general, and more specifically, young females, are usually groups unable to sustain leadership in order to pursue their points of view. This forces them into a position subordinate to mature men. Although the weight of established rules has had a great influence on the lives of our interviewees, forcing them to maintain the *status quo* and ensure social reproduction (Bourdieu, 1972), they have also adopted non-consensual strategies. Experiencing conflicts under different circumstances led them to embrace tactics which are sometimes conservative, sometimes subversive, not only in order to survive but also to fill a still vacant social position. We can realize that the women interviewed, through the *habitus* with which they were indoctrinated through family education, looked for models to determine new strategies regarding how to solve or face new situations, as much in terms of a search for equilibrium in her position within the family, as in a search for equilibrium of the family itself as a whole. In some cases, these moments cause a restructuring of the family organization.

Currently, in the succeeding stage of the research, we hypothesize that through interviews with younger women (women aged 45 to 55 years), who are still part of the economically active population, we will learn of change in the unanimity about standards of action. There would seem to be differences in social behavior and in their concerns, as well as in their representations of the essence of being a woman. Economic changes have introduced uncertainties in maintaining a decent standard of living, and in fulfilling dreams of granting children higher education. The quick changes which have occurred within society have also contributed to the fact that the ideal of womanhood which was prized for so long in society can apparently no longer be sustained and, depending on the social class, different new images are appearing to take its place. The research reported on here shows how radical such changes – if indeed they have taken place – are.

Notes

- 1 I am considering here alienation as the woman's estrangement in relation to her interests and rights, as well as her deviation from the conditions of material life. The use of the term gender refers to each sex in relation with the other one.
- 2 Among other studies, check the ones by Correa, 1981; Kusnezof, 1989; and those by Samara, 1985 and 1986.
- 3 Annunciation, Holy Ghost, God, etc.
- 4 Technical course which, at that time, could be attended immediately after a preliminary courses and for which the only requirement was for the student to be at least 16 years old.
- 5 The *Escola Normal* was organized in Brazil at the XIXth Century, with the purpose of preparing teachers for primary schools and up to 1971, when it was abolished by the Law 5692/91, acted as a very important means for the upbringing of the country's female youth, without taking into consideration their wishes to become or not to become a teacher.

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Helen Ralston

‘CROSSING THE BLACK WATER’: ALIENATION AND IDENTITY AMONG SOUTH ASIAN IMMIGRANT WOMEN

Introduction*

To cross the “black water” (*kāla pāni*) is a term used by Indians, especially Hindus, to refer to crossing the sea. In the past, traditional orthodox Hindus believed that by crossing the sea one became unclean, an outcaste, and, upon return to India, one had to perform prescribed rituals to become purified. One was completely alienated from the Hindu community, especially from one’s caste, and had to reconstruct one’s “pure” Hindu identity. Today, however, as a male Indo-Canadian colleague pointed out to me, the migrant gains an identity that is prized in India; now one is embraced upon return! One is assumed to have crossed the sea to one’s advantage. Just how true that assumption is with respect to South Asian immigrant *women’s* experience may emerge from the present paper.

The paper explores, from a feminist perspective, alienation and identity reconstruction in the lived experience of settlement among South Asian women who have migrated to Canada and Australia. From a legal standpoint, a South Asian *immigrant* woman who enters Canada or Australia is not an *alien visitor* from a foreign country, but, in Canadian terms, a landed immigrant; in Australia, a “migrant” who can legally apply for citizenship within a few years (three years in Canada; two years in Australia). However, the

term “immigrant woman” refers not so much to legal status as to processes of social construction in everyday life. To be identified as “alien” or “immigrant women” is thus a social and political construction for some people who are actually *permanent settlers* as well as being a legal categorization of temporary, foreign entrants to a country.

In Canada, it was the increasing flow, especially since the early 1980's, of immigrants from Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean who were *visibly* different in skin color from earlier (mainly European) immigrants, which led to the social construction of “visible minorities” by the government,¹ dominant white citizens, and, ultimately, the members themselves, to describe these immigrants, as distinct from another social construction, “invisible minorities” (see, for example, Elliott & Fleras 1992, p. 249) who were *visually* indistinguishable from the dominant white “charter” groups – those of British and French descent.² In Australia, the term Non-English-Speaking-Background (NESB) migrants is used to distinguish them from the less commonly used term English-Speaking-Background (ESB) migrants from countries like Britain, Canada, and the United States, where English is the national language.

In the following section, I give a brief overview of some classical and contemporary conceptualizations of alienation. I then discuss the conceptual framework and methodological approach of the research projects with South Asian immigrant women. Before exploring their lived experience of alienation upon settlement, I give summary demographic profiles of the three samples of women. The fifth section explores how the women engage in processes of positive identity reconstruction and active resistance to alienation and exclusion after settlement.

Theoretical Considerations

The concept of alienation has been analyzed, discussed, and used exhaustively in the literature of both classical and contemporary social scientists. In Marxist analysis (see, for example, Marx, 1956, pp. 169-171, p. 244), alienation is conceived in terms of self-estrangement as a result of separation of the producer from the products of his labor in the development of modern capitalism. Among other sociologists, it is used to refer to isolation, estrangement, and rootlessness “when cut off from the ties of community and moral purpose” (Nisbet 1966, p. 6). A great deal of theoretical and empirical work adopted a social-psychological approach which conceptualized alienation in terms of subjective feelings rather than objective experience – what actually

happened. Critics of the subjective approach asserted that it failed to come to terms with the causes and social conditions that produce alienation (Ludz 1973, p. 27). Horton argued that there was a fundamental difference between the classical and the contemporary approaches. He contended that, "Classical concepts (of alienation and anomie) are radical and utopian: their values refer to ideal social conditions. Contemporary concepts are ideological in their identification with existing social conditions" (Horton, 1964, p. 295). Other social scientists noted that alienation can be viewed as a positive phenomenon which makes creativity and social criticism possible (Ludz 1973, pp. 25-26).

To be "alienated" means to be a stranger, to be an outsider, to live in the margins and not at the center of society. Georg Simmel, in a classic essay (1950, pp. 402-408), described "The Stranger" as a "wanderer" – not "the wanderer who comes today and goes tomorrow, but rather as the person who comes today and stays tomorrow". Simmel has given a graphic exposition of how alienation and estrangement are constructed in relations between the migrant and members of a host society. For Alfred Schutz (1964/1944, pp. 91-105), the immigrant was the outstanding example of "the stranger", whom he defined as "an adult individual of our times and civilization who tries to be permanently accepted or at least tolerated by the group which he approaches" (Schutz, 1964, p. 91). Schutz described the stranger/immigrant in the situation of approaching a (foreign) group with a different "cultural pattern of group life" from that which he has taken for granted in the everyday world of his homeland. Such a step calls into question the stranger/immigrant's own "thinking-as-usual" and makes "the cultural pattern of the approached group ... a field of adventure, ... a questionable topic of investigation, ... a problematic situation itself and one hard to master" (Schutz, 1964, p. 104). Schutz's purpose was *not* to analyze the processes of social assimilation and social adjustment; nevertheless, Schutz's own "thinking-as-usual" suggested an assumption of social adjustment by the immigrant. Simmel, by contrast, noted that, "(the stranger) imports qualities into it (the group), which do not and cannot stem from the group itself" (Simmel, 1950, p. 402). Whereas Schutz's perspective implied that the "continuous process of inquiry" led to a continued condition of subordination for the immigrant, Simmel's analysis allowed for mutual exchange in social relations between immigrant and host group.

For the sociologist, Robert E. Park (1950/1928, p. 354), the "marginal man" was, "par excellence, 'the stranger,' as described by Simmel". Such a person "lives in two worlds but is not quite at home in either" (Park 1950, p. 51). Park noted the experience of exclusion, subordination, and racism in

the life of the “marginal man” He used the concept to analyze the experience of first and, especially, second generation immigrants (Park, 1950, pp. 355-356). Furthermore, Park’s insights led him to conclude that “(to be marginal) is...an effect of imperialism, economic, political, and cultural” (Park, 1950, pp. 375-376). His vision of reality thus identified *causes* that create marginality and estrangement.

Everett Hughes (1952) explored Park’s use of the concept “marginal man” in the context of migration and cultural contact in American society. Hughes (1952, p. 189) noted that “What Park did was to put the ‘marginal man’ into a broader setting; to see him as a function of the break-up and mixing of cultures attendant upon migration and the great cultural revolutions”. Hughes went on to note several kinds of persons – among whom he identified not only ethnic and religious groups but also women – who are located at the margins of society and their possible responses to marginality. He observed that social movements – cultural, national, racial, feminist, class – choose among various possible solutions to bring about change; and he identified alternative responses of the women’s movement and the main trend toward redefinition of gender status and roles (Hughes, 1952, p. 195).

The contemporary feminist scholar, bell hooks, claimed race and gender as intersecting sites of marginality. She went further than Park in actually “(c)hoosing the margin...as a radical standpoint, perspective, position... where we begin the process of re-vision” (hooks, 1990, p. 145). bell hooks (1984; 1990; 1992) moved beyond social criticism to a standpoint of resistance, where marginal spaces can be created as sites of oppositionality and shared political commitment to processes of change among black and white feminists (Trend, 1994). She asserted that:

Marginality ... (is) much more than a site of deprivation; in fact I was saying just the opposite; that it is also a site of radical possibility, a space of resistance. It was this marginality that I was naming as a central location for the production of a counter-hegemonic discourse that is not just found in words but in habits of being and the way one lives. As such, I was not speaking of a marginality one wishes to lose – to give up or surrender as part of moving into the center – but rather of a site one stays in, clings to even, because it nourishes one’s capacity to resist. It offers to one the possibility of radical perspective from which to see and create, to imagine alternative, new worlds.

(hooks, 1990, pp. 149-150)

In all my research projects with South Asian immigrant women (see Ralston, 1988; 1991; 1994; 1995a; 1995b; 1996), I have adopted Dorothy Smith’s (1987)

conceptual insights and methodology. Smith (1987, pp. 10, 89) proposed the everyday world as the site of the sociological problematic. Her feminist mode of inquiry, informed by her explication of Marx's political economy, begins with women's experience *from women's standpoint* and explores how it is constructed and shaped in the extended relations of larger social and political relations of ruling. Smith (1987, pp. 123-125), drawing on the core ideas of symbolic interactionism as well as on Berger and Luckmann's (1966) key thesis that reality is socially constructed in everyday life, observed that "the concerting and coordinating of actual activities by actual individuals... is continually being worked out in the course of working together, competing with one another, conversing, and all the other ways in which people coact". In Smith's conception, "(t)he social construction of reality means precisely that of creating a world we have in common".

In my research, I started from the standpoint of *immigrant women* who described their everyday lived experience – what they did and what actually happened in their lives. From their standpoint, departure from the homeland and migration to a strange country in order to settle could be an experience of alienation. I have conceptualized alienation as referring to the women's objective lived experience (rather than their subjective feelings) of being the stranger who is an outsider, living in the margins and not at the center of society. Following Smith (1987, p. 3), I have examined how race, ethnic, gender, and class relations have been constructed as "relations of ruling" in "a complex of organized practices... that interpenetrate the multiple sites of power". Relations of ruling can alienate women from the institutions of society and create conditions of "estrangement" and disempowerment. Following hooks (1990; 1992), they can also be the catalyst for social criticism, resistance, and social transformation. My assumption is that immigrant women are empowered when they are sensitized to the gendered organization of relations of ruling in their lived experience, when they resist alienating activities and reconstruct their own identity, when, as visible minority women, they become active subjects in transforming their lived world.

Demographic Profiles of Samples of South Asian Women

My paper draws on qualitative comparative data from original research among women of South Asian origin in Atlantic Canada (126 women), in British Columbia, Canada (100 women), and in Australia (50 women). Samples were

drawn in proportion to the census distribution of South Asians in the respective settlement regions. The field work, which was conducted in Atlantic Canada between 1988 and 1991, and the remainder between November, 1993 and May, 1995, involved one-to-one in-depth interviews and limited participant observation in the women's everyday activities.

The samples comprised women of diverse national, regional, cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds. In all three samples, the majority of the women had migrated to the respective countries between the ages of 20 and 30 years and about 80 per cent in all samples were under 40 years. For the most part, they had come as young married women in their child-bearing years. Many came as dependents in an arranged marriage contract.

The majority of the women in all samples were highly educated at the time of their entrance to the settlement country, with 82 per cent in Atlantic Canada, 63 per cent in British Columbia, and 84 per cent in Australia, being educated beyond high school level. Only in the British Columbia sample was there a significant number of women with less than high school education. At least 60 per cent of the women in each sample pursued further education after migration.

Lived Experience of Alienation Upon Settlement

In exploring the women's lived experience of alienation upon settlement in Canada or Australia, I consider four topics: (1) English language fluency and training; (2) getting an initial job outside the home; (3) non-recognition for education, training, and work experience gained before migration; and (4) ongoing work experience in the paid labor force.

English language fluency and training

Among Atlantic Canada women, 63 per cent; among British Columbia women, 74 per cent; among Australian women, 84 per cent spoke English fluently or at least functionally on arrival in the settlement country. One interviewee summed up succinctly her optimism about the importance of English language for many immigrant women, when she stated, "Language (is the most important thing) – once you can speak, read, write, (English), you are home free." From the standpoint of the immigrant woman, lack of fluency in the English language is undoubtedly one of the most profoundly alienating experiences. She is excluded from communication in most contexts in her eve-

ryday life. As Schutz (1964, pp. 100-101) has noted, however, language as a scheme of interpretation and expression comprises more than linguistic symbols and syntactical rules. In Schutz's (1964, p. 101) terms, "Only members of the in-group have the scheme of expression as a genuine one in hand and command it freely within their thinking as usual." The immigrant woman as newcomer, "outsider" and Other is objectively and subjectively alienated by her lack of knowledge of the new linguistic cultural pattern and her inability to adopt it as her own mode of expression. Once she has made it her own, she believes that she is free. Her assessment was confirmed by settlement workers, who made similar statements in different terms. Reality belies their belief.

Immigrant women who spoke English and were educated in a British educational system were in a different situation from immigrant women of another language background and educational system. To a certain extent the Canadian or Australian linguistic cultural patterns were familiar to them. Nevertheless, some women who had considered themselves completely fluent in English before migration had difficulty in understanding variations in accent, pronunciation, and vocabulary, especially colloquialisms and slang. They remained "outsiders" and "strangers" in everyday relationships with native-born "insiders" for whom English was an integral part of their culture. The immigrant woman with an Indian accent was constructed as "Other".

McRobbie and Jupp (1992) noted that native Anglo-Australian speakers are often careless with the vocabulary of their own language and this may present difficulties for NESB (non-English-speaking background) people who will tend to interpret literally. On the other hand, one may well ask, just who decides what is the "correct" English a, when, among native-born Australians, there are *class-based* variations in accents. Some highly-educated, upper middle-class South Asian immigrant women in both Canada and Australia claimed that, on arrival in the settlement country, they spoke English "better than most Canadians or Australians", respectively.

Narratives of women in Australia as well as in Canada supported findings of the Law Union of Ontario (1981, p. 234) that immigrant women tend to be more isolated from participation in the mainstreams of society than immigrant men. They carry disproportionate responsibility for household activities and child care; they have fewer opportunities for learning or improving the English language; they have more limited employment and job-training opportunities. Their isolation, in effect, alienates them from other women, from men, and from institutions of society.

Not succeeding in efforts to communicate in English, despite English as Second Language (ESL) classes, could alienate immigrant women in extended family relations. As one woman remarked,

I was studying English in India but when I went to school (in Canada), it was a disappointment to find I could not understand or communicate.... I felt I did not fit even though I bought (Canadian) clothes to put on. They spoke too fast. I quit after two weeks, because I was living with my in-laws' family. They are not educated. I did not want to fail and to have to explain to the in-laws.

Furthermore, inability to converse in the language of the settlement country could create an even more profound experience of alienation. A British Columbia woman expressed this lived reality succinctly:

It's impossible to *live* without the language. If English is only for work, that's wrong. English is for survival. Otherwise you're insecure; not a human being; not considered valuable enough.... You have a right to know the language of the country you belong to.... You're ignored by family, by children, by neighbors, because you don't speak the language. Men have better education to begin with. They get on with their lives. No, English classes for women is a gender issue. Women being house-bound is a disaster. They cannot pay for classes.

This woman noted the gender inequality in education on entry to the country. She also highlighted the gender discrimination involved in linking free English-language training to work and the long-term social consequences for women if they cannot communicate in English in all areas of life both within and outside the home. They become alienated from social relations with children, family, neighborhood, as well as other institutions of society.

Being fluent in English (and also French in Canada) is obviously a key element in getting paid work outside the home for all immigrants. Research in Canada has shown that the lower labor force participation for women, higher unemployment, occupational and industrial concentration and lower wages are all associated with inability to converse in English or French (Rao, Richmond & Zubrzycki, 1984; Beaujot, Basavarajappa & Verma, 1988; Boyd, 1990).

Certainly, government rhetoric and programs indicate that lack of fluency in the English language is assumed to be a fundamental cause of immigrants' "disadvantage" in the work force. Both the interviewee and some settlement workers have taken on the dominant ideology as their own. Marchak (1975, pp. 98, 115) observed that such acquiescence is essential if

the ruling class is to maintain its hegemony. On the other hand, evidence has indicated that fluency in the English language may not necessarily lead to employment, and certainly not to employment commensurate with qualifications and experience in the source country. Intersecting gender, race, and class relations continue to have an impact on the lived experience of migrant women and locate them as “strangers” at the margin of the paid work world, despite fluency in the English language. Unemployment or *under*-employment is one of the greatest difficulties encountered by immigrant women in both Canada and Australia, whether or not they have fluency in the English language.

Getting an initial job outside the home

It was when women entered (or tried to enter) the paid labor force that their experience of alienation was most marked. In Atlantic Canada, 48 per cent of the women said that they had experienced difficulties in trying to get a job; in British Columbia, 45 per cent; and in Australia, 44 per cent. Many of them found that they were socially defined as “different” because of educational qualifications, language, Third World origin, skin color, work experience (or lack thereof in Canada or Australia, respectively). Being “different” was all too often construed as a racialized inferior Other.

A British Columbia woman described her experience of structural discrimination in the work force as follows, “I have been here twenty years. I’m a Canadian (citizen). I *feel* Canadian and yet I am taken as different. Sometimes I feel it really frustrating.” For this South Asian Canadian woman, to be identified as “different” because of brown skin color was an objective and subjective experience of frustration, an insurmountable barrier to the achievement of her desired goal – a paid job.

An Australian woman noted how interconnected race and gender power relations and discrimination alienated a person of “mixed” culture. “If you are Anglo-Indian, there’s a perception that ‘You can go up to secretary, but anything more, there is a wall’. Women can be the worst. You have to be radical or leftist. If you don’t behave like that, you are treated like Jews in the 1930’s.” Liddle and Joshi (1986, pp. 188-190) noted that professional women who sought employment in Western countries found that ideas of gender and race inferiority augmented the discrimination they encountered. In line with Park’s thinking, Liddle and Joshi argued that the notion of Indian women’s inferiority to Western women is to be understood in the context of cultural imperialism and power relations between the West and the Third

World. Whereas the *class* position of South Asian professional women may be advantageous, within the context of cultural imperialism they are at a disadvantage compared with their Western counterparts. They are located at the margins of the professional world; Western women locate themselves and are located by employers at the center.

Racism was an evident interacting factor in alienating women in the work force. For example, a British Columbia woman recounted her experience as follows,

(The most difficult thing) was discrimination. I would apply for a job. As soon as they'd see me, they'd say, 'Sorry, the job has been filled.' Once I called from a pay phone. I was told to come and apply. I went right away and was told the position was closed. Also, a friend from Australia went to see about a job. She was pushed on the ground by a man. He said, 'You bitch nigger taking all our jobs.'

Non-recognition for education and work experience in the source country

Many researchers (see Boyd, 1976, Rajagopal, 1990; Wooden, 1994), as well as community workers have noted the difficulty migrants (both men and women) find in having their qualifications assessed. In Atlantic Canada, 41 per cent; in British Columbia, 40 per cent; in Australia, 38 per cent of the women stated that educational and training qualifications of their source country were not recognized, were downgraded, or required recertification in Australia or Canada, respectively. Atlantic Canada and Australian women fared better than British Columbia women in having qualifications recognized as equivalent – 39 per cent and 32 per cent of the respective samples, as compared to 15 per cent of the British Columbia sample. It is difficult to assess from the data whether or not English-medium instruction in the source country made any difference to recognition of qualifications. The rule of thumb appeared to be that a baccalaureate degree counted for no more than university entrance; a post-graduate degree *might* give a woman a first-degree equivalency.

Many women in all settlement regions had to jump over innumerable social and financial hurdles to get professional certification or recertification. Another source of frustration was the complete negation of experience in the source country and the impossible demand for their work record to demonstrate "Canadian experience" or "Australian experience", respectively. An Australian woman, who migrated in 1982, at age 38, wryly remarked,

“When I first came, they wanted ‘Australian experience.’ I told them I had to get a first job to have Australian experience.”

Some Canadian women found that they were in a double-bind situation because of their qualifications. The superior education, job, and class status they had held in their source country were discounted in Canada. They found that they had to have a superior performance in examinations or work just to be treated *equally* with other Canadians. As one Atlantic Canada woman put it, “You have to be first among the first to succeed as well as a (native-born) Canadian.” Another Atlantic Canadian stated, “It’s hard to be a foreigner; I have to get 100 per cent to get a job.” A British Columbia woman remarked, “Sometimes you have to work harder to be recognized here than in your own country... There’s resentment that immigrants are taking up all the jobs. My answer is that we are all immigrants, except native people.” The women’s experience of alienation and the representation of immigrants by native-born Canadians as foreign intruders illustrated covert racism in placing higher expectations of performance from an immigrant who belongs to a visible minority. It also affirmed an anti-immigrant ideological stance on the costs of immigration to Canadian-born members of the labor force.

According to some women’s experience in eastern and western regions of Canada and in Australia, racism played an explicit role in their failure to get work.

You are looked upon as if you don’t know anything or have a language problem, or will not do the job properly. They have these notions of Indian people. (They) won’t even sit down and talk to me as soon as see the color of my skin. That really pains me. Why would they take it for granted that, okay, her coloring is brown, she must be from India, maybe she doesn’t know anything, doesn’t know English, doesn’t have skills. (They) don’t ask what you *do* know. Sometimes you apply for jobs and they do job interviews and close the file just to show, “We have interviewed so many ethnic women.” They give the job to a mainstream person.... They say, “You don’t have British Columbia experience.”

This statement is packed with evidence of racism – the assumption of ignorance because of skin color; the assumption that the Indian woman has nothing to contribute or that whatever skills she has are valueless; the duplicity of tokenism in conducting a job interview for the employer’s record; resorting to the excuse, lack of “British Columbia experience” as the reason for not hiring a person, when racism is the actual underlying motive.

Ongoing experience in the paid labor force

Despite the difficulties 50% and more of the interviewees were participants in the paid labor force. Their work experience, however, is rather ambiguous. First, I will present some numbers. In the Australia sample, 60 per cent were working outside the home in the paid labor force; 4 per cent had retired. Despite their relatively high educational and occupational qualifications, only 48 per cent of the Atlantic Canada sample were working outside the home; 2 per cent had retired. In the British Columbia sample, on the other hand, 63 per cent were working outside the home; 6 per cent had retired. It must be noted that, in general, Atlantic Canada has a relatively high unemployment rate compared to the rest of Canada, and certainly by comparison with British Columbia, with its fast-growing economy.

While the majority of immigrant women in Canada – especially if they are non-white – tend to be in the lower-paid, less skilled and less secure traditionally female occupations (Boyd, 1975; 1984; 1986; Ng & Ramirez, 1981), previous research has indicated that immigrant women are bi-modally distributed in the occupational structure (Arnopoulos, 1979; Boyd, 1975; 1986; Stasiulis, 1986), a high percentage of them being concentrated in the more skilled and professional occupations. For some non-white immigrant women – including South Asians – the bi-modal occupation distribution is replicated. Jabbara and Cosper (1988, pp. 22-24) found that South Asian women in Atlantic Canada were greatly over-represented in management, teaching, and medicine, and were above average in clerical positions and social sciences. In British Columbia, there is a tendency towards a bi-modal distribution, with South Asian immigrant women working in unskilled occupations, like berry-picking and other farm work (Singh, 1987), in unskilled cleaning jobs, as well as in skilled, business, and professional occupations. In the 1991 census of Australia, India-born and Sri Lanka-born women were most likely to be employed as clerks, professionals, sales-persons and personal service workers (BIMPR 1995a; 1995b).

A high percentage of women in all three samples worked as medical or health care professionals, as social workers or counselors, as teachers and librarians, as accountants (55 per cent in Atlantic Canada; 38 per cent in British Columbia; 60 per cent in Australia). Semi-professionals, such as physiotherapists, interior decorators, and lab assistants, comprised 13 per cent in Australia, 3 per cent in Atlantic Canada, 8 per cent in British Columbia. Administrative personnel comprised 7 per cent in Australia, 6 per cent in Atlantic Canada and 6 per cent in British Columbia. Only in Australia and

British Columbia were there any self-employed large business owners (3 per cent, in the metropolises, Melbourne and Vancouver, respectively); 5 per cent in Atlantic Canada were self-employed small business owners. Secretaries, book-keepers, cashiers, clerks, and salespersons comprised 13 per cent of the Australia sample, 22 per cent of the Atlantic Canada sample, 21 per cent of the British Columbia sample. Skilled and semi-skilled manual workers, technicians, and machine operators comprised 10 per cent in Australia, 8 per cent in Atlantic Canada and 11 per cent in British Columbia. Unskilled machine operators and other unskilled workers comprised 3 per cent in Australia and 13 per cent in British Columbia.

Many of the 30 Australian women, 60 Atlantic Canada women and 63 British Columbia women who were working outside the home at the time of the interviews were *under-employed* in a job of low status and low pay which gave them few social benefits and little control over their lives. Frustration in getting paid work outside the home was greater for women with graduate degrees who had worked in their source country than for those women who were less highly qualified. For example, a medical doctor was an assistant health professional; some university and college teachers were research assistants, small business workers, or not working outside the home; several public school teachers were in unskilled work or unemployed; nurses worked in unskilled health occupations or were unemployed. The case studies of many women currently working revealed individual experiences of under-employment. Moreover, only 19 (38 per cent) Australian women, 44 (35 per cent) Atlantic Canada women, and 39 (39 per cent) British Columbia women had paid work in both their source country and the settlement country.

Race, class, gender, and region of settlement were inextricably interconnected in the women's ongoing paid work experience. As one Atlantic Canada woman put it, "For women of color it's difficult to find jobs, particularly in a place where few jobs are available." Some women who had practiced as medical doctors in the source country found it impossible to work as such in Atlantic Canada – either they could not get an internship or they were unable to take the necessary time for studying and sitting for certification exams. In several cases, the wife was unable to take accreditation exams because it was assumed that the husband had priority for similastudies and exams. Gender subordination and sexual division of labor operated materially by giving the woman exclusive responsibility for housework and child care and by placing the man in the paid work force.

There were some women in Atlantic Canada, British Columbia and Australia who told of positive experiences in the paid-work world. In the first

place, 19 of the Atlantic Canada women who had never worked in their source country were currently working in well-paid jobs in education, health professions, and accountancy, or as book keepers and administrative secretaries; six women were in lower-paid sales, cashier, secretarial, and factory jobs; three women were self-employed in profitable small businesses. All but one (a low-paid cashier) of these women enjoyed their work. Work outside the home gave them some economic and social independence and a measure of control over their own lives. Similarly, 23 British Columbia women and eleven Australian women who had never worked in their source country had jobs in Canada and Australia, respectively.

Identity reconstruction after settlement

Migration is not a one-time event but a complex ongoing process that involves crossing not only political, territorial, and economic borders but also social, psychic, and symbolic borders which define relations, membership, and belonging. It implies a rupture in lived experience of cultural identity and group membership in a source country and the reconstruction of a dynamic, cultural identity that is constantly being transformed in a new settlement country. The migrant is indeed the epitome of Simmel's "stranger" who comes today and stays tomorrow. If migration from the homeland is an important process of self-identification, awareness, and reconstruction, so too is arrival and settlement in the new country. Brah (1996, p. 21) has observed, "Identity ... is simultaneously subjective and social, and is constituted in and through culture. Indeed, culture and identity are inextricably linked concepts." Culture, like identity, is not a static collection of customs, beliefs, and practices which women carry in their bodies or their baggage when they leave their homeland and cross territorial borders. It is rather dynamic and continually being shaped and reconstructed in relationships with other people in the country of permanent settlement – as much for the native-born Canadians or Australians as for immigrants; for, as Simmel (1950, p. 402) observed, immigrants *import* qualities into the group (my emphasis). Culture and identity evolve and are transformed through historical, personal, social, and power relations among groups.

As the discussion above has indicated, South Asian women upon settlement in Canada or Australia often experienced alienation. Women described experiences of being represented and excluded as the "outsider" and the "stranger". For example, an Australian woman who migrated in 1981 at the age of 41, reported, "When I wore a sari, people would stare. I felt like an

alien. (Now) I don't wear a sari when I go out. You don't feel left out in the society. Now I only wear traditional dress for Indian functions. *How you present yourself depends on you.* "This Australian woman freely chose to reconstruct an empowered self-identity through her dress in various contexts of Australian society. Other women experienced alienation and outright racist behavior because of their difference in dress. South Asian Canadian women had similar experiences of alienation and racism because they were identified as women of color who wore different dress. For example, a British Columbia woman who migrated in 1976 at the age of 28, described an experience of violent racism against her as an unwanted stranger on a busy public street of Vancouver. "People didn't like the way I was dressed. I had eggs thrown at me on Fraser Street. People would swear at me. It happened to other women also."

Isolation – from family, friends and social relationships – confinement in the home through circumstances, and racialization of their identity by white immigrants and native-born residents alienated both Canadian and Australian women in everyday life experience. A British Columbia woman, who migrated with her husband and children in 1958 at the age of 30, related, "I missed my family. It was just like being in a prison. My husband worked in the mill; he only came home once a week. I did not know anybody. I stayed home. In India, it was open house." Other women reported that culturally-prescribed gender roles, which forbade social relations that might bring them in contact with men (other than close relatives, of whom there were few or none), added to their isolation and alienation. Similarly, an Australian Muslim woman, who migrated in 1980 at the age of twenty, noted the impact of religious gender roles on her life. "I was alone. I missed all my family. My husband went to work. All day I cried.... Our culture did not allow me to go out without my husband.... I had to decide myself that getting married meant this. I did not realize that at marriage, how lonely I would be. It took two years to settle down."

Brah (1996, p. 1) has astutely asked, "When does a place of residence become 'home'?" Identification of 'home' is problematic. Migrants, characteristically, have had several 'homes'." Some women experienced a dual identity in terms of their life inside home and community and life outside the home. Yet the women's experience of this dual identity was generally positive. For example, women made statements like the following by a British Columbia woman, who migrated in 1971, and located herself as follows,

I consider myself as different in ethnic background – not immigrant. Yes, Canada is my home. India is where I go to visit. I'm Indian-Canadian. I'm proud of that.

I'm different from a WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) – culturally, in clothing, way of thinking and acting in our family, religion, language at home. I speak Punjabi with my mother and father; English with my brother and sister.

In previous papers (Ralston, 1992; 1995a; 1995b), I have documented and analyzed the part played by ethno-religious and ethno-cultural community organizations in personal and social identity reconstruction among South Asian immigrant women. Such organizations provided a social context where people could meet and reconstitute their common identity, language, tradition, values, and consciousness of ethnicity and where they could foster the formation of an ethnic identity among their children. They also provided needed social, cultural, recreational, and spiritual services. Organizational activities promoted intra-group cohesion among the members and integration within the host society, especially for newcomers. The women constructed their identity as *immigrant women* who were different from mainstream native-born Canadian women. At the same time, the organizations served to establish boundaries not only between themselves, other immigrants, and other Canadians, but also among South Asian immigrants of specific regional, cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds.

In British Columbia, many middle-class South Asian Canadian women were actively organized in advocacy-oriented groups to promote consciousness-raising, education, and change among men and among working-class grass roots women in areas of specific concern – violence against women, reproductive technology and amniocentesis clinics, racism, as well as in agitation for the recognition of foreign credentials and experience. In Atlantic Canada, advocacy and change in structures and relations were not the goal; nor were critical gender issues the matter of discourse or action. Organizations among the Australian women were mainly service-oriented. However, some advocacy groups actively lobbied governments for appropriate services for women. Other groups had proactive anti-racist goals (such as Sri Lanka Tamils seeking human rights and justice in the home country; and Fiji Indians struggling against discrimination in Fiji), and anti-sexist goals (such as a Sydney woman's organization called Shakti, which aimed to raise consciousness, to challenge and to change patriarchal family relations, and to combat violence against women).

A British Columbia woman summed up well the perspective of many of the immigrant women whom I interviewed in both Canada and Australia. In bell hooks's terms, she claimed marginality or difference as a position of strength and resistance. She made a strong claim to being empowered.

I know I'm different from other women. I think differently. I don't get discouraged. That keeps me going. This is my personal self-evaluation. I set my priorities. I didn't realize these qualities in myself until I came here. You take a deep plunge and see the depth of the river.... Situations at work feel and are different. People are talking about you – the way you do things, [the way you] are dressed. If you can resist this, if you are happy with who you are and your identity, people start to respect you.

Conclusions

White Anglo-Canadians or Anglo-Celtic Australians, who constitute the dominant ethnic category in Canadian and Australian society, respectively, construct non-Western people and cultures as strangers and alien – the Other. Being a South Asian immigrant woman was experienced above all as being “different” from other Canadians or Australians. And “difference” was often construed as inferior, subordinate, and of lesser value to the white or English-speaking background (ESB) majority. Social and political constructions indicated the salient markers of cultural difference in each country. In Canada, visible characteristics like dark skin color and race are the markers of “visible minorities”; whereas Australia identifies language (non-English speaking background [NESB]) as the salient cultural difference.

The social construction of South Asian immigrant women as a visible minority or a non-English speaking background migrant category has a homogenizing effect which tends to ignore national, regional, and cultural differences among such migrants (Bai, 1992, pp. 23-26; Boyd, 1992, p. 280; Das Gupta, 1992, p. 17). The research has indicated support for Stasiulis's (1990) contention that women cannot be treated as a homogeneous racial category. Race interacted with gender and class in the lived experience of these immigrant women of color in Canada, or women of non-English speaking background in Australia to place them at the margin of society as alien strangers.

The difficulties the women experienced, as Anderson and Lyman (1987) have argued, should be understood not only in terms of their “cultural differences” but also in the context of the larger social organization and ideological structures which generate particular types of experience. Government policies, as they have applied to the settlement of migrants – whether assimilation, integration, or multiculturalism – have tended to focus on cultural and linguistic *differences* rather than on *inequalities* in economic and po-

litical structures and on gender inequities within and among ethnic and racial categories of people. Although neither Canada nor Australia has encouraged immigrant people to forget their past and assimilate to the dominant society, many of the multicultural programs suggest a hidden agenda for assimilation, or at best integration, to the dominant society. As Gill Bottomley (1988, p. 5) has noted, a focus on cultural activities can “distract attention away from the central problem of structural inequalities and access to resources”. Visible minority women in Canada and Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) women in Australia are alienated from resources and the ruling apparatus of society.

Kogila Moodley (1983, p. 325) described Canadian multiculturalism as an ideology which assumes social cohesion, which sees non-charter groups as a threat to that cohesion, and which serves as a cloak to hide the real inequality of power. She criticized the policy for making inequalities and inequities non-controversial and argued for a different emphasis in multicultural policy, one that addresses the constructed reality of “being a constant outsider, of being non-English, of having to do all the adapting and yet never enough” and, above all, lived experience “of inequalities of opportunity in the market-place, and of being relegated to lower caste status despite efforts...(and to) poorly paid, exacting occupations”. She identified implicit and explicit racism as the key marginalizing factor and the obstacle to overcome.

Australian feminists, among them Bottomley (1987) and de Lepervanche (1989; 1992), have been loud in their criticism of policy-makers and academic experts in multiculturalism for failing to address the fundamental structures of inequality in Australian society. While it is true that Australian and Canadian multiculturalism has provided a locus for women to organize and struggle for equality and equity and to have a collective voice, it has also served to isolate women within their own cultural groups and to subordinate them to ethnic cultural traditions. In fact, one might argue that multiculturalism has done little to combat alienation, ethno-centrism, racism, sexism, or classism in the experience of immigrant women. On the contrary, settlement and multicultural policies have tended to construct and reconstruct gender inequity within a racist class structure. Immigrant women of color remain alienated from “the ruling apparatus” of society.

Sandra Harding (1995) has asserted that multiculturalism as a theoretical construct is flawed and offers little hope for the sort of structural equalities it implies. As a theory of social pluralism, it assumes social order rather than social conflict and therefore it cannot address contemporary social inequalities. Even worse, it can, in fact, be “no more than a form of social control”

(Harding, 1995, p. 21). As a policy designed to create unity out of the reality of ethnic diversity, multiculturalism is problematic. A strong argument could be made that multiculturalism, by focusing on exotic cultural differences affirms and re-presents marginality and strangeness of minority immigrant groups. Sandra Harding (1995, p. 21) has argued for a redefinition of multiculturalism as a theory of social conflict, which focuses on the dimensions and causes of conflict and inequality, rather than the conditions of social order, if it is to “shed any light upon the process by which an existing society may approach cultural and structural equality”.

An anti-racist feminist perspective assumes that conflict is inherent in society and that conflict is rooted in race, gender, and class power struggles for control of society’s resources. Membership status of ethnic categories of people – be it visible minority status or NESB status – is characterized in terms of unequal power relations vis-à-vis dominant groups and structures of society. These are accompanied by differential and discriminatory treatment, particularly in situations of competition for scarce resources, such as jobs in the paid labor force. A critical feminist conflict approach to multiculturalism is an alternative paradigm for analysis, policy, and action towards creating a gender-just and equitable democratic society, where the voices of visible minority and NESB women are heard and heeded, and where their experience and productive labor are valued.

In practice, many South Asian women who have “taken a deep plunge” and crossed the “black water” have reconstructed a positive personal and social identity, have resisted stereotypes constructed by the dominant groups at the center, and have adopted a proactive anti-racist and anti-sexist marginal position of strength and opposition to alienation. To quote Avtar Brah (1996, p. 48), “Racism may have the effect of marginalising them, but they are not marginal identities.” In bell hooks’s terms, as South Asian *Canadians* or *Australians*, they have taken a central position where they can re-vision, imagine and create alternative, new worlds in a race- and gender-just multicultural society.

Notes

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- 1 Statistics Canada, in the *1991 Census Dictionary* (Catalogue 92-301E 1991, pp. 113-114) notes that "According to (the *Employment Equity Regulations* that accompany) the *Employment Equity Act* (1986), visible minorities are persons (other than Aboriginal persons) who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.... Because there is no question on race or colour in the census, data on visible minorities are derived from responses to the ethnic origin question, in conjunction with other ethno-cultural information, such as language, place of birth and religion."
 - 2 John Porter (1965, pp. 60-61) described French- and English-Canadians, "founding nations" of Canada, as the charter groups who decided who else could enter the country. He borrowed the term from Oswald Hall (1960).

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Margaret Abraham

ALIENATION AND MARITAL VIOLENCE AMONG SOUTH ASIAN IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES

Various studies have demonstrated that cultural change is usually hard for immigrants (Moon & Pearl, 1991; Brislin, 1981; Dyal & Dyal, 1981; Sluzki, 1970). Leaving behind nearly all that is familiar to you and coming for the first time to a foreign country is one of the most difficult experiences for a new immigrant. Having shifted from the culture and socio-economic systems familiar in their own countries, immigrants often experience a deep sense of loneliness in the new environment and social isolation (Kang, Kang & Kang, 1983). Drawn from my larger study on marital violence among South Asian immigrants in the U.S., this paper specifically addresses some of the forms of alienation experienced by South Asian immigrant women in the United States as a result of marital violence.¹

In the Fall of 1984, I left my family in India to pursue doctoral studies in the United States. Typical of many other South Asians, I carried with me my own limited vision of the “normative family” based on my own family experience. I am the youngest in a middle class family of four children; my father had died the year before, and it was the first time in the twenty-four years of my sheltered life that I was going to live alone and in another country. I clearly remember sitting in the plane, peering through the window, overcome by a sense of loneliness at the reality of no longer having *my family* near me. Although intellectually aware of the diversity of family, looking back, at that time I believed that most South Asian families were like mine:

a place of love, nurturance, support, and safety. From the outside, most of my friends' families appeared no different and those that deviated from the norm were explained away as the exceptions to the rule. In fact, I was to understand later that some of our families were the antithesis of what they outwardly appeared. Some of our mothers had been abused and some of my friends had even been abused by their own parents. However, at the time we dared not tell each other, kept up pretenses, and rarely revealed the darker side of our family relations. In her book entitled *Family Violence*, published in 1984, Mildred Daley Pagelow aptly states that "living in the privacy of our homes tends to restrict our vision of others' lives". Based on my own family experience, I was inclined to believe that the "normative order" and the "factual order" were one and the same when it came to the South Asian family. There lay the common problem of false universalization which was to be systematically undone in the next few years through the nexus of scholarship, teaching, and interactions with friends who had experienced domestic violence and/or were actively engaged in addressing the problem of domestic violence.

From 1990 onwards I have focused my research on marital violence among South Asian immigrants in the United States. I planned research on marital violence among South Asians in 1989 when I began teaching courses on family issues from a cross-cultural perspective and discussing issues around domestic violence with some friends who were volunteering at a shelter. The sheer enormity of the problem led me to begin a serious review of the literature on domestic violence. What became increasingly clear was that while there was considerable scholarship around domestic violence, there was little of research on its prevalence among ethnic minority communities. Given my previous research interests in ethnicity and migration, I knew then that the project that lay ahead of me was a study of the prevalence of marital violence among South Asian immigrants in the United States.

Method

The research for this study was conducted over a three year period (1990-1993). Since research in the area of domestic violence has its limitations in terms of ethical and practical barriers, when compared to most other types of research, access to sources for data collection was extremely difficult and limited (Strube, 1988). To maximize data collection, the data for this study were drawn from diverse sources. Data included unstructured taped interviews which I conducted with twenty-five South Asian women who were

victims of marital violence, questionnaires to South Asian organizations, participant observation in some of these organizations, and secondary sources such as newspaper articles, monthly bulletins, and pamphlets.

The privatization of the problem of marital violence, especially in the immigrant community, made access to interviews with abused South Asian women a long, arduous process.² Three organizations that I approached to assist me in contacting potential participants for this research were extremely helpful. These were Sakhi for South Asian women in New York, Sewaa in Philadelphia and Apna Ghar in Chicago. In all these organizations, specific individuals who knew abused South Asians or were case workers, talked about my work to some of the women and told them that if they were interested in knowing more about the project or in participating in it, they could either contact me or have me contact them. When we made contact I spoke in greater detail about my research. They then decided whether they wanted to participate in the study. I also informed them that at any point in the interview they could decide not to answer a question or stop the interview. What was so gratifying was that of the twenty eight people who were contacted, twenty five agreed to participate. Their consent was taped.

The women I interviewed were all first generation immigrants to the United States from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. They ranged in age from the early twenties to the late thirties and were from different socio-economic and religious backgrounds (Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Sikh). Many of these women had come to the United States after their marriage to a Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) or to a U. S. citizen of South Asian origin. In other cases the women were citizens or LPR's who had gone back to South Asia to get married through an arranged marriage. The primary data collection technique was unstructured taped interviews ranging in length from one to three hours. Interviews were conducted in English, Hindi, Malayalam and Bengali.³ I met the women I interviewed in different places, depending on what was most convenient for them. Some interviews were conducted at my home, others in their own home, at the home of a friend or that of a volunteer, or at the office of a South Asian Women's organization.

Questions that guided the interview included profiles of the subject and her abuser, factors leading to their marriage, the nature of the abuse, its frequency, the parties involved, if help was sought, the type of help sought and responses, modes of intervention, perceptions, and strategies for change. The attempt was to elicit the type of detail that approximates the actual lives and marital violence as experienced by these immigrant women. I believe that my being a South Asian, an immigrant, and a married woman helped in

building the initial rapport with the women. Of course, particular emphasis was also given by me to instill a sense of safety, trust, and intimacy which allowed them to speak about issues that are usually perceived as being private and normatively unspeakable.

The interviews were transcribed and analyzed. Based on patterns that emerged from the analysis of the coded categories and the researcher's interpretation, typologies were developed for the causation of violence, results of violence, manifestations of violence, responses of organizations, and suggested strategies to assist abused immigrant women. Pseudonyms have been given to the subjects to protect their identity. The endeavor is not to make generalizations but demonstrate how alienation occurs for immigrant women within the family, the community, and the larger social institutions of society.

Conceptual Considerations

The term alienation has been used in various ways to explain a wide variety of phenomena. In the 1950's and 1960's, American sociologists' focus on the dimension of alienation (Seeman, 1959) or on an examination of the structural conditions (Blauener, 1964) resulted in a shift from Marx's original formulation of the term to denote both a subjective state and an objective category under capitalism. Seeman's typology has increasingly been used to explain the different psychological states of the individual. Although the general term, 'alienation', is rarely used, some dimensions of his typology (powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation) have influenced the analysis of domestic violence in the United States. Research indicates that social isolation is "strongly related to the risk of wife abuse" (Gelles, 1997, p. 86). The more socially isolated a family is, the greater is the risk for wife abuse (Fagen & Browne, 1994). In 1972, Seeman (1972, pp. 492-494) defines social isolation as "the individual's low expectancy for social inclusion and social acceptance". According to him, this form is found among members of a minority and is usually accompanied by loneliness. According to Hughes and Gove, social isolation refers to the lack of social interaction and social integration (1981, p. 50) where social integration refers to "the existence or quantity of social ties or relationships" (House & Kahn, 1985, p. 85). While there is considerable evidence in the literature showing social isolation of the family as a factor in domestic violence, almost no attention is given to how it functions for ethnic minority immigrant families, and how it lends itself to

the invisibility based on their ethno-gender status that plagues immigrant women in the United States.

This paper focuses on alienation among abused South Asian immigrant women in the United States in an attempt to expand the discourse on domestic violence in the U.S. to include the experiences of ethnic minority women because such omissions result in an inadequate conceptual framework for dealing with commonalities and differences deriving from the nexus of gender, ethnicity, class, race, and legal status. Elsewhere, I have suggested an “ethno-gender” approach to the study of domestic violence in the United States (Abraham, 1995).⁴ Using this ethno-gender approach and drawing on the works of both Marx and Seeman on alienation, I examine the forms of alienation among abused South Asian immigrant women. I define alienation in this paper as the perception and reality of being dehumanized in relational and positional ways within familial and institutional settings. Here, alienation includes both subjective and objective elements. That is, it includes both people’s feelings of alienation as well the structural component which depicts the impersonal, dehumanized nature of the social, political, and economic institutions of society. On the basis of my research from the vantage point of an ethno-gender approach in analysis, I delineate four major forms of alienation experienced by South Asian immigrant women in the context of marital violence in the United States. These are 1) social 2) bodily 3) economic and 4) institutional alienation. For purposes of clarity, these various forms are treated as separate categories in this paper, although in reality they intertwine.

Social Alienation

Social alienation is the individual’s perception and reality of being isolated emotionally, socially, and geographically. It is the “feeling and fact” of not belonging or having a meaningful relationship. The individual experiences a sense of being lonely, abandoned, ignored, and disconnected from both intimate and other social relationships. Social isolation is manifested at three different levels. First, it is apparent in relations with one’s partner/spouse. Second, are the manifestations in terms of the frequency and quality of social interaction in informal networks with friends, relatives, and coworkers. Third, social isolation is salient in terms of access to and participation in formal organizations such as community organizations, economic, legal, and political institutions.⁵

For South Asian women, especially recent immigrants to the United States, social alienation is one of most painful manifestations of marital violence perpetrated against them. For some of the women I interviewed, the pain and loneliness of coming to a new country, the separation from family and friends in the home country, the emotional, social, and economic dependence on the LPR or citizen-spouse coupled in some cases with poor command of the language, as well as difficulties in contending with cultural and structural barriers, increases the sense of alienation in a foreign country.

For many immigrant women, the spouse is the only person a woman knows and she is compelled to rely on him at least in the early stages of her residence in the United States. Emotionally weakened by separation from her family and the reality of being in an unknown environment makes the immigrant woman emotionally dependent on her spouse despite his being a relative stranger to her in many ways. The very nature of intimate relationships exposes individuals to each other's strengths and weakness (Wolfe et al., 1997). She is eager to please him in the hope that the quality of her interpersonal relations with her spouse will reduce the anxiety of being in a foreign country and help negotiate the difficulties of transition both in terms of married life and in terms of living in a culturally and structurally alien society.

An essential element of intimacy is the need and willingness for people within the relationship to consent to self-disclosure, to be open to each other with mutual trust and respect. The difficulties of intimacy with a partner who often lacks interpersonal skills and is insensitive to the nature of dependency created in the marital relationship in the immigrant context, contribute in significant ways to social isolation. The context of resettlement also lifts the potential restraints of cultural and familial mechanisms of social control on an aggressive husband. Therefore it is not surprising that South Asian women who have few resources at their disposal and whose dependence on their spouse is high are much more vulnerable to power exercised by an abusive spouse. Isolation tactics are deliberately used by the husband to increase his power and control over the wife in a social environment which is alien to her. He controls all the activities and independent contacts his wife makes. This control takes the form of locking her in the house all day or not giving her a house key so that she is forced to stay at home. He monitors all telephone calls, leaves her at home with no money, forbids her to contact her relatives and friends and constantly questions her about her activities or whereabouts. For new immigrant women in some cases the husband scares her by claiming that the neighborhood is dangerous and thereby compels her to stay at home. Yamuna recounts her extreme

sense of isolation when she first arrived in the United States to join her husband: "I was in his apartment...I think we hardly went out...I mean you could feel terribly trapped in that kind of thing...I was not even allowed to open the blinds...so I had this awfully trapped feeling..."

Shahida's husband locked her up at home from the morning until he returned from work in the evening. "He took off for a day after I came. The next day, when I went to the door as he was leaving, he told me that it wasn't necessary. He shut the door and locked it from outside. Actually it could be locked from both inside and outside. I could have opened it from inside [but she didn't know that at the time]. He used to come [home] around at 6:30 and eat dinner around 7:30. So the whole day I was alone in the house. I spent my time watching T.V. When I asked about a job, he said that he didn't want me to have any small job. If I got a good job, then I could do it. When I asked for English classes, he said that he didn't have any money. He told me if I had money, then I could go and take English classes. I did not know how much he earned. He used to do all the shopping and spending. He had never even taken me to buy groceries. He told me not go because it wasn't a good neighborhood."

"Three days after I arrived here (U.S.) he started beating me", says thirty year old Reena, a clerical worker, describing the battering her husband inflicted on her. "He held my neck and beat me (for asking him what was on his mind)...when I went to lie down he pushed me off the bed...I felt very sad and I wanted to die..."

Usha, a thirty-two year old insurance agent, tells how her husband and her in-laws together made every attempt to isolate her not only from her workplace but also from her own family in India.

...It was an everyday problem, they wouldn't let me go to work, they would close the garage door on me. They would lock all the doors and I couldn't get out of the house. It was real hard...right before Thanksgiving...when I was going to India for my sister's marriage, they would not let me go. I had to call my neighbors to let me go out of the home, otherwise I would have just missed the plane. When I came back the same thing started again...

Not having anyone to talk to, answer questions, or provide basic information increases a woman's sense of vulnerability and social alienation as a new immigrant. Added to this problem, is the isolation and dependence stemming from leaving behind the support system of the larger family in one's home country. In nearly all my interviews, the women spoke about their isolation in terms of both the lack of mechanisms of social control for their abusers as well as the limited social support, emotional and instrumental,

that they themselves received while in the abusive relationship. Many immigrant women experience a desire to alleviate the isolation through social interaction with members of their own community in the hope that they will regain some sense of the “familiar”, a sense of “belonging”, and community identification. Back in their own home country, for South Asian women, a husband’s lack of interpersonal interaction may be compensated by the social ties to her own family, her friends, or other members of the community. Members of families and friends may act as a buffer against stress and abuse. The physical proximity of family members and friends can act as a mechanism of social control on an abusive spouse. Many immigrant men and women find themselves in the United States without any equivalent friends or supportive relatives who can be such buffers.⁶ In fact, for immigrant women who come as dependents, the social circles are liable to make life much harder. The social interaction that the couple tends to have is primarily with the husband’s friends, and sometimes with his co-workers. Their loyalty frequently rests with the husband thereby increasing the sense of social isolation experienced by the abused immigrant woman.

The privatization of the home and the atomization of South Asian women in the United States, through lack of social interaction or community support coupled with marginalization by the dominant American culture results in the creation of a violent space within the institution of marriage, where men can silence women, use coercion on women’s bodies and yet be unaccountable for their violence. Often language and cultural barriers, combined with the anonymity of immigrant families are conducive for South Asian women to be trapped in an abusive marriage while their perpetrators remain unaccountable for their actions.⁷ The result is that frequently women who are victims of marital violence have no family or friends of their own to turn to in a crisis situation and thus experience comprehensive social alienation.

Social isolation for recent immigrants and ethnic minorities in general occurs in complex ways at the most impersonal and outermost level of social interaction based on their ethno-gender positioning. Every society has its normative expectations and mechanisms of social control. Often for immigrants social alienation is aggravated by cultural dissonance with the host country. For ethnic minority immigrants the sense of social isolation at the outermost level is often increased given the contradictory and conflictual relations that arise from the intersections of ethnicity, class, and gender in the United States. Usually as a function of their position as an ethnic minority in the United States, members of the community often find themselves socially isolated due to the stigma attached to their ethnic identity. Very of-

ten ethnic minorities feel estranged from the mainstream due to discriminatory practices of mainstream American society. The perceived cultural hiatus between South Asian culture and mainstream American culture, coupled with ethnic stereotyping by the dominant society, lead immigrants to seek out “our own people” in order to gain a sense of belonging in the new country. For abused immigrant women this becomes extremely difficult given the sexism and cultural chauvinism within their own communities (Narayan, 1995).⁸ Immigrant women are left with few social ties or sense of belonging to a community and this places them at a greater risk of wife abuse.

Bodily Alienation

Another important and more tangible way in which South Asian women experience alienation is through what I call bodily alienation. Here I draw upon Marx’s concept of a worker’s alienation from the act of production. Here work becomes an alien activity which is forced upon one, offers no intrinsic satisfaction and is done only at someone else’s bidding. I define bodily alienation as the state of being when a woman experiences objectification, violation, and appropriation of her body in ways over which she feels she has no control. The wife feels that she is being treated like a commodity rather than a human being involved in an intimate relationship. She experiences bodily alienation as her body is exploited and appropriated for the personal satisfaction of her abuser. This form of alienation usually occurs when a woman is physically and sexually abused.

Positioned between a South Asian society which legitimizes violence by cultural values that define women as property and an American society which objectifies women’s bodies, South Asian men frequently perceive that it is their male right to control women’s bodies through physical and mental coercion. Physical abuse that these immigrant women experience, ranges from pushing, hitting, punching, to beating with an object or choking. Very often the bruises are in areas of the body which cannot be seen by others, thereby making the crime an invisible one and allowing the cycle of violence to continue.

Zakhia, a thirty-three year-old woman with a six year old child, who struggles to make a living doing odd jobs and sometimes sewing in a garment factory, talks about how her husband started battering her after they came to the United States.

After three months [of coming to the U.S.] he [husband] started hitting me. And every year it just became worse. He didn't think much of working girls. He thought that they had easy morals. He would accuse me of not working and doing other things with my time. He would beat me at night and during the day I had to go out and work. He would beat me once in a few weeks. I used to have bruises on my body and had to work like that...I never told them [at work] that my husband was beating me.....He was hitting me very badly, and then he started threatening to take my life....

Usha, was physically abused not only by her husband but also by her in-laws for such things as going to work, for spending any money she earned, for spending too much on groceries, or for cooking what *they thought* was too much or too little. "All three of them, father-in-law, brother-in-law and him (husband) all teamed up (Mother-in-law had passed away). They started abusing me physically. They kicked me. My father-in-law came and twisted my arms, and threw me in the family room."

Even though many women may be conscious of strategies of active resistance or retaliation, they are unable act upon them due to the sheer physical force of their batterer. They, therefore, experience bodily alienation as they are rendered powerless at that moment of time.

Sexual abuse is the other realm in which women may experience bodily alienation. In South Asian culture, women's sexuality is rarely addressed. Discussion of sex, especially in front of unmarried women, is rare. A high value is placed on an unmarried woman's virginity. Women and men are socialized to believe that pleasing the male within the context of marriage is of central importance for a successful marriage. Little or no concern is shown by South Asian men for the sexual needs or feelings of their spouses and this results in the objectification of women in sexual relations. In fact, sex is perceived by most husbands as their right and male sexual gratification is frequently the realm in which domination and control over women is exercised. Sexual abuse takes primarily three forms: 1) forced sex; 2) manipulation of reproductive rights; and 3) manipulation of sex through the use of the concept of the "other woman". Forced sex occurs when the husband has sex with the wife against her wishes. He appropriates control over her body whenever he pleases for his sexual gratification. Here sex offers no intrinsic satisfaction as it is forced on her. She is forced to have sex at her husband's bidding. This sexual abuse results in bodily alienation as the woman feels that rather than an activity that is mutually gratifying, she is dehumanized in the relationship and is transformed through sexual abuse into a commodity. To illustrate: Zakhia, tells how her husband felt it was his right as *her husband* to control her sexually.

My husband would bother me at night. He would accuse me of doing immoral things at the job and for being tired at night. He would beat me and then do whatever he wanted to...he never asked me at all. He did whatever he wanted to do. If I refused, then fights would start. He would never apologize. I had to apologize to him...he used to say, I am married to you, I don't have to ask or apologize for anything.

Similarly Jayathi, a forty-three year old woman, currently divorced and working as a staff person in a hospital, says of her husband's insensitivity and abuse:

He was just too quick, too rough, and too crude. He did not think about making my feelings more pleasant...All I felt was pain...After the children came, the kids and I would be in one room (husband's decision) and he would be in another bedroom...whenever he felt like having sex...he would ask me to come to his room...After that, he would send me back to my room, [saying] "go because the kids are sleeping there alone". It made me feel cheap. Like I felt I was whoring myself for him. There was no intimacy, no compassion, no friendship, no companionship between the two of us. I always felt that I was the cook, housekeeper, nanny, and then his prostitute.

The very process by which men initiate the sexual act, define it's nature and the source of gratification, leave the woman feeling that there is no room for intimacy and caring. She becomes the object and no longer recognizes herself as an equal participant in the sexual activity. The sexual act becomes one in which she experiences bodily alienation.

Bodily alienation also occurs when a woman is sexually abused through the manipulation of her reproductive rights. The emphasis on the family as a unit for procreation in South Asian culture also has an impact on a woman's sense of self. A woman's position in her conjugal home is based on her ability to reproduce, especially a male child. Lack of children is perceived by the community as a woman's failure. Often the choice and access to contraceptives, or the decision to have a child are totally controlled by the husband. This is a source of power over the wife as in the case of Zarina, a sixty-two year old Bangladeshi woman with five children, four of whom were born within the first five years of her marriage. Zarina tells of how her husband controlled her sexual and reproductive rights:

Most of the time he would force himself on me...he did not feel any guilt and would go about his activities like nothing happened...after my fourth child, my sister's friend suggested I go on the pill...but my husband was reluctant to buy

them. He himself never wanted to use condoms or anything...and by making me pregnant time and time again, he was trying to bind me down to him...

Similarly, Tara, a thirty-seven year old secretary, explains how her husband controlled her sexual and reproductive rights. In this case it was not by forcing her to have children but by forcing her to have abortions, thereby denying her right to have a child.

Three times he forced me to go for an abortion, which I was totally against...he said we can't afford it, we have nobody to watch the baby, things like that...when I finally got pregnant for the fourth time...I convinced him somehow to keep the baby...but a year later he said he can't stand this, he does not want to deal with the responsibilities, it is too much for him, he is too young for all this, he should be enjoying his life. He started going out and having an affair.

Interestingly, in the South Asian immigrant context, men also sexually abuse their wives by manipulating the "other woman" factor as a means of intimidating and exercising power and control. Here by the "other woman", I mean the process of insinuating, threatening, or actually having a sexual relationship with another woman thereby making his wife feel sexually inadequate and alienated from her body. For South Asian immigrant women like Yamuna, sexual abuse took the form of her husband threatening to seek sex elsewhere if she did not yield to his desires, thereby devaluing her, making her feel inadequate and forcing her to have sex with him in ways that were against her cultural proscriptions.

....it was a very bad beginning [to their marriage]...he went on about how things are like in America...and how sex is like in America...how easy it is to get sex in America...and if I don't comply with what he wants, if I am shy or something like that, he would probably have to seek it elsewhere...

One mechanism of control Shahida's husband used to make her feel inadequate was to devote all his attention to their neighbor, Jen, a divorced white American woman. To illustrate:

[Upon Shahida's arrival in the U.S.] He told me that there is somebody called Jen in the neighborhood. She is an Italian-American. He used to do his groceries with her... After two or three days Jen invited us over for coffee and we had gone to her place. That day there were two of us and one of Jen's friends. Ahmed had brought his camera. The three of them were talking and taking pictures. I was sitting all alone. They asked me a few questions and then neglected me completely. They

were taking pictures of each other... After we went home, I asked him why he couldn't have taken a couple of pictures of me. He said O.K. and clicked a few then... Jen came to our house twice during the seven months I was there. Ahmed used to go there nearly everyday. After dinner he would go.... He used to come back around one at night. I could see from the kitchen door that her car wasn't there. So I knew that they used to go out together...Once he tried to hit me with a brush but I managed to duck away, so he didn't hit me. I asked him, why he got me here if he wanted to spend all his time with Jen. I would always feel that I was totally unwelcome. If I ever smiled at him, he would ignore me. I felt unwanted....I didn't ask him if they had any relationship. I just told him that he could take me out with them sometimes, when they went out. He knew that I was alone at home from morning...He didn't give any reply to that. He just banged the door and left....

This process of using the "other woman" has multiple consequences. The South Asian women, now finds herself experiencing not only a loss of self-esteem but a sense of emotional and sexual inadequacy. In some cases, she sees this as a failure in her role as a wife, feels rejected or compelled to have sex without it having any intrinsic sexual satisfaction for her. In the immigrant context, it also serves the function of constructing the "other woman", frequently a non-South Asian as a foe/intruder, thereby diverting some of the resentment by the wife against the husband toward the foreign "other" and adding to the alienation process. Thus bodily alienation gets constructed not only in terms of gender but also includes elements of ethnicity.

Economic Alienation

Economic alienation is the perceived – and real – condition of economic deprivation experienced by a woman as an outcome of the husband controlling all the finances, giving the woman absolutely no money, holding her accountable for every penny she spends, excluding her from any bank accounts and any movable or immovable assets. It involves a woman's sense of exclusion from basic economic rights and control over her wage labor. Although marital violence cuts across all socio-economic segments of the South Asian community, factors such as the South Asian woman's level of education, the language barrier, the lack of employment or her inadequate preparation for entering the work force, exacerbate the woman's sense of dependency and financial entrapment within the marriage. In some cases, cultural limitations combined with gender role conditioning, result in even highly

educated and financially independent women feeling pressured to be accountable to their spouses. According to Shahida:

He gave me no money for household expenses...He used to do all the shopping and spending, he never took me for grocery. He told me not to go, because it wasn't a good neighborhood...I had no slippers to wear at home, so I asked him for one. He bought me one that was one size bigger. So I was in a state, that I couldn't even go out to buy a pair of slippers....During Ramzan, I had kept Roza, but he did not. You know I couldn't eat anything the whole day. He never got fruits or anything for me. It was very hot those days. I had found a bag of coins in a drawer. I didn't know that they were old rare coins. I took a couple and bought orange juice. Later he told his friend that I had stolen his money....

Tara, explains how her husband tried to control her finances:

I was working for two years before he married me...he started asking me about the money. Like 'what do you do, what happened to the money?' Then he started asking me to give him an account. I said I can't give you an account for what I did with my money in the last two years. I don't keep the receipts...he said you are talking back to me, you have no respect for your husband...that's how it started. I couldn't say anything. If he asks me something I have to give him an answer. If he does not like it, then it's not respecting him...he would slap me...

"Since I came here," says Usha, "I have been working, but my husband took the money... and then they (husband and in-laws) would give me twenty dollars a week. I had to pay my gas and for all my lunches. Things kept getting hard, because when you go out and all, you have to contribute to other things. You have to maintain your attire...First I started saying that I need some more. Then the father [in-law] started interfering, then the brother [in-law] started interfering more and more. If I go for grocery, why did I spend so much, they would open my groceries and go through everything. How much I spent on it. Whatever I do at home is wrong. If I cook two things, why did I cook two..." When she attempted to maintain a separate account she was beaten up. "One day I thought that I am not going to close the account [an independent account which she had started and was under pressure to close]...I need a little bit of financial independence...so he beat me and said that he was going to call his father and brother and they are all going to beat me..."

By controlling the finances, men ensure that immigrant women remain in abusive situations due to their perception that they are unable to opt out. Although many of the women have been educated in their home country, they do not have the type of preparation in terms of language skills, qualifi-

cations, or job training needed to get a job that can provide financial independence in the United States.⁹ For still others, their qualifications and training may be outdated due to her abiding by the culturally prescribed norm of her primary role as wife, mother, and keeper of the home. The loss of self-esteem and confidence, especially in an alien country, deters them from seeking jobs, or in some cases from obtaining them. The inability to seek financial support from their own families exacerbates their sense of economic alienation. Getting a job becomes imperative for these South Asian women yet for many the lack of a “green card”¹⁰ makes obtaining any sort of legal employment a nonviable option. The lack of a “green card” becomes an obstacle for some of these women finding an economic alternative which could facilitate their gaining independence from their abuser. And this compounds their sense of economic alienation. In addition, for some of the women I interviewed, policies and procedures of certain institutions such as the INS become structural impediments contributing to immigrant women’s alienation. This brings me to the fourth major form of alienation abused South Asian immigrant women experience in the United States.

Institutional alienation

Institutional alienation is the perceived and real experiences of rejection, exclusion, and lack of support from institutions. As stated earlier, the dehumanizing qualities in the structural arrangements of the major institutions of society contribute to the alienation of abused immigrant women. Three major institutions which contribute to South Asian immigrant women’s sense of alienation are the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Law enforcement Institutions, and the Health Care institutions. The treatment that abused immigrant women experience at the hands of law enforcement officials and medical practitioners and the obstacles they meet in their contacts with them often increase alienation. Financial constraints, procedural delays, ethnic and gender stereotyping, language barriers, and a general lack of sensitivity compound the problem of alienation for abused immigrant women. For some, the very process of seeking assistance or justice from legal institutions is alienating due to the depersonalized nature of these large scale bureaucracies coupled with the lack of sensitivity of the office bearers.

One can begin with the problem pertaining to immigration. Appropriate legislation, legal enforcement, and legal assistance are needed for victims of marital violence to provide protection and safety.¹¹ Although some South

Asian women emigrate on the strength of their own independent status, most come as spouses. This legal dependency often places the husband in a position of dominance and control over the wife and the woman in the dangerous position of remaining with her abuser due to the fear of finding herself with loss of legal status.¹² Seema, a twenty-six year old woman, who works as a packer, was physically maimed by her husband when she was twenty-four. Her husband frequently used the green card as in issue to exercise power and control over Seema.

As he [Seema's husband] is a citizen, my green card came within three months but he never let me collect the mail. I knew that the green card had come but he kept it with him. I had not even seen it. Then he started to say that one day he would murder me...It was six o' clock in the morning ...he said that I had come only for my green card. He said he knew that I had asked his friend about my green card. He kept on saying that I had married him for the green card and was going to ruin his life...he went and picked up a pitchfork. The big one made of iron...he aimed it to poke my eyes...I had not fully woken up so I could not run away...I became unconscious...when I regained conscience, I realized that I was all alone...I saw myself in the mirror and found that I was bleeding profusely...one eye was totally damaged...

For Shahida, opting out of an abusive marriage caused delays in her attaining a green card since the green card was contingent on her husband's status. She says:

I have a green card now but earlier I had some other status. I got it after my marriage, under the condition that I will have my interview after two years when they will make the Green card [permanent]. But I separated within seven months of my coming here. So the interview that needed both the husband and wife could not be held. I had to file for my green card separately...one has to file it and give it for their (Immigration and Naturalization Services) consideration. They decide whether to give it to you or not. I filed it and fortunately won the case.

Yamuna, who left her husband before her green card came through, tells of how her husband tried to intimidate her at work and later by telling her roommate that he was "going to tell the police, I'm going to tell the immigration that she's a cheat, she's a liar and everything".

Fear of issues of legal status compounded by insensitive attitudes on the part of police officers, inadequate training programs for these officers who respond to calls from abused women, and their unwillingness to arrest perpetrators of abuse exacerbates a sense of institutional alienation. Saunders

and Size (1986) noted that officers that had traditional perspectives on women tended to take the least amount of action in domestic violence situations that needed intervention. For South Asian women the situation becomes even more problematic. Some of this stems from immigrant women's fear of the police or an apathetic attitude exhibited by the police officer when the woman seeks help. Zakhia confronted police apathy when she went to report on her husband.

Then one day he came and hit me at my place of work. I went to the police station, but the police didn't listen to me. They just asked me to wait. So I went back to work. Then my boss asked me about my problems. I said it was nothing. But my supervisor said, that he had seen my husband hitting me and I was going to the police station and my husband was following me and cursing me. Even then I said it was nothing. Then I just broke down and started crying. I told them that I didn't know what to do. They told me to go to the police station. I said that I had gone to the police station but the police is not willing to hear anything. Nobody is there to help me. Then the boss helped me. She called the police. Then she got all the paper work done.

Police officials often go into the situation carrying their own stereotypes of the immigrant community and a lack of sensitivity to the plight of immigrant women caught in the web of marital violence. If there are no visible physical marks of abuse, officers are often reluctant to arrest the perpetrator. In some cases, the inability of the woman to communicate her situation to the officers results in the officer letting the abuser become the communicator of the situation. This results in the abuser not getting arrested. Hence, South Asian immigrant women who experience violence in their homes and have a language problem are reluctant to seek institutional support. They feel alienated from these impersonal institutions, called on to address what is often perceived as a private matter.

In addition, judges have also been criticized for being an impediment to women receiving protection under the law. Schechter states that advocates for battered women report that in some cases judges have inadequate awareness and "inaccurate information" about family law. She says, "If the legislature has recently enacted new laws, ignorance tends to multiply" (Schechter, 1982, p. 168). For South Asian women the problem is compounded by the lack of cultural background of the attorneys and judges. A serious difficulty arises when language becomes a barrier for communication within the Court System. While the use of interpreters becomes important, the quality of the interpretation and the biases of the interpreter are often left unaddressed.

The abused women are thereby left with nonviable options such as no interpreter, her abusive husband as her interpreter, or a biased South Asian male interpreter.

For immigrant women, the stereotypes, negative attitudes, false perceptions of ethnic minorities by providers of medical care can lead to insensitivity and apathetic behavior toward the victim. In some cases communication problems result in incorrect diagnoses of the problem. As stated by Hamlin (1991, p. 403) “negative behaviors exhibited by health care providers toward victims lessen the victim’s willingness to seek help”. The structural impediments that immigrant women face exacerbate the process of alienation since they find themselves in an unsupportive environment, at both the familial and the institutional levels.

Conclusions

Drawing upon the narratives of Shahida, Tara, Usha, Yamuna, and Zakhia, I demonstrate in this paper the forms of alienation faced by South Asian women in the context of marital violence in the United States. Through the experiences of some of the South Asian women I interviewed, we can see how wife abuse in the immigrant community can appear to be non-existent due to the “invisible wall of isolation” arising from multiple factors such as:

- * the power tactics used by abusers aware of the cultural and language barriers that their spouse may encounter in a new environment;
- * the lack of friendship networks, social contacts, and emotional support that abused women receive from members within their own community;
- * the structure of American society where race, class, and ethnic divisions leave little room for social interaction that cuts across such differences in the complex realities of people’s day to day experiences; and by
- * the deliberate racist policies of the United States Government through its immigration laws and (now welfare reform) policies that discriminate against immigrants and force women to stay in abusive relationships.

We see how gender role conditioning, cultural specificities, and structural impediments all contribute to marital violence and alienation for South Asian

immigrant women in the United States. Their marginal position as immigrant women makes them very vulnerable and hence necessitates their inclusion in the discourse on domestic violence. Mechanisms of patriarchal control, issues of women's self esteem as victims of marital violence, methods for intervention, and policy formulation thus must be understood within a cultural and structural context so as to reduce alienation among immigrant women.

While a detailed discussion of the ways to address abused immigrant women's alienation is beyond the scope of this paper, one can conclude with some brief suggestions. At the macro level, there needs to be a shift from a broad-based policy in the United States to one that incorporates a degree of sensitivity to the distinctiveness of immigrant groups in the same setting. The courts, the police, medical services, and educational institutions should all be sensitized to the needs of the various immigrant communities through various multicultural sensitization programs. Ethnic minority communities need to play a more active role in integrating new immigrants into the host society while simultaneously enabling them to redefine their cultural identity in empowering ways.

At the micro level, individual advocacy and victim support groups are essential. South Asian victims of marital violence need to be assisted by individuals and groups who can provide them with relevant information, suggest the alternative options available to them, listen to their problems, provide social support, counsel them,¹³ empower them, help them remove their personal belongings if they decide to leave their home, and frequently take them through the steps necessary to end the cycle of violence perpetrated against them. Victim support groups where survivors meet other survivors, discuss their problems, support each other, provide solidarity, and help each other in the process of ending the violence perpetrated against them is an important method to empower women and shift the problem from a private problem to a public issue.

By addressing the forms of alienation experienced by abused South Asian women in the United States, this paper demonstrates that in spite of the commonality of the basic problem of violence against women, it is important to understand that women too, should not be defined as a homogeneous category and that structural and cultural factors must be examined. Although this study focused on South Asian immigrants, these forms of alienation can be used to understand the experiences of immigrant women in other communities. It is important to understand that ethnic minority women frequently derive their identification from ethnicity, race, class, and gender. Most important, to reconceptualize the existing framework – so as to in-

clude the reality of our differences, when addressing the problem of marital violence and alienation – questions such as how gender relations are constructed and contribute to alienation should be combined with why and how cultural and structural factors contribute to the alienation process.

Notes

- 1 Marital violence in the South Asian immigrant context may be defined as any form of coercion, power, and control – physical, sexual, verbal, mental or economic – perpetrated on a woman by her spouse or extended kin, arising from the social relations that are created within the context of marriage. I include extended kin in my definition of marital violence because marriage for South Asians is not normatively defined as a relationship between two individuals but as an alliance between two families. It is often the extended kin who are partners in crime through their silence or active involvement in the perpetration of the abuse. It is within the institution of marriage that patriarchal control is most manifest on a woman based on her multiple subordinate statuses as wife, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law, and mother. To then understand the nature of marital violence in the South Asian immigrant community in the United States, one must begin by discussing ideology and structure of the South Asian family and the gendered relations that govern it.
- 2 It was only with the creation of South Asian women's organizations in the 1980's that South Asian women began gradually contacting these organizations as an alternative power resource.
- 3 Most of the interviews were either in English or Hindi. One interview that was conducted in Bengali was done with the help of a translator.
- 4 I define the ethno-gender approach as the multiple intersection of ethnicity, gender, class, and legal status as significant categories in the analysis of domestic violence with a special emphasis on the relationship between ethnicity and gender.
- 5 Similar levels have been addressed by Lin (1986) in identifying layers of integration to indicate the degree of belonging, bonding, and binding that individuals experience at the formal, informal, and interpersonal levels.
- 6 This aspect cannot be overemphasized since the sexism and cultural prescription in South Asia in general also allow considerable latitude and power to men vis-à-vis women in gender relation and often a woman's family and friends while sympathetic to the woman's situation may suggest that the woman stay with her abusive husband due to various cultural factors.
- 7 Sakhi Collective (1992), *Break the Silence*.
- 8 Here by cultural chauvinism, I mean the belief by the larger body of the South Asian immigrant community, that their cultural values, especially in terms of gender relations, is the best and to be upheld by the community at any cost.

- 9 Both Caputo (1988) and Walker (1978 – cited in the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare) state how a large percentage of abused wives stay in the relationship for financial security or inexperience in the job market.
- 10 A Green card is a permit given to immigrants by the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service to permanently reside and legally work in the United States.
- 11 MacManus & Hightower (1989) discuss some of the major structural impediments that battered women face.
- 12 The need to protect immigrant women's rights have led to pressure groups seeking members of Congress to initiate or help pass legislation that would protect the rights of women, especially immigrant women. For example, the Immigration Act of 1991 allows immigrant women who reside in the U.S. and have "conditional green cards" to petition to remove the conditional status and file for an independent permanent green card. She can petition for this by 1) showing that the marriage was a good faith marriage and 2) that she is a battered woman (based on expert testimonials). In addition, The Violence Against Women Act of 1994 has some provisions to protect immigrant women. It contains a "Self Petitioning" provision which allows the woman to petition for her own permanent resident status if her husband is a U.S. citizen or Permanent Resident who has failed to file a petition on her behalf and 1) if she has been married to her husband for at least three years or 2) if she has been abused by her husband. The passing of this legislation is one step in removing a major structural impediment that forces abused immigrant women to stay with their abusive spouses.
- 13 Counseling provided by the different South Asian organizations varies from trained counselors to volunteers who are trained to counsel on an informal non-legal basis.

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ALIENATION, EDUCATION,
AND KNOWLEDGE

Matthew David

KNOWLEDGE, INFORMATION, AND POWER: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN ACADEMIC LIFE

*The endless cycle of idea and action,
Endless invention, endless experiment,
Brings knowledge of motion, but not of stillness,
Where is the life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?*

(T. S. Eliot: Chorus from *The Rock*)

Alienation and Education

What purpose does higher education serve in society? Or, to put the question another way, whose purposes does higher education serve in contemporary society? At least three answers may be put forward. First, higher education may be said to enhance productivity and efficiency, creating a better equipped work force for the post-industrial economy. Second, it might be suggested that higher education continues the struggle over ‘closure,’ the differential access to positions within the social division of labor and reward, through extending the dialectical process of integration between socio-economic origin, differential and ‘personal’ educational ‘achievement’, and socio-economic destination. Finally, higher education may be

seen as having a crucial role in facilitating democratic and ethical criticism of the present state of affairs in which human creativity is reduced to the logics of efficiency (mapping the competitive social relations of production) and inequality (mapping the competitive social relations of consumption). The third conception of the role of higher education sits rather uncomfortably with the former pair.

As Alvin Gouldner suggested in his 1979 account of knowledge production and society, knowledge is both culture and capital. He refers to knowledge as Siamese twins; culture being capital universalized, capital being culture privatized, both being manifestations of methodologically guided and goal-directed action, i.e., knowledge-based action is distinct from mechanical behavior. Knowledge production for Gouldner is then potentially both consensual and critical. Consensual knowledge production engages the world in the attempt to solve given problems by addressing old questions. Critical knowledge production engages in the asking of new questions, challenging existing priorities and posing new problems. Alienation in higher education can be seen as the reduction of knowledge production to the management or reproduction of the present agenda: the passing on of old techniques for solving problems without questioning the questions themselves.

In a conservative climate there is a great danger not only that higher education will come under ever greater pressure to orient itself singularly to the task of consensual knowledge reproduction, but that, in the very democratizing moment of expansion, in the intake of greater numbers of students, universities will further alienate the nature of the educational process, by increasing the competitive individualization of learning by diminishing the cultural networks of staff/student interaction, and in transferring increased responsibility to technical networks of bibliographic information management and distribution. In so doing, education takes on more of the alienating characteristics of market competition and factory production efficiency. This is accurate in terms of cost terms, even if not in intrinsic educational terms. The creativity within discipline of learning to ask new and yet meaningful questions, the ability to move beyond information management, requires defending. Technological networks are not the problem. They offer many benefits and possibilities. It is the substitution of technological networks of command for cultural networks of communication, and the logics of economic efficiency and competition that drive this substitution, that represents the problem. This replacement of ends with means taken as an end in themselves, requires us to ask: "if computers are the solution, what is the question?"

The BLERBS (British Library Ethnographic Research on Bibliographic Services) project conducted individual, ethnographic, and focus group interviews with over two hundred academics, researchers, librarians, and students, at three United Kingdom university sites. The sites were a prestigious nineteenth century London University College, a 1960's 'new' university and a former (non-research based) polytechnic that had only become a university in 1992, and had the greatest number of students, the smallest library collection, and the lowest number of academic staff. Within these three sites three departmental subject areas were chosen. These were Chemistry, Economics, and Philosophy. While not fully representative, these sites and departments represented a cross-section of both the hierarchy of academic prestige and the spread of academic work, from natural and social sciences to the humanities.

The focal question of the research was: 'how do you choose and/or find the things you need to read for the work that you do?' Within this, attention was paid to the relationship between cultural and technical networks in the conduct of academic knowledge production. Central to the findings were the limitations of technical networks when taken as substitutes for communicative interaction within academic cultural networks, and the ideological and alienating implications of policy decisions that assumed, consciously or by default, that ever larger student to staff ratios, could be managed by means of such a substitution.

Have We Reached the Age of the Liberated End-User and Unmediated Media?

East and Tilson (1993) refer to the "liberated end-user" of on-line databases in academic contexts. While the academic end-users of on-line databases would, until recently have had to take their search request to a librarian who would then design and carry out the search as quickly and as comprehensively as possible, the emergence of on-line annual single payment subscription services has meant the elimination of additional costs per search. Thus the end-user has largely cost-free time on-line to make mistakes and learn to use the systems for themselves, without the mediation of information specialists. This has created talk of unmediated media! It has been generally thought, at least by those in higher education seeking to reduce costs (but not by East), that new electronic media could substitute for a large amount of expensive contact time with librarians and teaching staff.

In this scenario, liberated end-users are presented as having been freed from regulation and subordination to information specialists and bureaucracy. The previous state of affairs made librarians bureaucratic gatekeepers (allocating and preserving limited resources). Now, presumably, liberated end-users are freed to pursue their own “ideas”, without having to negotiate or mediate these ideas with or through institutional gatekeepers. Such an ideal model of individuated activity fits neatly with an atomized picture of educational and academic activities. However, the communicative exchange involved in the negotiation process through which questions are formulated and knowledge is produced, maintained, and modified, cannot be reduced to the interaction characteristic of human-computer interaction. To attempt to do so reduces an essential feature of knowledge production to information retrieval. For this to be possible, learning would have to be reduced to a form of individualized problem-solving that sets about generating answers for questions that have already been established and for which the methods had already been prescribed. As such, education would become a system of learning procedures and following commands. However, for all its potential benefits, new technology does not substitute for librarians, nor for the series of others that make up the field of communicative exchange within an academic cultural network. The free market/instrumentalist conception of learning is doubly misleading in that it hides the non-market based conditions upon which the so called liberated end-user has been given supposedly “unmediated” access, and secondly it ignores the crucial cultunetworks (of mediation) through which individuals acquire criteria of relevance that enable translation of information into knowledge.

Academic Communism?

While far from the idealized image of free exchange in the academy, Robert Merton's (1973) academic communism, intellectual production, and the distribution of ideas within the academic community, should not be modeled on the commodified exchange of the marketplace. The academic library perhaps best exemplifies, at least in principle, the non-market ideal of free access to the means of intellectual production. The virtual library, or library without walls, based on a variety of new media systems and services, is, at present, enmeshed in a series of struggles over the distribution of costs and benefits of such facilities as on-line journals, World Wide Web access and on-line bibliographic services such as BIDS (Bath Information Data Serv-

ices) in the United Kingdom. Conflicts between communication and commodification are manifest here.

On-Line Journals: Average academic journal costs in Britain have risen by 300% since 1985; part of a vicious circle of decreasing subscriptions and higher prices. Smaller, less prestigious, college libraries are hit hardest and have no option but to reduce the number of titles they subscribe to. The emergence of increasingly large numbers of full-text on-line journal services will again raise the question of whether smaller institutions can keep up. Technically, full-text on-line journals are vastly cheaper for the publisher to produce than are the production and distribution of paper copies. This is because fixed costs shift from publishers to readers in terms of the increased hardware and software required by the reader to access the materials.

The collective provision of such reader resources is something that the library is eminently well suited to carry out. However, beyond technical questions of production, distribution, and reception, the question of copyright has inhibited the development of services. While services are emerging slowly, they are on a small scale and often eclectic at present, and questions of ownership predominate. In Britain the first serious attempt to produce electronic journal services is being heavily state subsidized through the Joint Information Service Committee E-Lib (Electronic Library) Program. Librarians interviewed as part of the BLERBS research expressed concern over the dependency relations that could emerge from electronic journal services. Unlike paper copies that the library would take possession of and which would not be returnable if a subscription was subsequently cancelled, electronic access to past materials would potentially only continue as long as present subscription payments were maintained. The centrality of copyright questions to the development of electronic services (as if people are not presently photocopying paper sources) reflects the increasing penetration of academic journal production, and even editing, by the priorities of more commercial publishers.

The World Wide Web: Again, the Web manifests the conflict between communication and commodification. With more and more of the telecommunications infrastructure being relocated into private hands, and with universities increasingly unable to subsidize services, the commodification of cyberspace moves on apace. The Web was originally designed as a medium for the transmission of scientific data (visual, numerical, and textual) by a Swiss physicist at the European Centre for Particle Research. However, at the present time

the Web is being increasingly commercialized both through the attempts by Microsoft and rivals to control the software used to access the web, and by the increased penetration of advertising revenues in the organization of search engines, right down to the priority placement of commercial sites in the listings gained by users when conducting searches. A year ago now a popular computing magazine counterpoised two potential internet futures. The first suggested unequal access would polarize society in the next century as Marx predicted polarization over the “means of production” in the last. The second saw the internet as little more than the C.B. radio of the late twentieth century, an un-commodifiable dustbin for valueless chatter. Such different visions of the future raise important questions. What social relations of technology will the internet mediate, and what effects will it have on the production, ownership, and distribution of information and knowledge?

Sharing library catalogues on-line has already taken place. The development of Metropolitan and Wide Area Networks, linking colleges, in the United Kingdom, for instance, via the Joint Academic Network (Janet), and for those able to utilize it “SuperJANET,” enable far greater access to learning resources. Yet while enabling an explosion of communication, this transformation is accompanied by economic pressures toward the commodification of intellectual activities and resources. Cooperative relations between neighboring institutions over resource sharing are increasingly being replaced by formal contractual relations which inhibit such sharing.¹

Universities and colleges are under intense financial pressure. While it is attractive to imagine institutions sharing resources in a grand virtual library, in a growing number of cases, that access is being charged for. Smaller, newer colleges, unable to compete with the “capital-stock” (of books and journals) held in older university libraries, will be forced into dependent exchange relations, buying access to their shelves, physically and virtually. Increased student to resource ratios create pressures to restrict access to outside users. While on-line catalogue searching can locate a book or journal, this is no guarantee of seeing it. Virtual proximity does not ensure actual access. In fact, unlimited catalogue accessibility is used to justify “smart” library cards not only enabling you to take books out, but also enabling the bearer entry in the first place. This is occurring in institutions now worried that their students are being deprived by hordes of alien researchers, fresh from scouring the internet for accessible resources.

The British Government’s Joint Funding Council’s Library Review Group recommended academics travel more and that institutions collaborate in sharing costs through regional consortia. However London’s “M25 Consor-

tium” gives little comfort. While the Consortium’s Web site <<http://www.m25lib.ac.uk/m25/>> enables subject searching in the best field-specific collections within 110 London academic libraries, increasingly these very libraries are barring entry to students other than their own, unless an inter-library financial agreement has been formed, or the individual pays.

On-Line Bibliographic Services: BIDS-ISI (in the U.K.) annual subscription service gives access to numerous on-line services without additional per-session cost. In the U.K., access to services like BIDS (Bath Information Data Services), and use of data-bases on CD-Rom has only increased pressure on smaller institutions to rely on Inter-Library Loan services, as access to information on existing materials falls out of step with in-house stocks. For institutions whose staff undertake relatively little research, I.L.L.’s. may be more cost effective than expensive journal subscriptions, but choosing external service provision means library resources are not available to build up in-house resources, perpetuating low research scope in the future. BIDS own data on cost per session show that while large research universities pay as little as a few pence per search, low research institutions are paying anything up to three pounds fifty (East & Tillson, 1993, p. 20). For all its potential benefits, the subscription system maps and perpetuates existing institutional disparities. Smaller institutions face great difficulties justifying subscriptions on the basis of present research activities, while dropping out offers the prospect of relegation to the academic slow lane. The example of BIDS shows some signs indicative of on-going commercialization of academic communication. Its birth, development, and success, however, have other causes. Originally a service set up by the British higher education communities’ Joint Information Services Committee, and based at Bath University, BIDS sought to provide a generalized bibliographic data service to the university sector that would avoid both the high variable cost of “pay as you go” on-line services and the high fixed initial cost of CD-Rom services. Its mission statement is: “To stimulate and enable the cost-effective exploitation of information systems and to provide a high quality national network infrastructure for the UK higher education and research councils communities.” The freedom for the user at the point of use lies in the service’s non-market-based approach. Through a nationally negotiated arrangement, the user is given the freedom not to pay each time they use the system. The liberation of the end-user could simply end up as the liberation of the market and the freedom of corporations to commodify academic communication in the name of the free and isolated net-surfing consumer. BIDS is an important counter-exam-

ple of non-market-based principles in practice. While present institutional disparities are reproduced by the mapping of subscription costs onto unequal institutions (rather than costs being top sliced from government education funds), further submission to pressure on the service to become more commercial would be unfortunate. This brings us to the next theme, academic communities and the enabled (rather than simply the liberated) end-user.

Academic Communities.

The idea of the unmediated medium, or the liberated end-user, is easily dovetailed into misconceptions over the nature of academic freedom and production in the particular, as well as over the relationship between information and knowledge in general. In the BLERBS ethnographic interviews and focus group discussions with academics, researchers, students, and librarians, the centrality of cultural networks emerged, both in relation to the acquisition of skills to use new electronic media, and in the ability to translate systems of information management into tools for knowledge production. Such processes hinge on the negotiation of “criteria of relevance” by which searches (with or without the use of new electronic media) move through the organization of information within databases, catalogues, or shelves to the selection of materials based on their meaning within a knowledge-based frame of reference.

Such frames of reference do not provide fixed and objective horizons within which members of an academic community are contained. They are the on-going shared understandings that the participants bring to, and modify through, their interactions. These frameworks guide the formulation of creative new understandings that themselves form the basis of new working hypotheses for both empirical and bibliographic research. The negotiated nature of interpretation, along with the normative orientation towards understanding, is manifested most clearly in the attempts to formulate problems and search criteria. Discussions of what actually constitutes the problem at hand, discussions between librarians, academics, and students, constitute the heart of the creativity within an academic discipline.

The relationship between creativity and discipline centered around communicative action within a cultural network must be radically distinguished from the relations of command and execution enabled by a technical network. While the principle of chance coincidence may lead a machine, in the exercise of a command, to generate results that trigger a connection in the

mind of a user (between Foucault and the goldfish for example), a machine is only capable of following a command in the manner it has been programmed to do so. It cannot understand a question, or, more importantly, know if what it has been commanded to execute is in fact what the person imputing that command wanted. Technical networks cannot replace the cultural networks through which the question to be asked is formulated, discussed, and negotiated, even if the technical network can be very useful in generating answers to certain types of questions once they have been formulated. To assume that technical networks can replace cultural networks is to assume that the questions that need to be asked already exist and it is only necessary for those engaged in academic production to enact the procedures required for their calculation as isolated technicians of information manipulation.

The equation of knowledge and information, the reduction of inter-subjective communication to command, the failure to differentiate the enabled end-user from the liberated end-user, and the assumption that technical networks can substitute for cultural networks, are all characteristic of the current trend within higher education, at least in the U.K., with regard to the introduction of new electronic media. The enabled end-user, in the light of the BLERBS research, is someone who has access not only to the technical networks of information management and transmission, but is also a part of cultural networks through which they can negotiate questions, learn from others, and generate the criteria of relevance by which information can be selected and integrated within knowledge production and application.

The United Kingdom now has possibly the largest rate per capita of people entering institutions of higher education in Europe, with a staffing level that has remained constant, or in some institutions diminished, during the 1990's, the very years in which U.K. student numbers grew radically. As student:staff ratios in the U.K. increase, and contact time, for discussion and asking questions, diminishes, new electronic media are being used. The framework is that of the "liberated end-user" as described above, rather than as part of the enabled end-user model to which it must be counterposed. Unless the misconceptions entailed in the "liberated end-user" model are brought out and alternatives suggested, the economic arguments made for replacing expensive human communication with new electronic search services, will carry on, along with the commercialization of education that is being carried through as its sub-text and driving force. The reduction of education to such a prescribed and mechanical system of commands represents an alienation of human creativity that parallels the alienation of hu-

man production and consumption within what is traditionally understood as the sphere of 'work.'

Communication and Command

Conversation Analysis can be used to point out key misconceptions in equations between Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) and intersubjective communication. Failure to differentiate the two leads to individual user breakdowns, while at an institutional level it may have wider ideological significance. Ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (CA) highlight the importance of the orientation of each speaker to the understanding of the other. As such, "communication" involves meaningful rule following. However, it also involves negotiation among the speakers over interpretations of both the rules of delivery (of most interest to CA) and the content of speech acts (of greater interest to ethnomethodologists). "Communication" involves a unique form of attention to the other.

Human-Computer Interaction operates according to different principles. A machine cannot orient itself to understanding the intentions of the user, in the manner of partners within a conversation. A machine is able to perform procedures upon command. The distinction between communication and command is crucial to this discussion, so some attention must be given to classifications. "Command" is being used to refer, in the first instance, to the limited sense of commands given to a computer. In this context the use of "command" is still based on a metaphor taken from interaction between sentient creatures. However, it should not be taken to imply the idea of "domination," "force," or "imposition". To begin with, it is only necessary to demonstrate how a failure to distinguish between the principles which govern how people interact with other people, and those that limit interaction with machines devoid of intentionality, can lead to misconceptions over the extent to which the latter can substitute for the former in educational contexts. Machines are ineffective and inefficient substitutes for humans in achieving many educational goals.

One response to this may be to change the goals of education to match the functions that can be achieved in HCI. A conception of education in which it is thought that HCI can substitute for intersubjective interaction between people, or where HCI is taken as a model for instruction and learning, could indeed produce a very undemocratic and submissive form of education. In this regard, the second and literal sense of "command" as a

form of monological interaction premised upon power relations and dominance, as opposed to dialogical “communication,” becomes relevant.

Ethnographic study with an ethnomethodological orientation reveals the key role of cultural networks in the formation of the skills (criteria of selection and interpretation) that enable information to be translated into knowledge. The democratic potential of new electronic media lies in their ability to enhance intersubjective communication between human beings and to facilitate knowledge production, dissemination, and negotiation. Dangers lie with the spread of new electronic media in the attempts by those keen to commodify these media to equate communication with command and reduce collective knowledge production to atomized information accumulation.

Ethnographic and Conversation Analytic Approaches to the Ethno-methodological Study of Cultural and Technical Networks

Ethnomethodology has often (perhaps rightly) been regarded by most sociologists and other social scientists as being a rather esoteric and insular sociological perspective, with little to contribute to macro discussions of social and political affairs. Ethnomethodology’s concern with the “immediate” and complex nature of human interaction in everyday life, in many cases, led to a wilful disregard for all talk of social structure or of relations of power and domination which could not be addressed within specific observable recordable communications. However, the core of ethnomethodology, the attempt to grasp the fundamentally unique features of human intersubjective interaction, does have a bearing on wider social and political questions, and particularly the question of human alienation. In particular, with regard to the question of alienation, the ethnomethodological understanding of intersubjectivity can make a fundamental contribution to the study of new electronic and “interactive” media. Ethnomethodology centers attention upon the study of the methods by which the members of an intersubjective relationship maintain the sense of a shared understanding, and of the orientation of each participant towards the understanding of the other that is central to communicative action (as opposed to other forms of human or non-human behavior). Break-downs in communication can yield a better understanding of what maintains communicative action, and what distorts it. Such

work contains implications for the understanding of “democratic” interaction and communication.²

Habermas offers ethnomethodologists, such as Garfinkel, an escape route that would enable a critical orientation towards relations of domination and power within social life, while, at the same time, maintaining ethnomethodology’s valuable orientation towards the unique features of inter-subjective communicative action as a central foundation for social life. Habermas suggests that (1986, p. 130):

Garfinkel could escape this dilemma... only if he would take seriously the claim to universality implicitly built into the ideas of truth and rightness as pointing to *the validity basis of speech*. The social-scientific interpreter, in the role of an at-least virtual participant, must in principle orient himself to the same validity claims to which those immediately involved also orient themselves; for this reason, and to this extent, he can start from the always implicitly shared, immanent rationality of speech, take seriously the rationality claimed by the participants for their utterances, and at the same time critically examine it. In thematizing what the participants merely presuppose and assuming a reflexive attitude to the interpretandum, one does not place oneself outside the communication context under investigation; one deepens and radicalizes it in a way that is in principle open to all participants. In natural contexts this path from communicative action to discourse is often blocked; but it is always ingrained in the very structure of action oriented to reaching understanding.

Regarding new electronic media, the question of what is meant by “communication” needs to be raised in relation to both electronic and paper-based media. For the ethnomethodologists, communication means an inter-subjective orientation to the other in face-to-face everyday interaction, or similar direct exchanges (such as telephone calls). Communication for those engaged in “communication and media studies” is usually mass-mediated “communication”. Mass mediation stretches relations of communicative production and reception, through technologies of storage and transmission, beyond the ethnomethodologists’ embodied “talk”.

The questions of accountability and control, discussed in ethnomethodology in terms of the normatively self-regulated orientation towards understanding the other, of maintaining shared meaning through inter-subjective exchange, and in the rules of such exchanges (turn-taking, adjacency pairs etc), become radically altered as production and reception are separated. Liberal and critical media theorists differ in their reading of this separation, and the power relations they see embodied in it. Radicals suggest that

such a separation (with the accompanying concentration of ownership and control) enables the distortion of media output in an ideological fashion. From an ethnomethodological stance such a separation scarcely constitutes communication, for one side is able to dominate with little orientation to the recipient. This is monological rather than conversational discourse. Liberals suggest that mass media producers are forced to orient themselves to the consumer preferences of their audience. However such a commodified and silenced conception of the other, where the audience is not asked to articulate a response, but simply to choose among different messages on offer, still fails to resemble inter-subjective communication. They represent distorted forms of communication at best.

So what of the newer electronic media? What is meant here are the networked computer and the electronic mailing services, search engines, databases and home-pages to which it can connect its user. Networked computers enable dialogic communication, as well as access to a vast array of information and information about how to get information. Unlike the telephone, much of the interaction is with machines, rather than through machines to people. To the extent that “direct” person to person e-mail (either in real-time or when stored) integrates features of the letter, the telegram, the telephone, and the answering machine its originality may only lie in its speed, though speed may have significant effects. These, however, are not the focus here. Rather we want to address aspects of HCI and their relation to cultural networks. Interaction with a machine (such as accessing a data-base or home-page) should not be confused with communication with a person, however that communication with another person is mediated (telephone or letter, etc.). Machines enact instrumental commands. A machine is incapable of understanding anything, and has no normative orientation towards understanding the user. Failure to differentiate HCI and inter-subjective communication at the level of individual users leads to frustrating interactional break-downs. At the level of policy-making and marketing a failure is bound up with deeply ideological misconceptions.

As multi-media systems advance, the interface between telephone, computer, television, video, and audio reproduction will blur giving a large (practically infinite?) choice of combinations to those able to gain access (able to pay). With infinite choice, the opportunity to disseminate information through personal home-pages, giving the world access to the individual, may also arrive, for better or worse. However, it is necessary to make clear the essential distinctions between conversation and command, between knowledge and information, between liberation and enablement, and between the cul-

tural and technical networks by which “communication” is effected, if we are to understand the possibilities and actualities of new electronic media, as well as to resist the alienating relations they may facilitate when taken up within the logics of economic efficiency and interpersonal competition, that currently dominate society.

An Endnote – Via Theodore Rozek

While this paper has only begun to touch on some of the crucial areas of investigation in the study of the democratic and unalienated possibilities of new electronic media, and the pressures to subvert and distort these opportunities, the themes raised do make a start at what needs to be an on-going research agenda. The BLERBS research, through its multiple-track application of ethnographic and conversation analytic modes of micro-analysis offers suggestions.

Theodore Rozek’s (1996, pp. 12-14) critique of faith in computers as substitutes for human interaction in learning gives an appropriate point of conclusion: “Out of curiosity, I recently asked a librarian if she had ever considered renting out space for advertisements in the card catalogue or its on-line version. She was first bewildered, then shocked. “We would never do anything like that,” she said. That is the voice of public service... Some Web enthusiasts consider such structures a kind of elitist censorship. They might even regard the Dewey library catalogue system an infringement on the free flow of information. On the other hand, I have heard no serious complaint that keywords on the Web are now rented out. . . People who think that education equals information have no idea what either information or education is... the quality of the question is more important than the quantity of data that appears as an answer.

And how do we teach kids to ask good questions?”

Notes

1 Upgrading from connection to the present JANET wiring to connection onto a fiber optic system has been contracted out from the university sector to British Telecom. While this has enabled radical expansion of the bandwidth, and thus of the speed of information transfer, the service is not universally available, due to high connection costs. As such, SUPERJANET has to be opted into. As the addi-

tional bandwidth enables faster access to large documents, SUPERJANET makes it possible for large numbers of users to access full text graphic journal services, and other bulky materials, at a reasonable speed. Relations between bandwidth of superhighway routes, local network infrastructure, and alternatives that may bypass the need for expensive infrastructure upgrades will create an uncertain future of those making financial commitments for future needs within present constraints in the anticipation of future possibilities.

- 2 The limitation of ethnomethodology's contribution to the debate over democratic communication lies in its founders' failure to extract their conception of the normative discursive basis of intersubjective interaction, from the normative theories of societal consensus found in the works of Parsons (1951) and Schutz (1972), from whom Garfinkel in particular developed his conception of normative order. Whilst critical of Parsons' functional theory of social roles, norms, and values, Garfinkel's critique is based upon a radicalized phenomenology, such that any theory of general system or societal function is rejected for the study of the normative orientation of actors towards the maintenance of consensus at the level of everyday interaction. In his work, Garfinkel draws out the relativistic implications of Schutz's conception of the lifeworld. However he fails to demonstrate how such a relativism is to be related to the claims made by ethnomethodology itself.

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PARADOXES OF ADJUSTING TO THE INTERNET: EXPERIENCING ALIENATION?

There is a paradoxical difference between writing that is made public on the internet and writing about the computer as a medium of communication. While writing made public on the internet is usually direct, spontaneous, and resonant with personal involvement; the writing about internet communications tends to be indirect, constrained, and academic in the sense that the writer is objective even though not impartial. There is thus an interplay of alienation and non-alienation, or even de-alienation, that computer communication discloses. In this paper I want to introduce people's experience into the discussions of virtual reality.

I will explore the multiple significances that inhere in my 'private' experience of a small part of the internet and its links and non-links with alienation. One aspect of that experience has been obliging students to express themselves in a closed listserv, about issues discussed in a course. So I will also present some data on how students dealt with the challenge. I am writing about people with no pretense to being virtuosi of the net – students who confronted it with some trepidation. This, I believe, is a population which deserves attention.

The underlying assumption of this kind of exploration is that given a molar understanding of one human locale, there is a likelihood that we will make discoveries that apply to other settings as well. This kind of examina-

tion relates to the debate of post-modernity according to which an overwhelmingly various world impacts and fragments identities by splintering consciousness and shattering frameworks of shared values. But it starts with real people.

PART I

My personal attachment is to a computer terminal in an office with normal – institutional – entry into a computer system. For me, being involved in Cyberspace is a declaration of membership in several kinds of networks: professional, institutional, interactive circle, and coterie. My professional association with sociology and education is the substructure; the University's policy for allocating resources to the distribution and installation of computer services is the key to access; and to the formation of an immediate circle of colleagues who are 'doing it, too'. All of this underlies the possibility of becoming a member of one or the other clique of computer correspondents.

In the sociological literature, membership is a weighty status. The sociologist is hard pressed to uncover all the associated meanings. For one thing, membership involves overt and covert mutuality, and diverse strata of shared experience. On one level we are talking about the substance of society – norms and values, patterns of decision-making and choices of behaviors. On another level, membership recognizes that in every milieu there is knowledge far beyond what can be encoded; but that knowledge impinges on the peculiar turns that these dealings take (Garfinkel, 1967). All of these are relevant to the various kinds of memberships that make it possible for me to have access to the computer and its wonders. I will first talk/write about this business of being a member in a computer coterie – a listserv; in the second part of the paper, I will relate to a computer group that I forced into existence.

The encounter with a virtual network and its appurtenances link up with standard conceptualizations of membership only vaguely. Membership in the realm of Cyberspace alienates us from what has turned into the cumulation of quasi-intuitive understandings. The intuitions are called into question by the very existence of electronic networks. Initial preparation by memberships in families, school organizations, work places, neighborhoods, and circles of friends is irrelevant to membership in (an) e-mail network(s). The ways of networking, the effect on the individual net-worker, and the internet

as a milieu where knowledge is generated remind us of the paradox of a snowball on an incline. Like a snowball racing down the hill, the member of a network preserves structure through the feedback of the computer surface, while her behavior is patterned as progress in a straight line. Still, through the contact with a changeable environment, there is a direction of structural change. I will illustrate this by reference to the encounter of one individual with electronic mail, and then to those of students who approach networking as a learning task.

The environment that I will focus on here will be the most easily available resource of the internet, opportunities for making contact by means of electronic mail. This is an aspect which a recent reviewer sets aside as elementary and almost not worth attending to (Myodossor, 1996). For over twenty years, newspapers and magazines have run features about how computers link people from different parts of the world. They are prepared for the innumerable marvels. For newcomers, young or old, however, the primitive mechanics of gaining entry are still a mystery to be penetrated.

Even habituation to the technical steps does not resolve the estrangement of the self from the novel environment and the complicated initiation procedures. Learning how to perform 'clicks' according to detailed instructions is a fatiguing process. Once past the gate you find yourself 'on-line' where other people are happily corresponding with one another. Strangely enough, the first inkling of the atmosphere of the correspondence is an awareness of intimacies among what seem like formidable closed circles. The question of how one can worm one's way into these sets is not easily resolved. Eventually it becomes clear that the essential problem is to get hold of an address.

The first address I had was that of a network of lecturers and teachers in the area of women's studies, a place where I felt terribly alone. The writers were concerned with specific issues in pedagogy – teaching materials, chauvinistic prejudices expressed in class discussions, and the approaches suitable for men and women enrolled in women's studies courses. Although I was not faced with similar problems, this was clearly a 'good thing', and I religiously read all the communications, suffered the aches of the wallflower along with pangs of conscience because nobody asked me and I could think of nothing worthwhile to say to all these connected people. I hung on because in my eyes networking was a relatively hard-won luxury, and I found it impossible to decide simply to give up the connection even though the information was useless to me except as ornament.

Over the last decade I have collected a long list of addresses and have

acquired the status of membership on many networks. Becoming aware of more and more lists is indeed analogous to snowballing in the sense of racing down an incline. Adding to the list of addresses is an experience of a linear pattern that easily takes on (and indeed with me has taken on) geometric proportions. E-mail addresses are no longer formidable; the procedures for penetrating a new expanse of the network are routine; and extending the scope of my personal involvement with the internet becomes easier and easier. At the same time, the accumulation of memberships is a patent experience of structure change. I am no longer in contact with a particular group of people, troubled by a single set of delineable issues. Instead, I have access to the opinions of people who define themselves and their circles in vastly different ways.

Each of the lists to which I subscribe has not only a defined region of topics, but also a special ambience. And this assembly of ambiances provides an aperture through which I view the world of reflection and thoughtfulness. Thus, the screen discloses a range of topics that is far beyond the realm of my local and suddenly pedestrian concerns. It also provides an illusion of spatial immediacy and familiarity with an immense variety of souls behind occasionally obscure signatures. Different facets of the familiarity link it at once with alienation and de-alienation.

Membership admits me to information and opinions with an untoward directness and plausibility. This derives from the fact that it is real people who are writing, and if I regularly 'check mail', indeed they have just written. What moved the person behind the address today is explained on-screen, fresh as the morning's rolls and seemingly uncensored by the elaborate apparatus of appearing in public. These are not the communications of names one is likely to hear on television, or even to see in the newspapers. This is the realm of private communion.

The conviction that e-mail is supplying first-hand information which is both confidential and worth a great deal is reinforced by the linguistic peculiarities of the medium. Rather than relying on the formal style of the journal article or the pre-frozen and processed official interview, internet writing has the immediacy of a telephone conversation. Only topics of current concern evoke reactions – often impetuous. People make spelling mistakes. Words are cut off in mid-breath. Sentences trail off into oblivion. The screen seems to 'talk'. There is a genuineness to this kind of communication – a conviction is conveyed that these are our intimates sharing pressing thoughts.

Sometimes, a member of the network calls our attention to messages

from other realms. By ‘forwarding’ an article that catches the eye, she overruns the network with formal writing as well. The contrasting styles of the importations provide different kinds of readings, shaded interpretations of the seething reality that is not merely virtual. Although the invasion of material from another kind of reality interrupts soaring empathy, these grant insight into the tastes and alignments of the persons behind the listserv.

Still, on-screen familiarity breeds reconceptualizations of (social) membership that are not distinct from alienation. At first, when I was a member of one or two networks, I was convinced that being a member obliged me to find my way into the discussions that were going on. This was a task that I found overwhelmingly difficult. I was intimidated about pushing into a discussion where an avowed expert in a sliver of a field was offering views of his/her own. Over time, my approach has changed – gradually but radically. I still do not seriously weigh the possibility of withdrawing from a list that is obviously concerned with ‘good’ topics, but I no longer feel the need to apologize (even to myself) for not reading all the messages, or for not responding. Except when provoked, I am one of the hundreds of lurkers available as a virtual captive audience to whoever ‘sounds off’ with the intent of ‘giving information’ and by the way also ‘gives off’ information about herself (Goffman, 1958). Lurking is much better on the internet than in face-to-face communication. You can definitely see and not be seen. You can be reserved without causing discomfort to partners in interaction. To some extent the ‘new view’ is a truce with capitulation. Part of my current view comes from a re-vision of compassion and composure. I accept as necessary the alienation that is grounded in the evolving self as well as in the peculiarities of the medium.

Another aspect of this view is the outcome of a more careful look at the sources of the e-mail messages. Electronic mail makes it possible to arrange incoming messages with the help of a command to “sort by sender”. With this sorting it turns out that the actual number of active participants is relatively small for any given line of discussion. People who are loath to communicate for whatever reason, jump into a particular fray from time to time. Then they disappear into the land of the lurkers again and engage in non-participation when the topic changes.

For each topic that is raised there are some who take responsibility and work the topic out to where their private curiosity rests. A surprisingly small number take up a position of persistent, on-going participation. There is then a controlling class – a self-aware group that has no compunctions about dominating the screen. Incongruously they often take advantage of oppor-

tunities to write informally about personal affairs and anxieties, estranging fellow members and sometimes generating resistance by their tenacity. The reward of the most active contributors is twofold. They have a sounding board and often evoke comments on the points they bring up. In the long run, this is possible because there are not only members who are consistently active, but also because there are members who interpret their obligations as the duty to 'listen', to react at most from time to time. They also serve who do not persevere. It turns out that the alienation realized as 'lurking' is respectable and actually necessary to the continuance of the network. The odd combinations of member functions lead to a radically different reading of the term 'member' and a combination of alienation and de-alienation that raises fundamental questions about the theory.

One game is that of waiting to see how it all comes out when non-participation in an on-going debate seems a reasonable stance. Instead of the thesaurus judgment of lurking as 'prowling', 'skulking', 'slinking', or 'stealing', you discover that the status of 'lurker' is necessary to the hygiene of the network. At the push of a REPLY button, 'lurker' turns into 'active partner' in a discussion that reaches across oceans and continents. At the same time, the option of withdrawal is ever-ready. Lurker is a status that is all potential, and can be left at will without consulting the other members. Thus, not acting is a deliberate choice of role-taking in a particular substantive environment. The associations hold an ineluctable virtual attraction. Members can adopt different kinds of identities, and different positions vis-à-vis their listserv peers. The flatness of the internet screen facilitates playfulness in allowing correspondents to try on the multiple identities that present themselves. The range of possible identities is enormous if we take into consideration the various types of communication that are convenient on the internet. Each identity can be honed to the circles of correspondents aligned for a specific purpose. This is, therefore, a way for an individual to generate a consciousness of her full human potential. The reality is beyond the virtual, chosen for its connections with realities lived on other levels, in other spaces.

In sum, by contrast with the snowball, a structure thrown into a pattern of movement, the member of a network has the option of performing as an agent. Messages are sequential because dates of transmission are noted. Options, however, are clustered and non-linear. There are possibilities of persisting in one or the other of the modes of membership; alternating connection and disconnection; reading or not reading messages; giving free rein to a highly personal use of language or taking refuge in 'forwarding' formal discourse; engaging with specific people or not; and being there as a

reserve fellow on the same planet.

In terms of alienation, the activity raises some interesting paradoxes. Because of the limitations of the internet stage on which we can try out selves, we can actually find modes of combining fragmented identities. The residues of alienated affect are completely raveled. An individual has a consciousness of being in control especially when she withdraws from the e-mail fray. This is just at the point where the correspondent has no power whatsoever over the interchanges conducted in the network. If, as Welsh (1983) says, capitalistic progress is synonymous with the displacement of the natural spontaneity of individuals to a market consciousness; the paradox of e-mail lies in the imposition of a conception of spontaneity which precludes the very possibility of a market consciousness. The supreme achievement of alienating capitalism is the potential for domination that inheres in the command of norms which serve to annihilate the possibility of total control.

PART II

This part of the paper will focus on how graduate students in a course on the Sociology of Knowledge dealt with the requirement of e-mail communications.

Background: The course called “Issues in the Sociology of Knowledge” is offered as a required course for graduate students majoring in the area of “Foundations of Education”. Most of the 26 enrolled during the year 1995-96 had only a flimsy background in sociology – a single semester course in the sociology of education or two at most. The rationale for requiring a course of this kind in graduate studies is the perception that an acquaintance with the sociological problematic of knowledge is a way of shedding new light on teaching-learning and on schooling in general.

In planning the course, I reflected on how best to ground some advanced approaches to the discipline of sociology while highlighting possible applications to education. In this context it was important not only to present sociological interpretations of knowledge, but also to unmask the ways in which the sociological mechanisms are at work in shaping knowledge which is part of the contemporary scene. The course was structured around illustrative texts and relevant learning experiences. The list of references included some of the classic texts in the field of sociology of knowledge: Weber, Durkheim, Marx, Mannheim, and excerpts from the writings of Althusser, Berger and

Luckmann, Lyotard, and Foucault, as well as theoreticians of trends in technology (Agassi, Merton, Zuboff, for example). I decided that it would be useful for students to cope with learning computer technology at the same time as they deal with theories that question the nature of knowledge. I therefore set communication among the students by means of electronic mail as a course requirement. The computer specialists in the School of Education set up a closed network especially for this purpose.

The procedures we followed were standard. We decided on a name, SOCKNOW. Through SOCKNOW all the participants in the course were to be able to correspond. I wrote an introduction with basic instructions about participation. In two workshops a computer expert introduced students to the range of possibilities: writing to all, writing to individuals, using Hebrew for their communications although entry had to be in English, sending attachments when they might want to, and so on. In internet terms, each workshop was a simulation of the 'real' thing – electronic mail!

In the meantime, in class, we were discussing texts and relating social issues of knowledge to current events. The discussions were designed to facilitate the development of a capacity to see how approaches discovered in the texts affected our daily lives and how they might elucidate complexities of schooling. Since the group was comprised of mature students, all experienced workers in education with a keen sense of mission (an ideology), the analysis of the social sources of knowledge conveyed in the course was both a shock and a challenge. Class discussions of the texts often began with the marker of reserve and suspicion, "but."

The correspondence that the syllabus required was defined as an opportunity to find an outlet for the hesitations, questions, reflections that the material evoked, or better, provoked. To ease their entry, I made it clear that minimal participation in the listserv was the requirement. The reward in terms of marks would be based on the simple act of writing and not on an evaluation according to standardized criteria. It is no exaggeration to say that although they had never tried to use electronic mail before, the students were eager to get going. As things turned out, they had to deal with disappointment before they could actually take on the assignment. The experience was a fascinating one both because of the things that got done and because of those that did not, the topics that students wrote on, and the tenor of their writing.

The attempts to tackle the challenges disclosed different kinds of alienation. From the first alienation was imposed by the external conditions and the technical obstacles. The acquaintance with electronic mail was to be a new experience for the students, and the challenge was one of acquiring

knowledge of self through exploring a new mode of self-expression. It was conceived as a way of fathoming how society gets involved with shaping and diffusing knowledge. The actual impact of society on this knowledge was far from the romanticism of characterizing a type of consciousness, or a formation of the self. Society encroached on the learning experience in the form of educational policy, prior commitments, and again in technical obstacles: inept bureaucratic arrangements, insufficient equipment, and inadequate funding for guidance while learning.

Technical Obstacles: Rarely do researchers explore the technical obstacles that prevent people from becoming liberated end-users (see David, this volume). Yet these are often salient blocks to acquiring requisite skills for relatively extended periods of time. Investigations of computer use tend to focus on the psychological barriers. In our case, philosophical questions of the suitability of the hardware, or psychological issues of the degree to which the software is adaptable to modes of human thinking, or questions about the correlations between personality traits and computer skills, as well as the pedagogical issues of motivation and the impulse to learn all were irrelevant for most of the semester. I will report on some of the details.

We all knew that students had a right to some place in the virtual spaces of the School of Education. At registration, they had filled out forms with background information and had chosen a nickname so that they could be assigned virtual niches and find their way into a computer network 'at any time.' What none of us knew, however, was that after registration, the forms were piled up in one of the offices and only a few of them were actually processed and translated into computer addresses. It was past mid-term before the entire class was included in the list, and the students could actually use the computer by right.

Even when they were allowed the privilege of approaching the terminals, they had problems of supply. Only one or two of the students in the course had modems for access to a computer from outside the university. The remaining 24 had to get to terminals owned by the School of Education in order to have their say. Twelve computers were available for limited time periods during the week. Since the students enrolled in the course all worked in schools, their obligations often made it impossible for them to time their visits to the university so as to accord with the availability of the computers. Furthermore, even if they did manage to get to the computer room in time, they found themselves in competition with students from introductory courses who had to carry out mechanical exercises. Guidance

and support by computer personnel was, therefore, meager by contrast with the felt needs.

A lack of technical preparation, the outcome of earlier constraints on schooling, was a further block. None of the students knew how to do touch typing (aptly the “system of typing blind” in Hebrew). They therefore needed a good deal of time simply to hunt and peck! Because of the handicap, most of the students wrote out what they wanted to say in longhand, and then set themselves the grueling task of copying their ideas out letter by letter.

The upshot of the experience with the technical difficulties was that most of the writing got done during the last month of the semester and most of the notes were short. Not only was there no need to formulate rules of politeness; correspondents had no time and too little skill to be spontaneously rude.

The ‘Correspondence’

Still, there is an interest in what did get said and how, as well as in the kinds of selves that are expressed in the communications. All together, there were 26 students in the class and all of them wrote at least once, so that the total number of e-mail letters was 61. Of these, only 21 notes were written before December 18. That is to say that 2/3 of the notes were compiled in just under the last four weeks of term. Most of the letters were about a quarter to a third of a screen long, although there were exceptions. Topics that students wrote about included current events, reactions to issues that were raised in the lesson, and formal presentations of their own knowledge.

The first letter was written a month after the beginning of the course. It related to the Paradigm for the Sociology of Knowledge proposed by Merton. On the 29th of November, a student uses Merton’s paradigm to say that she is beginning to understand that ‘mental products’ different from hers can be formed. This was the note that opened a series of letters on the collective trauma after the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin. There were different versions of personal indignation with reference to at least one of the course readings in each note. In general, there was a consensus of horror, and a fear of the consequences. Only a few of the students stated specifically that they were responding to one of the others.

The tenor of all the letters indicated that most of the students had surrendered to feelings of powerlessness and meaninglessness, and to the revela-

tion of the general anomie that made it possible to assassinate the Prime Minister. Correspondents were upset by the fact that the assassin was religious and apparently well-versed in holy texts. There was a sense of the mutual estrangement of the religious and the secular public – an obscure sense of social isolation which was no less tangled for being shared. Each letter was written as a personal declaration rather than as an interchange. At the end of the semester, however, one of the students took up this very question, writing movingly about the “schisms in the nation”, the misunderstandings, and the deliberate hostility generated by the segmentation, and what he saw as the hopelessness of the situation. He was the first to actually ask for responses, and several students did indeed respond.

At the end of November a large group of students from this class attended a symposium on free speech. All of them interpreted the arguments presented at the symposium in relation to their evolving understanding of how society intervenes in the institutionalization of knowledge. SOCKNOW served the function of audience comments for the symposium, rather than for an ongoing discussion. In many ways, this experience was a mode of recuperation from the shock of Rabin’s murder. All of them could agree with at least one of the speakers, and often with more. People insisted that the restatement of norms familiar from high school courses in civics was reassuring, and there are expressions of satisfaction with what are understood as declarations of consensus. Some of the students ended their e-mail notes by expressing a wish to carry on the discussion in class, i.e., orally. But in their writing about the symposium, each of the participants in effect made independent statements and ignored her peers.

In six of the letters the focus was on topics cited in the bibliography or analyzed in class. In these letters there is no attempt to take a personal stand. They are long and detailed, with abundant reference to the course ‘material’. In the context of a class grappling with relatively primitive technical difficulties, the very length of these summaries was a kind of parade of superiority. In terms of the content, however, the three students who chose to write as if they were answering questions on a test did not go beyond rather superficial summaries. The interpretation seemed to be that I (as the lecturer) have to be ‘shown’ how much they are willing to invest in the work assigned. The long-winded superficial statements, unconnected to the class or to any meaningful aspect of their own lives, ignored the possibilities of exchanges with their peers and isolated them from their fellows. The style, peculiarly rigid and impersonal, indicates the distancing of the self from the concerns of the course, a persistent self-estrangement.

Summary

In the experiences sketched above, the encounter with electronic mail was interpreted as an extension of the familiar although what constituted the familiar was different for different actors. My own entry into the world of e-mail was both gradual and erratic. I defined my anxiety in terms of interaction and consciously grappled with alienation as a phenomenon of social intercourse. The questions that haunted me were those of consideration for others (whether as recipient or as sender), making a contribution to the interchange, coming up with a remark that was not already formed by somebody else.

Among the students invited (required) to participate in correspondence related to the themes of a course, the relationship to the computer was governed by the technological and the technical apparatus, by an interpretation of what it means to be a graduate student, and by a representation of how students should present themselves in a university activity. In reviewing their experiences, we can see some further testimony to alienation as a process. Whether or not the members of the class were aware of it, they had to cope with alienation on three levels. Objective conditions embodied the slippage between technological progress and its inclusion in the ordinary arrangements it is called upon to serve. Macro-constraints are evident in the limited equipment, negligible support, the void in the preparatory curriculum, and the pressures of the world of work. These are 'failings' of the system which constitute concealed modes of preserving ignorance through the acceptance of unassailable necessity (Bourdieu, 1973).

The macro-stresses shade into the meso through the operations of the University. The inefficient division of labor ensures social-psychological correlates of alienation. The norm is to counter the extravagant investment in equipment – with miserly allocations of money and time at the level of support for students. The limitations are recognized in perpetually insufficient time for acquiring proficiency and for relieving the burden of thinking about procedures.

The social psychological residues of alienation are to be seen in the initial phases of e-mail use. For the most part, students were incapable of actually creating a candid exchange. There is an aura of social isolation as most of the students wrote their pieces and ended with a perfunctory close. Of the entire 'corpus' only 15 (25%) letters specifically invite responses, continued discussion, further interchanges. For the most part, these requests, too, met with the virtual equivalent of a blank stare. The knowledge possible through

e-mail was introduced in bureaucratic frames familiar to the students since the first grade. Without a conviction of purpose, students surrendered to impression management. The governing concern was self-presentation according to a reading of the academic market, the self-estrangement taught, in effect, in a mass-production system of schooling.

The constraints of the milieu constituted a severe limitation that the students were powerless to overcome. The gains in knowledge and the consequences of computer use remained wrapped in mystery. Thus, the entire experience could be understood as an element foreign to human needs, a part of the on-going structure of the learning system and more of the same. The adherence to the familiar that prevents students from actually conquering the difficulties is a specific translation of normlessness/anomie to a new learning milieu.

Given the narrow focus, and the evidence of the kinds of letters sent by e-mail at this early stage of the diffusion of knowledge, alienation can be seen as a faceted progressive process. There is a lesson here for the meaning of learning and for the place of alienation in evolving cognition.

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Leena Koski

FROM GOD TO FRIENDSHIP: THE CHANGING MORAL ORDERS OF EDUCATIONAL STORIES IN FINNISH ABC BOOKS

The Question of Morality

The Finnish Ministry of Education has recently launched a campaign for teaching good behavior and proper manners in schools. The campaign is a consequence of public concern and public discourse arising from the perception that children and youth are no longer well-mannered, nor responsible and sensitive toward either their peers or their elders. The alleged decline in deportment has been linked indiscriminately with several social and cultural phenomena such as the economic depression, unemployment, rock culture, and the mass media. It has been suggested that in the past, unlike the present, good social and moral values prevailed and could guide children's manners and everyday comportment. Now, it is claimed, these values have degenerated and the young are alienated from the deeper meaning of life, and from understanding both the importance and content of decent behavior. "Something", it is said, has been lost in society, and neglected in education and society.

Concern for the loss of values and good manners can be linked to the on-going sociological discourse about the foundation of moral justification in (post)modern society. Bauman (1993), McIntyre (1985), and Maffesoli

(1996) suggest, though each from a different perspective, that a collective basis for morality, or one moral authority no longer exists in contemporary life. They maintain that most moral questions today are riddled with unresolved contradictions. Currently, the only basis for moral statements is located within the autonomous individual, despite the fact that education is always based on collective ideals which are held to be universally valid. These values are manifested in the curriculum and in textbooks (Ball, 1994).

It is suggested that the feeling of loss of decency and manners is an indication of collective alienation from the moral principles which formerly were prevalent. These principles influenced the climate of moral and social values in Finland for centuries, and only declined in the 1960's. The new values are not, or at least not yet, confirming or meaningful enough to produce shared moral values in the rapidly changing social environment. The notion that life should have more significant meaning than is currently offered by the mass media, for example, or by market competition, prevails in the collective memory, and leaves people with a sense of anomie. This article focuses on the Finnish moral and educational heritage by studying the representations of decency and positively valued social relations that have been taught in elementary schools throughout this century. I will explore changes in educational values as reflected in Finnish ABC books and elementary readers/primers.

The article is based upon an on-going study of the symbolic and moral orders of Finnish educational thought and institutions, a project focusing on educational practices and policy-making in twentieth-century Finland. The aim has been to study changes in the symbolic and moral orders in relation to social, political, and cultural processes. Data have been drawn from the Finnish ABC books and readers for elementary education between 1920 and 1990; from discussions in teachers' journals between 1920 and 1995; from curriculum reforms between 1920 and 1990; from recent individual school curricula initiated during 1995; and from individual life histories. The themes analyzed are qualities and contents of the symbolic orders (e.g. Douglas, 1989; Eliade, 1957; Girard, 1977; Maffesoli, 1996). The main themes involve changes in meaning. These have to do with purity and impurity (Koski, 1995); with internal and external social and individual dangers; physical and mental territories and borders (the concept of the Fatherland and the Other); the ideal representation of the relationship between the individual and the collective; and finally, with ideal human qualities and relations. The changing role and place of the Christian God in moral education is also discussed.

Throughout their existence, ABC books in Finland have had two major purposes: to teach children to read, and to guide them to understand the essence of the moral principles of the day (Kotkaheimo, 1989). These aims tend to be made explicit in the authors' forewords. In 1928, Horma, Huntuvuori, and Saarimaa wrote: "... *the determining factor for choosing the material has been that the stories rouse the spirit of patriotism and that they are morally conscientious.*" In 1943, Noponen and Tarkiainen noted that the contents of their new reader were chosen from the field of "... *patriotic, moral, and religious ideas, to which it is desired that the hearts and minds of the new citizens become attached.*" While educational aims have changed, and the authors have changed their objectives somewhat, the idea of the moral importance of the ABC books remains: "*The school cannot deny the facts of reality in the world around it. All we can do is to talk about them naturally and positively so that a child does not feel that he/she is in a better or a worse condition compared to others. Support for feelings of superiority and inferiority must be avoided by all possible means. Inferiority is often felt by children who feel themselves somehow different*" (Heiskanen, Julkunen & Piippo, 1980).

The ABC books and elementary readers have always included fables, folk tales, poems, hymns, stories from the Kalevala (Finland's national epic), and from the works of Finnish novelists, as well as educational stories about everyday life written specially for the textbooks. The analysis in this paper centers on these narratives because they reveal both ideology and social change in the most clear-cut manner. The rationale for studying these narratives is that stories and story-telling have a deep symbolic meaning in the construction of social life. They are rooted in the social space they determine. As the social circumstances of Finland's education and culture have changed, so too have the stories.

Notes on Education and Culture in Finland: 1920-1990

Finland gained her independence in 1917. In the spring of 1918, a civil war between the socialist industrial workers and farm laborers (the "reds"), and the union of the bourgeoisie and the wealthy peasants (the "whites") broke out. After four months of heavy fighting, the "whites" were victorious. The aftermath of the civil war was marked by hunger and retaliation, as well as by the execution and imprisonment of men, women, and even children. It was widely considered by educationists that the civil war was a consequence of ignorance and poor education on the part of the rebellious workers and farm laborers. Accordingly, the establishment of compulsory schooling in

1921 was aimed at the enlightenment of the common people. The compulsory primary school had the vital ideological responsibility of creating a unitary nation, and resocializing the children of a disaffected working class to the prevailing post-civil war cultural values. This task was emphasized in the educational discourse of the 1920's and 1930's. State schools were expected to provide practical and moral instruction for the children of the workers, while the children of the higher social strata were sent to grammar schools that provided education in the humanities and the classical subjects (Simola, 1993).

In the Second World War (1939-1945) Finland fought against the Soviet Union. The war was lost, but the collective experience created a new national unity despite the political restlessness evident after the war. In the post-war period, Finland experienced rapid structural changes. Industrialization, urbanization, and economic growth (combined with an institutionalized welfare policy) created and re-organized cultural and social forms, sentiments, manners, and practices into more liberal and informal modes.

The doctrines of the Finnish state school in the twentieth century can be divided into four periods of school reforms. These have signaled the gradual systematization of basic education (Kivinen, 1988). In 1898, every municipality was required to establish an elementary school; and in 1921, Parliament enacted a law of compulsory, state-controlled education. After two minor reforms, the Comprehensive School System was established in 1972. It was based on the belief that education is an important agent for social and cultural equality. From this perspective, centralized curriculum planning became part of a conscious effort to eliminate social, economic, cultural, and local differences in regard to educational opportunity. The planning was largely oriented toward problem-solving, as viewed from the perspective of the educated and highly qualified "professional" sector of the population. Stenval (1993, pp. 68-69) maintains that educational planning was growth-oriented, and that it was essential to the successful management and guidance of society. As such, in instrumental terms, education has fulfilled a crucial role in providing models for developing, steering, and guiding the greater society – while at the same time, of necessity, it has given short shrift to the needs and desires of individuals.

Although Finnish society and the system of schooling have passed through several major changes during the twentieth century, moral education has gone through two phases. In the period up to the 1960's, Lutheran Christianity provided justification for moral education, and from the sixties on, moral education rests on secularized principles. In the latter period, moral educa-

tion has been reorganized around the ideals of a democratic, liberal welfare state marked by human rights, equality, and social responsibility. The question asked here is: which moral qualities and norms do the two moral orders produce, and what, simultaneously, are the elements and processes of alienation that they create?

Christian God in Elementary Education: 1920-1960

The basis for morality in the newborn nation state in the 1920's was founded on traditional Lutheranism combined with Hegelian ideas of the sacredness of the Finnish Fatherland. Finland is a predominantly Lutheran country (in the 1920's, 98% of the population belonged to the Lutheran Church; in the 1990's, 86%). The combination of Lutheran Christianity and the ideals of the Fatherland merged into a powerful moral, spiritual, and ideological force, a bond between the individual, society, and God.

The Lutheran Church holds that all doctrines must be examined and evaluated according to the Word of God. Christ is present in his Church through the agency of the Word and the sacraments, and Christ, by his Grace, freely gives salvation to all those believing in Him. Lutheranism emphasizes individuality in that every human being is linked to God through his/her free consciousness. It was thus incumbent upon every individual to read the Bible, and the Church commenced to organize instruction in reading Christian teachings. Learning to read and to know Luther's Small Catechism was a prerequisite for marriage for centuries (see Boli, 1989).

Martin Luther's most influential ideas were his definitions of sins and virtues, and his conception of the social order. According to Luther (1979), selfishness, sensuality, pride, and worldliness are the worst sins, and accordingly, obedience, humility and devotion to work, the highest virtues. The virtues can be executed following the demands of the social order, which Luther, in the medieval manner, sees as consisting of a patriarchal, hierarchical order. A continuity of authority flows from God via the priests and princes to parents. This authority demands total subordination and respect for superordinate bodies (from child to parent, to prince and priest, and on to God). Although free in their individual consciousness, people are expected to resign themselves to their predetermined place within the order of things. In Lutheran Christianity, God's will is beyond human understanding, but His deeds, whatever they may be, are always in the best interest of His children. Luther (1991, pp. 123-124) emphasizes, for example, that suf-

fering is God's special blessing, proof that the individual in agony is loved and cared for. Constant spiritual search absolves human beings from their worldly, alienated, and fragmentary existence, and incorporates them into the confidence of God's mercy through Christ's sacrifice.

The Lutheran ideas of sin and subordination were constantly repeated in the ABC books during the first decades of this century. Children were thoroughly taught the essence of God, and the relation between God and the child:

God is the Almighty. God is good. He has created heaven. He has created the seas. He has created you. Praise God! Fear God! Love God! Obey His will! The Lord be thanked! We are God's children. We watch His deeds. We wonder at His wisdom. We honor His greatness. We praise His goodness. May God bestow His mercy upon us. May God give us true humility. To fear God is the beginning of wisdom.

(Salo, 1949, p. 108 "On God and the Human Being")

Although the ABC books include other, similar manifestations (Kemilä & Kuosmanen 1953, p. 56), the predominant idea was to teach moral and religious principles in stories about children's daily activities. Mikael Soinen (1916, p. 27), a leading professor in the field of education during the structuring of the Finnish elementary school, maintained that "... *religious truths* ..." must be taught "...*so that children in their souls feel the value and importance of these truths, and so that these truths will awaken children's desire to strive to follow them in their lives.*" Moral principles and religious precepts must "...*be kept alive by feeding them gently whenever necessary.*"

Most educational stories and poems in the ABC books include some reference to God and His qualities, or His miraculous deeds in everyday life. One favored scenario tells about children in dangerous physical circumstances. In these stories it is always emphasized that whereas the human eye and mind are imperfect and careless, God is perfect and cares for us endlessly. An example is a story called Little Inkeri (Inkeri is a girl). Inkeri's father is coming home, his sleigh loaded with timber. Little Inkeri runs through the yard to greet him, but the father does not see her, nor does he know that she has fallen down between the horse and the sleigh. Suddenly, however, the horse refuses to obey his master's will and stops. The father is angry, steps down and then notices his little daughter lying on the ground, unharmed: "One more step, and the child would have been dead!" Inkeri's father carries her gently inside and says to her mother, "Here comes Father with his little Inkeri. God has given her to us for the second time. If the wise horse had

not stopped, I would be carrying the dead body of our beloved child to her mother” (Laitakari, 1928).

This narrative stresses that God protects children. He protects “me”. His protection is not, however, free of charge. It requires a continuous spiritual sacrifice. God must be praised, thanked, and obeyed for minding the worthless “me”. “I” must be humble, dutiful, obedient, and grateful for the gifts not deserved, but received as a sign of God’s mercy and love. The ABC books contain numbers of small prayers for all the important moments and events in everyday life: morning, evening, the end of the school term, Independence Day, and so on. These prayers repeat the ritual words of the sacrifice: the child thanks God for everything he/she has, and asks for strength to become “... *even more dutiful and humble*” (Kemilä & Kuosmanen, 1953). God’s gifts to “me” are so various and multiple that words can never thank Him enough. Because of an endless, unpayable debt, gratitude and love of God are the moral basis for the child’s behavior and thoughts. There can never be an equilibrium between morality and its legitimation for morality is the consequence of a boundless obligation, Christ’s sacrificial crucifixion (Girard, 1977). One of the child’s main moral duties and aims is to gain inner purity, a “pure heart”. This profoundly religious idea produces sets of educational activities. Douglas (1989, p. 35) has argued that dirt “...includes all the rejected elements of the ordered system”. Symbolic purity organizes behavior and offers a means of social classification. In the educational stories, the child has to pray and strive endlessly to attain purity, for the child is, in Luther’s words, “...born in sin”, a sinner *a priori*. When a child strives earnestly for inner purity, his/her appearance is clean and tidy. Consequently, messiness indicates impurity of heart and soul. Purity engenders both divine and social forms of blessing. The stories emphasize that the child’s inner purity is attached to moral virtues: humility, obedience, truthfulness, the avoidance of alcohol, prayers for purity of heart and humility of mind, and love for Jesus. Purity produces social and intellectual success, as is pointed out in the poem entitled “A Little Lass Annikki”.

Annikki, a little lass, is on her way to school / carrying her books and a piece of bread in her rucksack. / Her mind is clear, her cheeks are shining. / She meets a dear friend on her way. Annikki, a little lass, did her homework. / In the morning she combed her hair nicely. / At school she overcomes every problem / clears even the most difficult math tasks. / Annikki, you little lass, wend your way in obedience. / Fill your heart with pure thoughts. / Let an angel guide your life / and you will not go astray.

(Laitakari, 1928, pp. 26-27)

Parents and the Fatherland in Primers

Apart from the deep influence of the Lutheran God, Finnish moral education was based on the idea of the sacred Finnish Fatherland. This was a romantic Hegelian idea prevalent in Europe during the nineteenth century. The most influential Finnish theorist, the Hegelian philosopher and banker, J.V. Snellman, proclaimed that a human being was obliged to seek the greater happiness, rather than simply fulfilling his selfish needs. Real happiness could only be obtained by serving the *Zeitgeist*. The demands of the state, the nation, and the Spirit were always to be placed before the needs and desires of the individual (Snellman, 1928). In education, the Lutheran orders and the sacred Fatherland were merged into common moral demands. A good child must love the Fatherland and his/her parents. It is God's will that a child obey his parents, who are intermediaries between the will of the Fatherland and the will of God. As such, they stand as the most immediate authority over a child's life.

The authoritarian and normative contents of the educational stories state with extreme clarity that children are to love, obey, and respect their parents. In most ABC books there are stories titled "Mother" and "Father", which define roles in the ideal family, where, in Salo's (1934, p. 68) words, Mother *"... never leaves me because she loves me,.... teaches me honesty and obedience, ... guides and directs me."* When I am sick, mother cares for me. *"Mother has taught me to pray every morning and evening. She thanks the Heavenly Father for my wish to become a good child. Then she prays that God will send His angels to protect me."* Father, on the other hand, *"...tells me funny stories..."* when he comes home from work. When I have been bad, father scolds me, but *"...dishonest I am not. That is what my father is glad about I love my father. I want to be his own good child. Father said once that home, mother, and father are God's gifts to a child."* It is pointed out that parents make sacrifices that are not reciprocal. The child receives life and unselfish love, endless care, and concern, and tries to repay it with respect and obedience. Interestingly, a favorite story in ABC books has to do with the child's inability to realize in full the expectations placed upon him or her. A child forgets parents' advice, is willfully disobedient, falls into the sin of pride – trying to *"show off"*, acting in a certain way *"... despite mother's censure"*, as one of the stories is titled (Salo, 1949, p. 107). Such activities do, of course, always end in catastrophes such as physical pain, wet and torn clothes, and so on. Soon after the bad deed the child suffers from bad conscience, which leads to confession, and finally, to forgiveness.

The lesson is: “*Have you done wrong? Confess!*” (Laitakari, 1928, p. 109: “Grandfather’s advice”). The growing, developing child is fundamentally overcome by the authority of parents, and the abstract collective, the Fatherland. The subjugation is signaled through gratitude, respect, and hard work. This equation creates a hierarchical morality of forced love:

More than yourself you must love your home
And the honor of your mother and father;
but even before them, love Finland,
And most of all, love God!

(Salo, 1949, p. 136 “What you must love”)

The child, a sinner by nature, becomes good in the process of guilt, confession, submission, and forced love for those in authority in the hierarchical order. Sincerity, chastity, and pure love are required of children. If these qualities are not forthcoming, the collective order of social life will decline. The form of power is pastoral; and even, sacrificial. As Foucault (1983, p. 214) points out, pastoral power demands that children “reveal their innermost secrets. It implies a knowledge of the conscience and an ability to direct it”.

The moral order, centered upon the transcendent God and His earthly representatives, creates acquiescence and subjection. However, it also promises a child the riches of a meaningful life so long as he or she labors diligently within the social whole which, in turn, will provide explanation and consolation for sorrow, sickness, and death. Death is often present in the narratives, especially in the readers up to the 1940’s. Comfort and solace are offered in stories where the child has to face the death of his/her sisters and brothers, friends or parents.

In the stories of death, the dying children were often crippled, or otherwise debilitated for extended periods of time. In these stories, the mundane being of such children was marked by the magnificent glow of a special divine blessing. Such children were understanding, tolerant, forgiving, obedient, honest, and pure. The stories tell that after the protagonist’s death, God transforms him or her into a little angel who prays for the souls of those kinfolk left behind on earth. In an elementary reader by Airila, Hannula & Savola (1949, pp. 12-13), the reader finds one version of this concept. The story is told by a boy who is recalling the time when his severely ill elder brother died. Although the brother is gone, the boy often feels as if his sibling were still somewhere nearby. Mother explains:

You are right. He is observing us from where he is now. He follows our lives. He is happy when we are kind. He feels sad when we show discomfort. He advises us to be grateful to God for the gift of health. He tells us always to remember that there is another life following this life, a life where he has gone afore us.

The sanctification of authority, as well as of death and poverty was an urgent social need in Finland after the civil war. The social distribution of wealth was dramatically uneven; and there were thousands of orphans, widows, and imprisoned rebels. Bitterness, hatred, poverty, and illnesses prevailed in the homes of the vanquished, while vengeance and arrogance festered under the roofs of the victors. There was an urgent need to create a discourse powerful enough to socialize every child into the idea of sharing in the life of the nation – state, and thereby mitigate the threat of further social and political disorders. The educational answer to these problems was the propagation of the will of a Fatherland blessed by God. Every child was offered a place in the shared home, and every child was important in his/her predetermined social position (Koski & Nummenmaa, 1995).

The Death of God: 1970-1990

Following the economic, cultural, and political changes which occurred during the 1960's, the moral form and content of the ABC books changed. Now, narratives dealt with the ideals of the modern, active, and participating citizen of the egalitarian welfare state. The Lutheran and patrimorality which had penetrated educational stories before the war, and were still popular in the 1950's, broke down and vanished almost entirely from the ABC books during the 1960's. The most important change was the total withdrawal of God and the Fatherland from the dominance they had hitherto had in daily life, and with them, the stories demanding love, obedience, submission, and respect for God, the Fatherland, and parents disappeared as well.

In an ABC book by Knuuttila, Kääriäinen, Turunen, & Voutilainen (1967), a characteristic narrative reveals the changed position of God. In this story, called "The school term begins", the pupils go to the morning prayer assembly and sing a hymn "*Come with me, oh Lord Jesus*". The first two verses of the hymn are printed, and the story goes on: "*During the first lesson we have reading. We read a story about a girl who got lost in the woods. Laila plays the girl. Jussi is a troll and Mikko is a schoolboy. Jussi captures Laila. Mikko saves her. The bell*

rings. *The lesson is over.*” In comparison to the stories of only a decade before, the changes are evident. The hymn and the story are not connected to each other; moral obligations do not follow from the singing. God is mentioned in the ritual, but he does not play any role in the story itself.

In general, God turns into an allusion reserved for the Christmas rituals. Even then, God’s name is not mentioned very often. For example, an ABC book by Miettinen, Sauvo, Karppi, Töllinen, Mattila and Raatikainen (1984, p. 80) contains a typical Christmas story, “Christmas is Jesus’ birthday.” The story of Jesus’ birth is told in a few simple sentences, for example, “*By that time, Jesus’ parents were visiting Bethlehem*”, and “*Angels chanted honor and glory to God*”. However, all references to “my” wish to be good, obedient and grateful, to love God, parents, and the Fatherland, to gain a pure heart as a compensation for God’s goodness – all these features are missing. The ritual is recounted as a part of the cultural heritage, a legacy to be dispensed to new generations for the sake of tradition.

A similar process has happened to the imperative love for the Fatherland. The ABC book by Knuuttila et al. (1967) has a story called “The Fatherland” which tells the reader: “*We live in Finland. Finland is our Fatherland.*” After the lyrics of the national anthem are presented, the book asks: “*Tell us what the Finnish flag looks like.*” The Finnish Fatherland appears as well in the story “Independence Day”, in Miettinen, Sauvo, Karppi, Töllinen, Mattila and Raatikainen (1984, p. 148). “*Finland is a beautiful country. Finland is our Fatherland.*” Again, no command to love, no demands. God is not there to justify the Fatherland. The Fatherland has aesthetic qualities, but no needs. The anthem and the flag, as the symbols of the nation-state, simply belong to the proper rite of celebration.

The nation-state has already been legitimated by the alleged self-evidence of the need for a collectivity responsible for welfare. The Fatherland no longer requires Divine justification.

Parents as well, lose their role as mediators between the will of God and the state. Now, suddenly, parents do nice, cosy, and humorous things with their children. They organize picnics, go ice-skating, and play games with their offspring. In a Mother’s Day poem, a boy describes his mother as simply a pleasant person. “*You are a nice mother, even though you cannot fly. / You are a good pal, and as pretty as a flower. / You laugh a lot and your hair is curly*” (Helakisa, Merenkylä, Ahanen & Palmu, 1975).

Social Responsibility and Friendship

New ideas of morality were introduced in the ABC books following the disappearance of God. These precepts related to the ideals of a democratic Western welfare state: the declaration of human rights, solidarity, equality, and social responsibility. Erkki Lahdes, a leading professor of education during the Comprehensive School Reform, defines the new educational aims as follows. "To acknowledge human rights as just for every human being, to understand the meaning of cooperation, distribution of labor, and various roles, and to rationally solve social conflicts" (Lahdes, 1969, pp. 38-41). An essential feature in the educational stories portraying these new ideals is the emphasis on two formerly almost irrelevant ideas: helping out, and friendship.

The ideal of helping out is presented in various stories. It can be linked to the child's daily life (classroom, free time etc.), or reported as an almost abstract definition. In a story titled "Helping" in an ABC book by Miettinen, Koivu and Hakulinen (1984, p. 86), Anna asks other children what "helping" means. They offer different explanations: "*Our mother sometimes asks father to help her to clean the carpets.*" "*Helping is doing something for someone else's benefit.*" In an ABC book by Kajarto and Parviainen (1987) there is a story called "UNICEF." There we are told that "*UNICEF helps the poor children everywhere in the world. We could make a circle around the world, if all the people would give a hand to one another*". In one story children had heard about the developing countries and their problems, and wanted to help them. They collected money, placed it in a jar, and some even gave on behalf of others, because not every child had something to give (Miettinen, Koivu & Hakulinen 1987, p. 124). "*Helping is a shared joy*", is declared in a story where children bring food to wild animals in the winter (Harjola, Linna, Mäkipää & Vuorensola, 1988, pp. 94-95).

Despite "helping", the most evident new cornerstone for moral education is the idea of "friendship". Every child is supposed to be kind to every other – because every child has the same needs and wishes. The Lutheran dogma of "born sinners" has been reversed. Every human being is defined as being essentially good, worthy of belonging, whoever he/she is. A child does not have to pay for social acceptability or spiritual salvation by means of obedience and submission. The idea of equality is defined as similarity between children. Differences are decisively denied and transformed into similarities, especially if the child is somehow obviously different: blind, deaf, or sitting in a wheelchair. Here is an example:

Helena has moved into our house. Helena has never said that she does not play with others. Yesterday we were jumping rope and Helena made it at least up to one hundred. She can do very difficult math tasks, although she is only seven. Sometimes Helena even comes to my home to ask me out. Just think! Although Helena can't see at all, she can do almost anything. She promised to teach me the alphabet that the blind use, if I want her to. Sometimes we listen to Helena's vocal books together. Everybody likes Helena.

(Miettinen, Koivu & Hakulinen 1984, p. 116)

Friendly relations are required, normalized, and justified by principles of equality and similarity between children. Being good, which was once equivalent to being obedient and submissive, has been transformed into a respect for equality. Thus, friendship has been made an object of moral teaching. The idea is crystallized in stories about children whose friend has suddenly moved to another city, and left the child alone. New friends must be found, because without friends life is a misery. In one story Leena's best friend has moved away. Leena decides to find herself a new friend. She asks the wind: "*Are you my friend?*" The wind, and the rocks have no time for Leena. Finally she hears a voice from behind a stone: "*You do have a friend, me, Mika.*" "*What do you want?*" asked Leena doubtfully. (Mika is a boy, Leena is a girl). Mika answers: "*Well, you do not want anything special from a friend, do you? You are just friends with him.*" The story concludes: "*Now Leena has a friend of her own again*" (Miettinen, Koivu & Hakulinen, 1984, p. 132). The story also suggests that friendship means unselfish sharing, a feeling of togetherness and personal security. Leena and Mika begin their friendship by "*whispering secrets into one another's ear*".

To emphasize friendship and helpfulness is a new contradictory notion in Finnish culture. Traditionally, Finnish culture has valued surviving alone, and friendship has been considered a profound and serious commitment. The Finnish concept of friendship differs fundamentally from how for example Maffesoli (1996, p. 23) describes "friendship chains" on the basis of being introduced to someone. Superficial social contacts and networks have not been highly valued in Finnish social life. Instead, tradition holds that it is better to be alone than to have superficial relations. Thus, placing friendship at the center of moral education and redefining it as a basis of socially accepted behavior is an educational innovation.

The present-day view is that you must look around and be alert, because the world is full of potential friends. Ongoing discourse indicates that children with friends do not harass and irritate others, or precipitate other social

troubles. Having friends, means one is, or is becoming, morally good. A recent ABC story (Muikku & Ruhanen, 1990, pp. 72-75) demonstrates (or symbolizes) this idea. It is presented as a little play. A princess is walking in the garden. Her servant, who should guard her, falls asleep for a while, and the princess keeps walking along among the roses. Suddenly, a wicked witch kidnaps her. There will follow complicated negotiations between the king and the witch over the price of the princess's freedom. The vital question is: what does the witch want? The answer surprises the king. She simply wants to live in the castle with the others. She has kidnapped the princess simply because she is lonely. The queen hesitates, but the king invites the witch to the castle. The witch and the princess arrive, and the witch says: *"Hello, king! You are a jolly good fellow to take me to live in your house. It has been so lonely and miserable out there in the dark forest."* The king warns her about making trouble while she is in the castle, but the witch replies: *"OK, it isn't necessary to be malicious now that I have friends and better things to do than evil. Let's have a party to begin with!"* The cause for bad behavior is loneliness; the solutions and the sources of goodness are friendship and communality.

Friendship and helpfulness have become the center of moral education in the ABC books. The ideals are not, however, tied to any explicit signifier. They exist as they are: be friends with everybody, because everybody has the same, equally good ontology as you. Evil or sins do not exist, and difficult questions like death, poverty, or misfortune are excluded. Death is sometimes mentioned, but even then, it concerns only animals.

There was a small bird lying in the snow. Olli took it in his hands. He tried to warm it, but it did not wake up. It was dead. Olli and Minna gave the bird a funeral. They sang: Stars are shining, lighting my way. Stars are shining, signs of life. Minna and Olli had tears in their eyes. Why had the bird died?

After this story there is an assignment: "WRITE DOWN NAMES OF BIRDS IN YOUR EXERCISE BOOK" (Knuuttila, Kääriäinen, Larmola, Voutilainen & Huttunen, 1974, p. 41: "A Dead Bird"). The confusing feelings, the questions caused by death are turned into an issue of remembering facts.

The moral codification in the ABC books has changed towards morality constructed in social relations, between individuals. The discourse suggests, that social responsibility and friendliness cause mutual understanding *sui generis*, as well as well-being, happiness, and a good life. An individual is not enmeshed within collective aims and hierarchical, authoritative orders, but rather, within social processes between equal individuals. To become a mem-

ber of society, a child has to be friendly and helpful. Social competence has come to be rooted in interpersonal relations of friendship and helpfulness.

The Changing Locus of Alienation

These changes in the pedagogical stories of the ABC books reflect general changes in Finnish educational culture. In the ABC books, God and Fatherland have lost their moral meaning and power, while friendship and helping one another have moved onto the center stage of moral education. The compliant Lutheran ethos has declined. A child does not need to be obedient, submissive, and loving out of forced love and gratitude to God and parents. There is no longer a debt to be paid, and spiritual and physical dangers have disappeared. A child needs to have friends to become good. Having friends who help each other out creates a happy and warm world, the attainment of which is within the grasp of every child.

The question about changing processes of alienation in relations to the moral order leads to contradictions. Lyotard (1987) reminds us that alienation is originally a religious concept. The Fall of Man signaled his exclusion from God's comforting proximity, from the true nature of human life. To strive for the reunion of man and God is indeed one of the major themes of the Bible. In this sense, today's moral education is alienating and alienated. It is often claimed that what has been lost in regard to contemporary conduct is respect and humility toward earthly authorities, toward hierarchical and authoritarian orders and all their consequences. However, the idea of equality of value in all human beings is also a fundamental Christian notion that has influenced education for centuries (Cunningham, 1995). In the latter half of the twentieth century, equality has been secularized and transformed from divine to social, from religious to political. Based on the political ideal of human rights, contemporary equality has lost its transcendent, justificatory power in education. Equality has not been successfully linked in the ABC books to notions of a meaningful life. Equality is presumed, in itself, to be morally binding. It is a taken-for-granted abstraction, which exists without practical orientation or guidance in life.

The birth of a liberal, individualistic morality, however, creates reciprocal relations between social actors. Having friends creates immediate personal and social satisfaction in the child, and provides an anchor of certainty to reinforce his/her accepted personal qualities. It does not leave the child alone to struggle with his or her conscience. Confession, forgiveness, hu-

mility, and repentance are not needed; for social and moral membership are guaranteed *an sich*. The withering away of formerly divine, repressive demands in the ABC books is accompanied by the disappearance of the child's former metaphysical means of finding comfort in times of sorrow and loss. This exclusion leaves the child alone and without comfort in times of crisis: friendlessness, divorce, traffic accidents, or severe illness. It appears that without the help of transcendent consolation, sorrows are too burdensome to be discussed, or even mentioned.

The behavioral problems in schools cannot be explained simply by analyzing the changes in educational stories. Nevertheless, if a God is needed in order to create a sense of life free of the feeling of collective anomie, can this be achieved without producing a powerful sense of submission to, and alienation from, social reality? The moral order appears to require a powerful core. If one considers alienation to be a religious dimension of social experience, the problems confronting moral codification are related to the processes of social secularization. Armstrong (1995) claims that various dysfunctions in contemporary society (following the demise of the transcendent gods in Western societies) are related to the loss of meaning of life in secular society. The basic assumption seems to be that a human being cannot bear emptiness at the symbolic center of things – and is unable to fill it in a satisfying manner with purely narcissistic or material impulses (Wexler, 1995). The Lutheran concept of a Divine order may have created a repressive morality through recent centuries in relation to a child's formative human values. Nonetheless, if one is to replace this with an emphasis on anti-authoritarian communal values (like friendship and assistance), this in itself, becomes a way by which we celebrate the Divine, as Maffesoli (1993; 1996), the follower of Durkheim, has pointed out. The new, secular moral order has not been emptied of transcendent signification. In this light, a moral education based on ideals of friendship, assistance, and sharing has considerable potency, both real and potential; and may indeed provide the immanent and transcendent core to contemporary social life in Finland.

Having arrived at this position, perhaps we ought to proceed further with our inquiry and ask whether the current discourse concerning the breakdown of manners and morals among youth is, indeed, something new, or is it an ongoing and recurrent theme down through the generations?

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Veli-Matti Ulvinen

PRISON LIFE AND ALIENATION

Motto: Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored. Or do they?

I have studied prison life and its “tacit” influences on prisoners’ lives. I collected the research material at the turn of the year 1991-1992 from the provincial prison of Oulu. The material was composed of 70 unstructured interviews and of documentary material that was available during that time. I interviewed three groups of people; prisoners, prison staff (officials and wardens) and outsiders (volunteer prison workers from outside the prison). All the prisoners interviewed were men. In the other two groups there were both women and men. The theoretical framework was derived from the phenomenological sociology of Alfred Schütz, from an analysis of the meaning structures provided by humanistic education and from a conception of culturally formulated discourse analysis. I analyzed and interpreted the research material qualitatively (Ulvinen, 1996).

Correctional treatment in Finland has three objectives. They are: (1) the implementation of prison sentences, (2) the minimization of the harmful effects of prison life, and (3) the utilization of the time spent in prison in order to help prisoners manage better in civilian life after they have completed their prison term. Apart from those objectives, the “hidden curriculum” of the prison is often said to lead to prisonization, a form of prisoner’s personality where anti-social behavior is more the rule than the exception. This overwhelming process of prisonization cannot, however, be taken for granted, if each prisoner’s personal prison experiences are considered (cf. Barak-Glantz, 1983; Bondeson, 1974; Clemmer, 1958; Hunt et al., 1993; Mathiesen, 1972;

Winfrey et al., 1994). The goal of my research was to find out whether there are delineable educational processes involved or, to put it more comprehensively, *educational regions*, that somehow affect life in prison. In order to call those regions educational, they should also be socially and culturally shared by prisoners, prison staff and outsiders (cf. Gross, 1978; Mead, 1972). If it is possible to find these regions, there follows a pedagogical question: in spite of the prison culture, how and to what extent do individual (idiosyncratic) and life-historical learning experiences guide a prisoner's personal growth inside the prison? In the process of answering these questions I have been engaged with the problem of the performance of culture.

The Concept of Culture

I define culture as a system of meanings that exists, is mediated, and reproduced through individual, subjective actors. In a qualitative analysis and interpretation of culture, we must, therefore, pay attention to the dimension of social life that is manifested through symbols (see, for example, Mead, 1959; Schütz, 1982; 1972; Wuthnow, 1984). This dimension of reality is constituted by structures, rules, mechanisms, and relationships of social action that are preconditions for the appearance of any specific symbolic act (Berger & Luckmann, 1967).

From the point of view of phenomenological sociology, culture as such contains the interpretation of meanings perceived through lived experiences as well as supposed grounds for subjective action. Within this understanding, experiences are always contextual, immediately connected to the interpretation of the world around us. Alfred Schütz refers to this contextuality with terms such as 'system of relevance' (Schütz, 1962) or 'frame of reference' (Schütz, 1982; see also Mead, 1959). Human action always clings to socially typified knowledge (see Schütz, 1972). 'Contextuality' refers both to the frame of being in the world, and to the conditions for intentional acting in the world. Therefore the term 'context' refers to a social meaning structure, the semantic relationship between an individual and her/his being in the world. The point is that the regularity of experiences and perceptions is the outcome of the intentionality of human action. But the content of the concept of intentionality itself does not differ from the description of human action because the experiences and their reflection are human action. As Schütz says: "*Our experiencing is almost ever [always] coupled with reflection about experience*" (Schütz, 1982, p. 32). It is reasonable to argue that scientific

knowledge can describe an individual's reflection in action directly (cf. Fichte, 1988; see also Habermas, 1977; Habermas, 1988; Schön, 1983; 1987).

My research target is human action, as a meaningful whole, within which I will try to discover the prevailing and/or the most efficient factors or elements. In accordance with the realist approach, I will try to explain and understand the general habits and mechanisms of action in social action (e.g. Harré, 1979; Harré & Secord, 1979; Sayer, 1984). The world exists as a possible logical structure in which living people blend their own deterministic beliefs. In addition to the realist approach, this determinism refers to causal idealism; the connection between two occurrences is often described through the structuration of subjective mind. (Hammond et al., 1991; Hondreich, 1988; Israel, 1979; Strasser, 1985). It should be stressed however that the task for human inquiry is to abstract from each case in a given cultural form more clearly generalizable features of human action. Even though this view stresses the very questionable social characterization of individual action, it does not rule out the possibility of the existence of general and universal qualities of human action (Harré, 1979; Schacht, 1971).

All the preceding considerations lead to the following conclusion. The concept of culture signifies that actions of people are understandable only in a certain (cultural=) environment and its social meaning structures through a contextual understanding of everyday life. The cultural context on which an individual acts always means being "inside". Each cultural context is also composed of the presumptions of "peripheral" and "core" areas of the walk of life in question. The assumption of being inside signifies that being outside (socially excluded) and being on the fringe is a contextual possibility for each human being. Only permanent marginality produces the possibility of being outside; in alienation and in social exclusion. The terms of otherness and marginality as well as social exclusion or alienation describe the sociological but proportionally traceable phenomena of social life. The question then is always one of an individual's being (acting, experiencing) outside *in relation to* being inside in a certain cultural context. (Dogan & Pahre, 1990). On this understanding, alienation as well as social exclusion are macro-sociological and normative terms in origin. At the same time they are comparative terms. My point of view is that social exclusion is a consequence of alienation, i.e. the estrangement and detachment from the macro-theoretically defined general modes of living. Besides this, social exclusion refers to a person's unwilling displacement from the walks of life that are important to her/him. These concepts are not totally congruent.

Inter-Subjectivity and Areas of Discourse

The starting point of my research is the assumption that ideal typical inter-subjectivity of speech and areas of discourse are created in social action. This ethnographic approach towards the social and cultural meaning content of speech is not macro-sociologically generalizing, but the issue here is more of a phenomenological experiencing, the theoretical attitude towards the research target (Bergson, 1983; Danner, 1989; Schütz, 1963b; 1972). The phenomenological orientation in qualitative research can be categorized as part of the interpretive research tradition. The point of departure is then to contextualize interpretation; to perceive the fundamental and inherent features of a phenomenon and to attach the interpretation to a comparison of different parts of the data (Denzin, 1989; Mishler, 1986; Tesch, 1990).

In the analysis and interpretation of the material I explored the expression of related to each research subject's life-world experiences (Manning, 1987; Schütz, 1972; 1982). In a research interview, for example, the cultural meaning structures – inter-subjective signs and products as a semiotically dependent whole of the symbols and meaning systems of social communication – are the phenomena that are studied through speech. The contextualization of the cultural phenomenon means that different verbal expressions – whole meanings – are ways to organize and standardize social action. It is worthwhile to note that within socially formed language the probable interpretations of each expression and meaning structure are in principle limited because for all of us the expressions and meaning structures are learned and assimilated through inter-subjective action. The outcomes of a given type of social action (such as interviews) are specific cultural products (texts) that can be interpreted to some degree only within the limits of their socially possible form.

This was salient in the course of my research. If, for example, I wanted to discuss with my interviewees whether they feel alienated or socially excluded, I had to rely on their discursive knowledge on the subject. If alienation or social exclusion are not well-known terms in everyday life, then whose ideas and ideals am I dealing with in the interview, mine or theirs? In order to reach my interviewees' own understandings and experiences I had to try to create a *relational discourse of being outside* together with them. Only within such a discourse could the conceptual definitions and interpretations of alienation or social exclusion be possible. In its interpretations, the discourse-analytical approach in human inquiry therefore takes into account and stresses above all cultural understanding and the large bodies of inter-subjective meanings in social life. In the many different traditions of discourse-analytical

research, the verbal expression is seen as interaction – as being the communicative situation – where the meaning of subjective action is inherent in every whole utterance, a semantic, meaning-endowing speech act (Mishler, 1986, pp. 95-96). So, both scientific and common understanding of a given discourse is interpretation which is always based on the meanings that are produced in social reality. This leads to an assumption that the social meaning structures that are the subjects of an interpretation exist regardless of the researcher (Manning, 1987; Schütz, 1972).

The Viewpoint of An Individual

The fundamental questions involved in the contextuality of cultural performance can be sketched with definitions of a cultural identity and of acting in a certain culture. These definitions lead to phrases such as ‘tolerance test’, “in which a person’s cultural bag is shaken” (Rönholm, 1992, p. 30), ‘pragmatic cultural competency’ (Laapio, 1994) or ‘school performance’, in which an individual’s performance or efficiency can be low, average, or high, as if we are talking about machines (see, for example, Konttinen, 1994; Larimo, 1994; Offord et al., 1978; Umiltà & Moscovitch, 1994). Theoretically, the concept of cultural performance can be more extensively defined as ‘life competence’ (Jørgensen, 1993). In general each individual person’s performance or appearance on a social stage, can be divided into episodes and examined as dramaturgical acts, experiences, and expressions (see Goffman, 1990; Bauman, 1986; Chomsky, 1972; 1980; Fernandez, 1986; MacAloon, 1984). These acts are carried through various frames of action that create persons’ positional roles with relational expectancies for one another.

I felt my positional role expectancy when interviewing the prisoners. At the beginning of the interview a few of them almost immediately started to ask me questions about how I felt and what I thought about prison life, and how life in prison was different from life outside. I felt that very inconvenient, but this experience gave me living proof of the preconceptions underlying my understanding.

In accordance with the objectives of correctional treatment in Finland, I started at first to examine prison life through the three features I supposed were inherent in the personal trajectory of incarceration: entering the prison, living in prison, and leaving prison. Prison as such seems to produce alienation and social exclusion. The study showed that these three features are determined by the objectives of correctional treatment, through changes in each prisoner’s life contents, as well as through the feelings of helplessness

and isolation that a prison produces. So, *entering the prison means isolation* where a person's life content has to change from that of civilian life. A person is forced to adjust to prison conditions. As an institutional form, isolation is produced by the first objective of correctional treatment. *Living in prison is labor* the meaning of which is manifested in an effort to make sense of one's own action despite isolation. This is apparent through the second objective of correctional treatment as it creates the confrontation between enterprising action and institutionalization. *Leaving the prison is an occasion where a prisoner tries to control the changes in his own life conditions*, but the legacy of captivity breaks through as societal isolation. Thus, the third objective of correctional treatment has a tendency to create an illusion that every prisoner has equal opportunities in society after imprisonment. On the basis of these categories, I looked for cultural determinants and meaning structures of individual learning experiences and personal growth inside the prison.

All the preceding theoretical considerations lead to the viewpoint that the individual is the subject in the research. To the individual action is a matter of cultural performance, and evidence of the social competencies that locate her/him in the social order of culture with its contextual features. Finally, to describe cultural performance I elaborated the following three phenomenologically oriented, context-based and discourse analytical dimensions: (1) social competency, (2) cultural meaning structures, and (3) the contextuality of competency in social action and reflective understanding of one's own life-world. In the research process I finally ended up using these three theoretical dimensions in analyzing and interpreting the interview data and document material. The rest of this article deals with these dimensions, and how I used them in my research project. At the beginning of each section the lyrics from *Us and Them* (Waters & Wright, 1973) give an indication of what the dimension is about.

Social competency

Us, and them
 And after all we're only ordinary men
 Me, and you
 God only knows it's not what we would choose... to do

Forward he cried from the rear
 and the front rank died
 And the General sat, and the lines on the map
 moved from side to side

Social competency signifies the factual, external, and normative one-dimensional features of an individual's being in the world. These features presuppose that an individual's social growth and development carry through certain criteria into a normatively defined social class. All normative rules are therefore composed of the inter-subjective meaning structures that are objectified in social interaction and the categorical cultural qualification which is based on the same meaning structures. At the extreme this refers to a classification which distinguishes between the normal and the deviant in the normatively defined performance of an individual (Bratus, 1990; Clinard & Meier, 1992). This is what seems to be happening in each formal organization, as in school, in a hospital or in prison. I found out, for example, that before a convicted criminal enters prison for the first time, he is typically stigmatized externally in juridical process by lawyers and public media. When he enters the prison, he is again stigmatized, neither by prison staff nor by other prisoners, but this time by his dehumanizing and alienating feelings of being like an animal locked up in a cage. I interpret this type of internal experience as a reference to a deviant and inhuman performance of a prisoner in contrast to what he sees as normal and human.

When we define a human action, the contextualization of culture signifies that the concept of social control is to be tied into the prevailing system of meanings. It is present in each environment of action which is formed through social interaction (Downes & Rock, 1984; Foucault, 1980; Kanter, 1972; Punch, 1985). This system of meanings also organizes individuals into a societal being, a people, a community with a unique character peculiar only to them. The actors – the individual, like the community – assume that to lead a satisfying life an individual has to acquire the shared rules and norms in the process of communal socialization (Douglas, 1986; Eskola, 1982). Prisoners, for example, are forced to fit in with the prevailing institutional frames of everyday prison life. This strict social control is executed mostly by the prison staff, but the other prisoners support this communal control to ensure that their own living conditions will be satisfactory. What is a satisfying life for the people in the provincial prison of Oulu depends on their general ideas of incarceration and how they coalesce in that specific environment.

This simplistic interpretation of a culture which is defined through social competency leads easily to the conclusion that it is no use examining cultural transition and especially the creation or fusion of cultural meanings. In other words, the interpretation given to certain cultural meanings holds just one perspective. From the point of view of a phenomenological discourse analysis, there are certain general macro-level discursive terms that are pri-

mary on this dimension of social competency. Within this dimension of social competency, I can describe the cultural tradition or collective memory of prison life which sustains the misconception that prison staff and prisoners are ideal typically of a particular type. One of the essential features of the ideal typical double structure of prison life is that liberty as well as captivity are composed of several quite regular and permanent possibilities of action which a person can seize upon. If a prisoner's most effective cultural world of experiences were constructed only in the context of prison, the difference between liberty and captivity would dissolve. A prisoner could no longer be sure about what is possible in civilian life and what is not. Of course in prison life this confusion could also lead to a great deal of trouble. I found, for example, that the forced process of socialization which emerges through the institutional social control of prison is not easy for any of the prisoners. If a prisoner tries to control his life in prison, the usual consequence of his confused and rough conduct is very often punishment. Prisoners are told to restrain their ideas of freedom of speech, movement, work, and leisure. They are told to wait to be excused from a cell. On the other hand, prisoners are told to co-operate with prison staff to live a satisfying life in prison. The message is that they will minimize the harmful effects of prison life *and* utilize the time in prison efficiently. In civilian life, after imprisonment, the alienating effect of this kind of socialization can manifest itself for instance in a lack of initiative in searching for work or even in applying for social welfare talking to a social worker.

The phenomenology of prison means, however, that it is impossible to go beyond the limits set if one does not transcend and question the prison as a whole. Therefore also the ground for cultural reproduction of a prison community – the confrontation between prisoners and prison staff – is reproduced every time someone utters the word 'prison'. This type of normative but paradoxical setting of cultural performance indicates simply that the examination of prison always involves a consideration of the relationship between the subculture and the predominant culture. These relational positions can be examined both as explicit prison metaphors as well as a concrete description of a single sporadic case in which the internally structured meanings determine the way of life in prison (cf. Göbel, 1982; Mellanby, 1987; Möller, 1987). Each predominant culture or subculture in principle represents its own specific structure in which it deviates from other cultural forms. In the prison setting the phenomenon of social exclusion or alienation can typically be understood as political powerlessness, false consciousness, or a reified comprehension of the social and institutional world.

In prison the civilian world and culture is still a background assumption, a permanent structure of possibilities which presume to promise a continuation of life after imprisonment. The subculture of prison takes shape, however, through cultural features that are both bound to the prison and transferred from civilian life outside. At the same time, the sub-culture of prison refers to the socio-cultural space or quasi-field where changes in targets for competitive ownership of the social, cultural, and economic capital are more rapid than anywhere else in society in general (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Clemmer, 1958). Levels of social behavior and class, objects of cultural interest, and the medium of exchange do not have even a relatively stable point. It is always a matter of negotiation between prisoners and/or between groups of prisoners to make the necessary distinctions clear. Within these limits an incompetent prisoner can still be alienated and socially excluded from prison life as well as from civilian life.

The cultural meaning structures

Black and blue
And who knows which is which...and who is who
Up and down
And in the end it's only round and round...and round

Haven't you heard it's a battle of words
the poster bearer cried
Listen son, said the man with the gun
There's room for you inside

On the dimension of cultural meaning structures the concept of social competency expands into an individual ability to construe social and categorical situations, to understand, act, and express oneself in relation to ideal typical Others. Within each respective social action every human has to be able to trust to the meanings that are given to phenomena in everyday life: cultural meaning structures which govern the shared definitions of situations, every time people have a chance to communicate.

In practice, cultural performance is always determined in united action together with other people, not only by the characteristics of a single person. A cultural performance is manifested through an individual's ability to act according to the cultural meanings inherent in each social situation. Without sufficient competency in each functional context, an individual cannot act together with others. Compared to the others his level of performance is

obviously lower. In terms of alienation or social exclusion, however, the developing cultural meaning structures provide every person or community with an arena (or space) for social action. If this arena is voided, a human being ceases to exist. Therefore, within this understanding, the proper sense of the concepts of alienation or social exclusion at the extreme, would point to death.

From the point of view of a phenomenological discourse analysis, on this dimension of the cultural meaning structures, each event that is experienced in (an abstract or concrete sense of) social action has an effect on general structures of interaction and also on subjective meaning structures. Therefore, it can be assumed that within a given cultural form of human life there exist different forms of discourse, depending on what kind of area of social action each individual is involved in. To understand, say, the manner of speech of men or women one would have to take into account the discursive terms of social action that are inherently different in cultural phenomena of gender (van Dijk, 1980; van Dijk, 1984; van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983; Goffman, 1976; see also: 1974; 1981; Habermas, 1987a; 1987b; Kress, 1985; West & Zimmermann, 1985).

The more extensive examination of the discursive terms of social action reveals the anthropological insight into the contextually framed origin of cultural products or (predominant) discourses that are inter-subjective ways to express subjective meanings. (E.g. Senge, 1993; Silverman & Gubrium, 1989; Simms, 1989). In social research, the social context where the subjective meanings are created, however, is most frequently taken for granted. The result is that emerging interpretations of the research target under consideration are evidently created with the support of meanings peculiar to the dominant culture. In the end, this leads only to the reproduction of the predominant system of meanings, not to new knowledge, and not to novel meanings (Roseberry, 1992; Sanders, 1974). From the point of view of the changing form and content of the social meaning structures, therefore, an examination of the historical development of societies is in principle a macro-sociological problem. As far as I can see, this problem is always formulated through the meaning structures that are produced at the individual micro-level. When micro- and macro-levels are interdependent, the interpretation of change is always based on the subjective meanings which endow wholes. The phenomena on the macro-level are therefore quite as social as on the micro-level (Jameson, 1981; Prus, 1994; Schütz, 1963a; 1972; Suransky, 1980; Whittaker, 1994).

Within the dimension of the cultural meaning structures, I have described two forms of comprehension of knowledge which both are effective in prison life: (1) "Light of Truth" and (2) "Twilight of Obscurity" (see Figure 1).

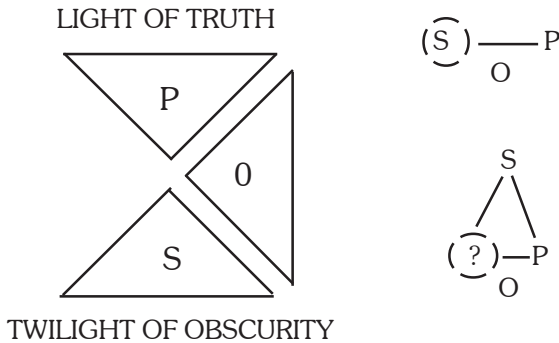


Figure 1. General structure of comprehension of knowledge
 (S = prison staff, O = outsiders, and P = prisoners)

(1) *The Light of Truth* is knowledge of the prison staff. Each Prisoner has to overcome distrust of authoritative action, because the prison Staff has precise knowledge of the relevant and correct knowledge in the matter of the Prisoner's own position. They know the right way to act. The knowledge and the consciousness under which every Prisoner conducts himself must therefore most often be false. Within this form of knowledge comprehension, the behavioral orientation is from Prisoners to prison Staff, which means that Prisoners are in a position to activate prison Staff. For example, in the prison all the Prisoner's own affairs and problems - the official affairs directed toward different official sectors in an inflexible bureaucratic manner, have to be conducted in accordance with the presupposed Light of Truth.

(2) For those who live in the *Twilight of Obscurity* the united action between Prisoners and prison Staff is highly possible, because no one has the ultimate comprehension of what knowledge from outside the prison is actually relevant inside. No one is certain of the right way to act. Within this form of knowledge comprehension, the behavioral orientation of both Prisoners and prison Staff is from inside to outside of prison, which means that the prison Staff is in a position to activate Prisoners. A flexible counseling attitude is adopted, for instance, toward Prisoners' affairs in civilian life. This means that, when in the Twilight of Obscurity, a Prisoner must first define his problems himself and only after that can the solution be sought. There are no right solutions ready to hand.

The role of Outsiders (volunteer prison workers) is situated mainly in the Twilight of Obscurity. In practice their personal orientation to work among the prisoners varies between the two extremes of a continuum. At one end of

the continuum, there is a passive but mentally supportive fellowman. At the other, there is an active conversationalist whose final aim is to offer practical support in relation to every problem a prisoner may have. For Outsiders confidential teamwork with prisoners and prison staff is possible but in practice very difficult because Outsiders are forced to face distrust every time they enter the prison. Inside the prison Outsiders are anchored between Prisoners and Staff. In addition, the directives of the prison give the official description of Outsiders' status in the prison community. Therefore, in the end, Outsiders as a group, in their prison work, are placed between the Light of Truth and the Twilight of Obscurity, at the fringes of both.

The contextuality of competency in social action and reflective understanding of one's own life-world

Down and out
It can't be helped but there's a lot of it about
With, without
And who'll deny it's what the fighting's all about

Out of the way, it's a busy day
I've got things on my mind
For want of the price of tea and a slice
The old man died

As a phenomenological event, an individual's social growth and development are attached to the boundary terms of his life-world. These boundary terms either expand or limit the individual's horizon of the life-world because they are determined through meaningful experiences and meaning contexts that are created in social action. So, a person's actions are based on the stock of knowledge which is created through the lived meaning contexts. That very same personal stock of knowledge limits or expands a person's capacity for mastery, for taking control of his life, at the very least to act as an independent person in "normal" society (Schütz, 1972; 1978). Within the framework of this understanding the concept of contextuality stresses the subjective meaning with which the structure of possibilities in social action is endowed. The contextuality of competency means that inside an individual's life-world the possible cultural performance and the performance that has been carried out are within the limits of life-experiences. These life-experiences as such may enlarge a person's life-world horizons beyond the practical assumptions and taken-for-grantedness of everyday life. Therefore,

the limitations of an individual's expressive cultural performance can be transcended by reflection on the life-world and the life-experiences – reflection which leads to comprehension (Schütz, 1972).

From the point of view of a phenomenological discourse analysis, on this dimension of contextual competency and reflective understanding, an individual's own life-world – the micro-structure of subjective meanings – forms through one's lived experiences within the mode of living that is possible for her/him. These are the regions of social action which parallel and merge with other actors' life-worlds. Every human being is born into the social and cultural world of meaning structures that is already there for her/him to seize upon. A child evidently grows into this world by nature. But there is also a need for education – to create meaningful experiences that facilitates the extension of the developmental and cognitive process into a rich awareness of the social world (Kimball, 1974; Vandenberg, 1974). In the case of alienation or social exclusion – from the point of view of an individual – it is only a person's relational context of action in the social world that is somewhat limited. We need not resort to conceptualizations of a false consciousness, of reification, or any of the social psychological dimensions suggested by Seeman (1959). A person's meaningful experiences generate personal growth only in action. The structural form and content of particular types of social action – activities in the classroom or in the work environment – may fail to mediate meaningful experiences. The outcomes of this life-historical learning process may produce alienating and socially excluding effects that can be understood only in that same life-worldly context of action (Geyer, 1980; Kandal, 1981).

Within this dimension of contextual competency and reflective understanding two salient strategic levels of social life are derived from the experiential structures of social life. In this connection I use the word 'strategy' as a term of warfare which refers to an observant but contextual progressive motion of action in possible relational networks, where all unexpected factors are taken into account. The strategies are: (1) The Acute Strategy for Survival and (2) The Activated Strategy for Action. They differ from each other in terms of the chronological order, of the constancy in the formation process of the world of lived experiences, and of the acquisition of cultural performance.

(1) *The Acute Strategy for Survival* is a tool for anomalous life occasions and periods of crisis. It does not require very extensive anticipation, because on each occasion and in every period of life, it is addressed through both functional limitations of the life-world and through those features of social rela-

tionships that are at one's disposal. It is an individual's active way to solve an acute problem situation and as such it can take form around quite a small quantity of experiential factors. So, as a theoretical term it signifies a strongly externalized, cognitive expression. This kind of strategy may for instance appear to be like the "survivor mode" of human action in a war zone (Sigafos, 1994). In the prison, I found that a convict or a prisoner on remand (awaiting trial) for the first time or even a prisoner who has been incarcerated frequently, always has to adjust to confinement with the help of the Acute Strategy for Survival. His ability to adjust is based on what he knows and what he has learned before he enters prison. The success of his adjustment often depends on the answers he can give to questions such as: How much do I know about daily prison life? Are there any familiar faces among the prisoners? What is the safest method for me to get to know the people that can give me protection without getting into trouble right away? A prisoner is forced to solve the problem of adjustment, and his solution can never be a standard for anyone else. This is the point of departure for all prisoners in prison life. Only after having come to terms with these conditions, can a prisoner construct the Activated Strategy for Action of confinement (Christie, 1983; Cohen & Taylor, 1986; Galtung, 1959; Mathiessen, 1972; Mawby, 1982; Parisi, 1982).

(2) *The Activated Strategy for Action* is a result of social growth and learning, and it anticipates the course of events in the network of socially experienced relations. It also channels the individual's action in practice, and, through his own unique social relations, structures his whole life and personality (Starr, 1983). These essential elements of emerging control of one's life are always subordinate to an individual's current world and to her/his former life-historical world of experiences. In setting different strategies for action, an individual's whole course of life is shaped through the personal structures of anticipation and future relevant expectations. So, the Activated Strategy for Action is a tool for obtaining control of one's life and for competent cultural performance. It is structured on the basis of the comprehension and the capacity to implement available cultural meaning structures. This kind of strategy may also be a sporadic mode of human action, as in task-oriented action, or an aggressive "combat mode" in the battle field (see Nurmi & Salmela-Aro, 1992; Nurmi et al., 1992; Sigafos, 1994).

In these descriptions both the contexts of action as well as the degree of generalization into a variety of possible meaning structures of action should be taken into consideration. The question is then, to what extent the (learned) cultural features of the social meaning structures of an individual being can produce the content and thematically relevant interpretations for an individual

strategy for action. This is the issue of the social contents of an individual's own intentional project and life-plan (Nuutinen, 1994; Schütz, 1972; 1978).

It is only through a prisoner's own experiential life-history in confinement that the opportunities for action in prison life are shored up as essential elements of his stock of knowledge. I found that prisoners, prison staff and outsiders develop strategies for action to organize their daily life and expectations of their future activities. A prisoner, for example, might want to go to prison school or take a vocational course in order to spend his time in prison more efficiently, or to make the days go by without a keen awareness of the environment, or even to learn how to manage better as a professional criminal. A prisoner might just want to be lazy, to spend his time quietly, or to have a good time with his friends (Meisenhelder, 1985). A prisoner might also want to believe that this prison is the one and only home and workplace for him, because he cannot, or does not want to, cope with the confusing liberty of civilian life. This last prisoner's strategy merges with the expectations of prison workhouse officials and wardens for educating a good, reliable worker. It may very well happen that a given type of work needed in the workhouse awaits the re-conviction of a particular criminal, instead of being assigned to a prisoner who is not so good a worker and not so familiar a person. In cell blocks these kinds of intercultural and subjective strategies intertwine with the strategies of voluntary workers from outside (prison school teachers, missionaries, etc.) who meander with their own cultural and subjective expectations of what prison life and prisoners' lives should look like. Therefore the assumption that a prison is necessarily a total institution designed to manage and produce spoiled identities is simply not valid; it misses the point! From the point of view of the Activated Strategy for Action, a prison is a network of groups of people who construct meanings in interaction with each other. Only in action do the interpretations diverge.

From the interviews, I learned that there are four stages in the life-historical development of imprisonment. The first phase is experienced upon entering the prison and formulating the Acute Strategy for Survival. The second phase consists of living in prison and forming the Activated Strategy for Action. The third phase consists of obtaining and establishing the principles of cultural performance and taking control of one's existence in prison life. The fourth part is the crucial and extended phase of leaving prison, attaining knowledge of cultural meanings, and establishing competence in performing culture, controlling one's life, and taking command of one's liberty with the aid of the strategies for survival and action. In the course of passing through these regions a prisoner's reflective attitude towards everyday life in prison

may create an understanding which is wider and more extensive than the taken-for-granted life-world. This taken-for-grantedness might otherwise exhaustively determine a prisoner's competency-based, one-dimensional experiences and culturally shared comprehension of knowledge and reproduction of traditional action in daily prison life.

So, does a prison as such produce alienation and social exclusion? The answer is "yes", if we adopt the macro-sociological and normative standpoint in determining what is an individual person's role in the structural and functional whole of a given society's power structure and its culture. For most prisoners there is no escape from alienation and social exclusion. This is true if we take for granted that for an individual the one and only real meaning of life is in competition with others for social, cultural, and economic capital (Bourdieu, 1990). Alienation starts with an individual maneuvered into a marginal position in relation to what is seen as normal and human. The permanence of being outside cuts off ties to the prevailing cultural meaning structures of social action. Obviously, this can end in the social exclusion of an outcast.

On the other hand, if we adopt the micro-sociological, relative, and subjective standpoint in determining how and in relation to what an individual is experiencing her/his everyday life in a socio-cultural context, the answer to the question about the inevitability of alienation is "no". We cannot take it for granted that there are certain predetermined discourses that describe the phenomenon of being outside better than the other. Of course there might be some indications that would point to alienation and social exclusion, but with contextual reference only to a person's own intentional life-worldly project and life-plan. These may be, for instance, a person's feeling of being like an animal, lacking initiative in social action, performing in a limited relational context of action, or even conceiving of social reality as an arena void of social action. We cannot therefore say that prison as such produces alienation. We can only say what alienation or social exclusion is in practice when we are certain about the contextual layers behind each person's cultural performance.

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ALIENATION IN SYSTEMS

Vessela Misheva

AN INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGINS OF TOTALITARIANISM AND THE FEELING OF ALIENATION

PART I

The Sociological Task

Totalitarianism is not an attractive subject, neither for those who write about it, nor for those who read such writings. It is easy to conceive of any work that makes totalitarianism its topic of discussion to be the expression of a “bad choice”. The term “choice”, however, is altogether inappropriate in this case. Writings about totalitarianism are often motivated by strong personal experiences which struggle to articulate a suppressed emotion that resists any linguistic form. They also often seem to be a response to an acute personal and social need to attach meaning to a senseless past that divides people by means of insuperable boundaries and prevents the future from dawning. It is no wonder then that such works normally fall into the scholarly tradition of writing about things that no one wants either to talk about or listen to. The reason is that such works are concerned with the misfortunes of an entire civilization, whose grandiose efforts in support of human progress are quite incongruent with what one is about to read.

Such a “modern tradition” is not without precedent in ancient times. It may even be said that it is only being revived today while having been fa-

thered by Thucydides, who alone among ancient thinkers acquired the fame of being an objective reporter of the most tragic and shameful events in human history. Ancient interpreters of Thucydides were of the opinion that the author of the *Peloponnesian War* had violated “the rules” when he wrote about a subject which was neither noble, nor glorious, nor pleasing to readers, which should have been “ignored by posterity and consigned to silence and oblivion” (Finley, 1975, p. 30).

Quite contrary to the opinions of historians, sociologists may claim that it is these “bad subjects” which require special attention precisely because they hang over the present like a Damoclean sword and trouble our consciousness and reason. In this sense, the importance of Thucydides’ work should be seen in that he created a language with which to talk about things that no one else could, thereby helping the present that had resisted forgetfulness to acquire meaning and withdraw. Such an enterprise is obviously opposed to that of the historian, whose social function is not to help the past vanish once and for all but rather revive it in the present. Historical texts are thus capable of creating emotions. That is why they are remembered.

The history of the modern world seems to have been overwhelmed by powerful emotions from which there is no relief. Psychology and psychotherapy offer little help in finding a cure for the wounded collective consciousness of European civilization because its collective psychology does not seem to be “an extension, an enlargement or a new illustration of individual psychology” (Durkheim, 1992, p. 259). What is needed rather is a skilful and competent science that will accept such *historical psychotherapy* as her calling and vocation. Sociology was obviously such a science for Durkheim, and for her he anticipated the important role of quelling passions and dispelling prejudices (Durkheim, 1992, p. 163). Perhaps because the founding fathers of sociology were often regarded as utopian dreamers, this supposed social function of sociology is well-forgotten today.

But if sociology should carry out this function, she should also be capable of *dis-identifying people*, that is, of dissociating them from one-sided interpretations of their past, which, being an object of constant emotion, has never actually succeeded in withdrawing from the present. The difficult task of sociology understood in this sense becomes especially obvious when it comes to dissociating people from an overwhelmingly shameful and horrible past that can never be completely repressed. Philosophers advise, “What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence” (Wittgenstein, 1993). Instead of “repression” or “silence”, sociology should find the means to

neutralize feelings through the creation of a neutral or objective language for talking about events as social facts. In other words, by creating a medium which makes it possible for such events to become an object of communication, sociology may provide the conditions for uniting people in the present, even though heavy memories have kept them divided by insurmountable walls whose foundations lie deep in the past.

Needless to say, such a language cannot represent the observation position of any one of the involved sides, and it should not describe events as products of genetic or psychological peculiarities, national fate, or personal will¹ It should instead give consideration to the fact that *society* itself might be “the determining cause of the facts for which it is the arena” (Durkheim, 1992, p. 204).

As recent psychological studies have shown, events can be effectively forgotten only when the feelings that they generate have been neutralized. Things we do not talk about do not vanish, regardless of how convincingly we pretend that they have never existed and how hard we struggle to forget and forgive. The ghost of the totalitarian experience that haunted Europe for almost an entire century can be banished from the social world only by being “brought to light” or explained.

Main Problems of the Research Field

From its very beginning, the problematic of totalitarianism has found it very difficult to define its subject theoretically. The answers to such questions as “What should be studied?” and “What is totalitarianism?” can still not be found.

In addition to the general difficulties connected with the study of any complex social phenomenon, specific difficulties in the study of totalitarianism can first of all be seen in connection with its total character. Totalitarianism does not manifest itself merely in one or another aspect of life of the society which it has affected, but it rather penetrates all social spheres and all levels of social life. If society is conceived of as a living organism, then totalitarianism is a kind of “social disease” which cannot be localized in one or another of its “vital organs” but rather infects the whole of the organism. In such a state of affairs, the disease will persist regardless of whatever diseased “tissues” or “organs” are removed from the social organism.² For this reason, a study of any particular social sphere of totalitarian society, regardless of its profundity, such as an analysis of economic or political life, is quite inadequate for understanding its essence. Even after

analyzing all possible aspects of social life in totalitarian society, the image of the whole, of that which makes a society “totalitarian”, will still be missing.

The expectation that better opportunities might be presented after the collapse of the totalitarian regimes in Eastern Europe for grasping their essence through the systematic study of both the already available and newly available materials and documents recording the course of events has been shown to be groundless.³ One of the main reasons for this is the peculiarity of the type of society in question that can be found in its *non-communicative language*. In this respect, the question is not whether we lack knowledge about certain basic facts, or even about the code of the language in which they have been encoded. What is lacking is rather a general idea about the type of society to which, for example, the countries in Eastern Europe belonged. The problem is, however, that in order to define what was pathological in that society, we must necessarily have at our disposal a model of the organization and functioning of what is assumed to be a normal modern society so that the difference between them can be thematized.

Finally, it may be said that no adequate progress in the study of totalitarianism can be expected as long as there are doubts about the comparability of its two most widely acknowledged instances, Nazism and Stalinism. Singular, unclassifiable, unique phenomena can never be made into a legitimate object of scientific study. It even be claimed with justification that these two instances of totalitarianism may be regarded as quite insufficient for inquiring into the origins of the phenomenon insofar as they both seem to have been products of one and the same World War. But in order to be able to claim such a connection and to discern some pattern of occurrence, there must necessarily be available other similar instances that were also brought about by experience of the severe crisis following a world war. Thus, the firm belief that totalitarianism is a unique twentieth century phenomenon emerges as another obstacle, as yet unperceived, to the study of totalitarianism. The study of totalitarianism thereby ends up saddled with methodological problems identical to those which the study of modernity as a unique and incommensurable period in the history of civilization has always faced. In order to inquire successfully into the nature and origins of totalitarian phenomena, it is apparently necessary to have examples of comparable events from the past, something that is inconceivable according to established opinion in the social sciences today.

Is Totalitarianism a Modern Phenomenon?

These preliminary considerations open up the possibility of promoting the hypothesis that *totalitarianism is not a modern twentieth century phenomenon*, as is normally accepted in the social sciences. The challenge to the firmly established view in this respect can be based on assumptions of a sociological character that employ systems logic.

From the vantage point of the end of the twentieth century, the main disadvantage of Hannah Arendt's analysis is not that she unjustly qualified Stalinism as of the same "species" as Nazism. Rather, she did not have the opportunity to analyze the similarities between the two convincingly because Stalinism was still "a living body". Totalitarianism was thus *misleadingly equated with nationalism* because it was mainly conceived of in respect to Nazism, not in respect to a study of the common features of its two acknowledged instances. The exaltation of one nation above all other nations might be part of the aggressive ideology and self-legitimation strategy of totalitarianism, but it need not be its distinctive feature or cause. Insofar as the *nation* is univocally recognized as a modern phenomenon, the modern character of totalitarianism was never challenged.⁴

However, historical evidence and sociological analysis suggest that totalitarianism instead expresses itself as a *national nihilism* whereby the nation turns to itself in search of the "enemy". Only in this process of national disintegration do the different origins or social histories of certain people(s) who were part of the nation in question regardless of their subsequent discriminative treatment (Jews, gypsies, Slavs, or kulaks) become apparent. If the two ideologies of Nazism and Stalinism seemed to have been so very different, this was not so much due to their different moralities as to the fact that nationalism was not a distinctive feature of the totalitarian communist regimes.⁵ On the contrary, both the Stalinist and Nazi regimes were based on international movements and "universal" ideologies, even though the latter did not necessarily experience the same urge to "go deep down to the roots".⁶

Nazism may have begun with a movement of the whole nation, but it was rather quickly transformed into a movement of those who defined themselves as representatives of the race in distinction from those who cannot represent it because they do not belong to it. The main features which distinguish one race from another in sociological terms are neither its common anthropological peculiarities, nor its psychological characteristics. *In sociological terms*, a race should be defined as the producer and user of its particular language, regardless of the eye, hair, or skin color of its individual members.

Language is always attached to a place, and if not, we talk about it as a “dead language”.⁷ People are of a common race because they share a common language, without which they have neither past, present, nor future; because they care and love it as a sacred good and are ready to die for it rather than accept a language imposed on them by a superior culture or force; because they share the observation position which their language entails; and because they participate in its reproduction. In contrast to the German case, when the nation turned against “alien” elements within in search of the enemy, the Russian case presents a great puzzle in this respect because both nation as well as race turned against itself in such a search. This is a sure sign that the theoretical framework which has previously been used for analyzing totalitarianism is inadequate. In addition, similar phenomena were not unknown in classical antiquity, as will be seen below.

The fact that totalitarian regimes established a technologically conditioned party monopoly over all means of mass communication, such as press, radio, television, and film, did not make them modern.⁸ On the contrary, this monopoly made the modern process of communication impossible insofar as the latter may take place only within interaction systems whose interaction space is closed and not accessible to observations from without (Luhmann, 1982). In other words, totalitarian society succeeded in repressing the emergence of a modern communication process with the help of modern technology by providing the technical means for violating the communication boundaries of the interaction systems. As a result, the entire interaction space acquired a strange form whereby the difference between the societal system (which makes possible the interaction between present and absent people) and the interaction systems (in which communications are carried out only by and with people who are present) disappeared.⁹

Furthermore, the principles of modern interaction that totalitarian societies abolished are not so very different from those that were established in classical antiquity, such as can be found, for example, in Plato’s dialogues. On the other hand, the “newly introduced principles” of interaction seem to be quite close to those which were typical of pre-modern communities, which were abolished with the emergence of democracy in both modern and ancient civilized worlds. From a systems point of view, the fact that ancient democracy was of a quite “modest” scope and did not include all people physically present within the territory of the polis does not make it incompatible with modern democracy. It makes no difference that the concrete criteria which particular societies have used for distinguishing between

what should and should not be considered as communication, or who should and should not be treated as present within the interaction space, are almost incompatible. What does matter is that the structures of the interaction systems in both ancient and modern democracies are the same, namely, they both *exclude the observer* and are comprised of only two interaction parties.

The tendency to conceive of totalitarianism as a modern phenomenon is also based on its use of modern, all-encompassing ideologies. But these ideologies lack the high degree of explicitness, concreteness, and formulation typical of other socio-political programs or philosophies. The language they use substitutes enigmatic symbols for clear concepts and reflects a missionary zeal rather than a social function. From a systems point of view, the socio-political programs of totalitarian ideologies can only be discussed as comprised of *messages*, not *communications*.¹⁰

Finally, totalitarianism is viewed as a modern phenomenon because it apparently established itself with the help of modern organizations, namely, political parties. One of its most obvious and decisive features is taken to be the replacement of a multi-party political structure in society by a single-party structure. But can a political formation that represents the whole still be a party that is supposed to represent a “part”? In what sense is Party written with a capital “P” a modern organization?

Furthermore, in the views of many students of totalitarianism, such as Arendt, Lederer, and Neumann, totalitarianism began with a process of the total destruction of existing organizations, including social classes, which apparently led to isolation and alienation. As a result, an active middle force appeared consisting of “large numbers of neutral, politically indifferent people who never join a party and hardly ever go to the polls”, and who “cannot be integrated into any organization based on common interest” (Arendt, 1975, p. 311).¹¹

I would like to argue in this respect that totalitarian society lacked not only organizations, but even functional differentiation. The forces that acted for the integration of the mass of alienated individuals could not have anything to do with what is normally understood as a “political party”, and the political system was not merely one social subsystem among others. Instead it coincided with the state, and what could be observed were different social functions as they were attached to the state. Nevertheless, it cannot be said that the totalitarian society which emerged in this century was without a structure; it was, rather, a structure of a different type.

The Ideology of the Masses

The main critical points against the comparison and conflation of Nazism and Stalinism in the work of Hannah Arendt devolve on the existence of radical differences between their ideologies.¹² However, the emergence of such powerful ideologies by themselves is not adequate for explaining the emergence of totalitarian regimes because, at the very least, it has never been made clear why they affected only certain whole societies and not others. In other words, it is not clear why some societies became “sick” while others only “coughed”. In this case, it is logical to assume that the process of the oppression and “exploitation of the world-proletariat by blood-sucking capitalists”, as well as the “pollution of the Aryan world by inferior races”, are of little importance for explaining the actual course of events. Such ideological constructions should rather be seen in their function of giving justification to actions that otherwise would have been considered morally inadmissible and would necessarily have been constrained by reason and conscience.

A functional analysis of the emergence of ideologies, however, may reveal that ideologies come into being in order to legitimize the social position, outlook, and principles of certain already *alienated* individuals rather than having been produced and embraced in order to become the bases for new practices. In other words, the differences in the ideologies used by different totalitarian regimes were from a sociological point of view no more than differences between strategies for granting legitimacy to one or another kind of *aggressive alienation*.

A common feature of all ideologies, regardless of the particular character of each, is that they have always been concerned with the *sacred*, whereby the adherents of a particular ideology become involved in a struggle against a world perceived as not only *profane* but actually *sacrilegious* and wicked. They emerge as a *consequence of social crisis* whereby aggressive alienation becomes firmly connected with the struggle for the “sacred” under the guidance of unperceived motives and unavowed interests. In this case, modern illusions about the possible “end of ideology” should be abandoned in a world still afflicted by crises in which some “sacred good” is at stake. Thus, social crisis and alienation may be viewed in immediate relation to the struggle over one or another *sacred good*, the distribution of which has come to be perceived as unjust in that it provides unequal opportunities for “survival” to otherwise equal human beings.

On the level of sociological analysis, which is interested in ideologies as ideal types, the particular “flavors” ideologies have and the rhetoric which

they use are not so very important. What is important is distinguishing between certain basic ideal types of ideologies, which, although they fall under one and the same common denominator, exhibit essential typological differences. Those who have criticized Arendt's analysis of totalitarianism for being indifferent to the question of the specificity of ideologies and for addressing both Nazism and Stalinism without offering any discussion of Stalinist ideology, have obviously not taken the main point of her conception into account. According to Arendt, totalitarianism is not a political affair but rather an affair of the *masses*. Only a mass society of atomized individuals no longer incorporated into the existing organizations is capable of having the totalitarian experience.

When such a society experiences a *total crisis* it produces the phenomenon of *total alienation*. The total crisis does not involve merely one or another "sacred good", but rather is a crisis over "The Good", which has neither a substitute nor alternatives. Obviously, such a Good can only be what is discussed in contemporary social science as necessary for the satisfaction of the "basic human needs".¹³

In this respect, it is reasonable to ask what kind of ideology may be embraced by a totally alienated individual. What are those "unavowed interests" capable of uniting individuals into a faceless mass in which they become stripped of all their individuality? If we may speak at all about the ideology of a mass, we have to consider it as being organized around the idea of a common basic need, such as survival, which has an institutional (not an organizational!) value. What we are confronted with in totalitarian societies is the unmasked face of the social institution, which, without the rationality and restrictions imposed upon it by social organizations, reduces the human being to no more than a medium for the blind force of evolution. Evolution apparently has no morality, and rationality itself is possible only where there is a choice.

Class struggle has nothing to do in this sense with mass struggle. A class struggles for a better life, while mass struggle is a life and death struggle. Thus, these two types of struggle embrace completely different types of ideologies. The one is supported by the organization and is directed against some culture or institution, such as when the proletariat struggles against capitalism, while the other is supported by the institution, aims to abolish all differences, and recognizes the adherents of organizational morality and professionalism in all spheres of life as its enemies. The "interests" of the mass are thus of such a nature that their defence requires no less than the revival of the ritual of human sacrifice on a mass scale. The main problem

here is to understand how such a thing could have happened in a civilized world proud of the fact that it long ago left the barbarian world behind.

The Party as Institution

The modern term “political party” normally designates certain phenomena produced during the nineteenth century when, it is assumed, the political system emerged. Parties are complex organizations having particular functions and goals that attract participants with a variety of motives. Despite the existing controversy in the theory of the party, it is difficult today to step outside of the theoretical tradition established by Marx and Weber which does not accept that it is possible for parties to exist in other than organizational forms.¹⁴ Parties are open organizations with particular criteria for membership that do not select their members on the basis of given types of inherited privileges or attributes, but rather unify people with common interests regardless of their underlying personal motives. The analysis of party with a capital “P” (The Party), which had a great deal to do with the establishment of totalitarian regimes, requires the development of a new notion of party that does not conform to the previously articulated concept.

The various Fascist parties were not of precisely the same type as the Nazi Party in Germany, nor can the Bolshevik Party and the Communist parties in Eastern Europe, which enjoyed political monopoly in single-party states, be compared with the modern Communist parties of the multi-party Western democratic states. The Parties in totalitarian societies cannot be described as political organizations for a number of significant reasons. For one thing, it is difficult to say that such parties were based on particular individual interests because their mass character threatened at times to engulf almost the whole of the population if internal restrictions had not been imposed on membership.¹⁵ This is something that can be explained only if we are capable of imagining a “party” concerned with a *basic interest* shared by all members of society. In this sense, The Party did not stand merely for some set of possible interests but rather for the only possible interest, that is, the survival of a particular “social species”. Furthermore, these “parties” claimed that they do not work for particular individual interests but rather for the interest of “the whole”, just as the heart is not simply one organ among others but works for the entire organism.¹⁶

Membership in such parties did not mean simply agreement on the social and political goals to be achieved, but rather an acceptance of a particular

style of behavior and a particular language for interaction that was a universal substitute for all other interaction media in the societies in question. The Party language became the only language in which “understanding” could be achieved, a language whose interaction space knew of no boundaries that could prevent it from imposing itself even upon the interaction systems of such supposedly “autonomous” social subsystems as science or law.

The Party member in a totalitarian state would not cease to behave as a party member when he left the party meeting, and he could be recognized as a Party member in all interaction systems in which he happened to participate. There was no social space in which he could step outside his “membership role”. Bolsheviks and Nazis were such in their working places, in all areas of public life, and even in their private lives. The difference between private and public was actually ephemeral. Even without party symbols and insignias and the other elements of the typical personal front (Goffman, 1958), their very patterns of behavior would suffice to indicate who the Party members were. Membership in such parties was a style of life, and there was no such thing as “non-working” hours, something which is found in any organization.

Membership in such a party, which was a “role” that replaced all other possible social roles, should rather be understood as a *mission*. It requires a special personal quality, passion, and commitment, as well as a complete identification with the whole. In addition, no one applies for a mission, which is rather bestowed upon one who is “chosen” for such an honor. The Russian proletariat was “chosen” for its “mission” by the objective “Laws of History”, just as the “Nation” chose the Nazi to become a tool of the “Law of Nature”. The Party, therefore, did not offer equal access to all who wished to join, whatever their interests, since not everyone was considered capable of carrying out “the mission”.

What is taken into account for appointment to a mission, or for participation in the “mission”, is not what the individual has done and is capable of doing, but what he re-presents, that is, the portion of history (family, nation, race) which he carries into the present. These were not the actions which justified the membership, but rather the membership justified all actions, regardless of their nature.

The new type of “party” embraced not only the entire social space with all its possible aspects and spheres, but also the entire individual human life from early childhood to advanced age. The parties of the Nazi and Bolshevik type were concerned with their reproduction in a way that was quite uncharacteristic of other political parties. They prepared their future membership through such overlapping party branches as the Hitler Jugend, the

Komsomol, veterans' associations, and so forth. That is why the self-descriptions of such parties do not resemble those of any other kind. The Party, which might describe itself as "mother", had its "teachers", "führers", and "fathers", and it designated types of social relationships resembling those of an army, school, or family. In no way was it a "tool of its members", nor was it pragmatically oriented towards the electorate. On the contrary, it was the Party which used its members as "tools" for the achievement of its goals.

The mass "party" is comprised of individuals who have no social roles, that is, individuals who wear *uniforms*, not "*masks*". This difference is quite essential from a sociological point of view. The uniformed man is not perceived as a *person*. He is faceless, something which made him a favorite character in criminal stories where the one who performs a crime in a public place remains invisible by virtue of his wearing a uniform. He could be defined, in Goffmanian terms, as a "*non-person*" – one who enters social settings and leaves them without his personal presence being acknowledged. He acts as the representative of a whole comprised of equals who, like links in a chain, are interchangeable and lack any individuality.

Finally, such a Party existed as an impersonal, invisible, almost natural force that could never be identified with either its leaders or its members. The Party represented a collective "being" that was nowhere and everywhere and, furthermore, could never be blamed for anything because "the Party can never be wrong". The Party was thus the monopoly holder of the people's *trust*, and the people in their turn had to struggle to deserve the *trust* of the Party. The most peculiar thing which reveals something of the structure of that society was that all kinds of social activities were spoken of as "struggles" on one or another "front".¹⁷ In this sense, the reconstruction of the world in which the people in totalitarian societies lived in terms of the political metaphors used there, and even in respect of the analysis of everyday language, may lead to the surprising discovery that the war never ended for them. The systems structure of such societies was not much different from that which can be ascribed to societies in a state of war, where life proceeds under the slogan "Everything for the front!" and a finger points at you from the poster on the wall with the question "Did you volunteer to enlist?"

It may be concluded on the basis of such features that the Nazi and Bolshevik Parties were quite different from what we understand by "social organizations". Their features rather reveal that these parties had the character of social *institutions*.¹⁸ This hypothesis explains the fact that such Parties were established in totalitarian societies even after the level of organizations had already been destroyed.

PART II

Society as an *Autopoietic System*

The theory of *autopoietic systems* in macro-sociology opened up new possibilities for the analysis of social phenomena in general and totalitarianism in particular. A systems interpretation of totalitarianism can provide a consistent organization for a variety of social theories, and thereby they gain legitimacy as complementary approaches rather than as competitors in the struggle for recognition concerning the truthfulness of their individual perspectives.

Systems theory in macro-sociology is an application of the theory of *autopoietic systems* (that is, *self-producing systems*), which first emerged in the natural sciences, and was explicated by Maturana and Varela.¹⁹ This theory presents society as a *non-living system comprised of communications*. Human beings are present within the social system and are its members not as physical bodies, or as systems units, but only to the extent to which they are capable of understanding and producing communications. Stated otherwise, “persons as concrete psycho-organic units belong to the environment of systems of social communication” (Luhmann, 1982, p. 247).

By definition, the system is “its relation to its environment”, or “the difference between system and environment” (Luhmann, 1982, p. 257). Through the of this difference between inside and outside, the system differentiates itself into functional subsystems with unique but equally important functions (politics, economy, law, science, and so forth). According to principles of selection and boundary formation, autopoietic social systems assume three distinct forms, namely, *interaction systems*, *organization systems*, and *societal systems*. Functional differentiation, as the “last product of socio-cultural evolution”, takes place *at the level of society*. Systems are autopoietic as long as they preserve their autonomy and hold control over their own boundaries, which they themselves have created.

No system can exist without an environment, but at the same time, no system of communications can exist without a *medium*, that is, the “stuff” out of which communications are made. Luhmann distinguishes three types of media: 1) language; 2) script (*Schrift*), printed text (*Druck*), radio (*Funk*); and 3) symbolically generalized media, such as love, assets/money, power/justice, truth, etc. (Luhmann, 1984, pp. 222-223). Social subsystems can be distinguished by their ability to produce communications out of different kinds of symbolically generalized media. The legal system uses the medium of justice; power is the medium for the political system; money is the me-

dium for the system of economy; truth is the medium for the system of science; and so forth.

For the purpose of this analysis it will be necessary to stress the importance of three systems peculiarities:

- 1) There is an essential difference between the systems of politics and the other functional subsystems in that the former have a territorial basis for the demarcation of their communication boundaries and decision-making (Luhmann, 1982, p. 244). Therefore, political states, or nation-states, are functional subsystems of the world system of politics whose communication boundaries, unlike the communication boundaries of any other functional subsystems, can be seen clearly and, therefore, can be controlled directly.
- 2) Systems theory maintains that in every period of social development dominant social subsystems exist that assume the role of representing society as a whole.²⁰ It can be further claimed that the same is true for social media, even including natural languages. In different periods of societal history different social media assume a dominant position in accordance with their respective abilities to make possible the communication of the societal system as a whole.
- 3) There is only one societal system and systems evolution is the evolution of a single unit. World society is today presented as the all-embracing system of *possible meaningful communications*, whose boundaries are set by accessibility and understandability (Luhmann, 1982, pp. 71-73).

A System's Ex-communication and the Origins of Alienation

That the political system of world society is divided into political states which use territories for the demarcation of their communication boundaries may be seen not only as a “more or less obsolete historical ‘residue’” (Luhmann, 1982, p. 244) but also as an essential starting point in searching for why certain social subsystems collapse. This is even more the case when we consider the importance that Arendt attached to the close relationship between the emergence of totalitarianism and the destruction of nation-states, which in systems terms are the political subsystems of the world system of politics.

Political systems, like all other autopoietic systems, are autonomous and operationally closed, by virtue of which no system is able to interfere in their internal operations, but this systems rule obviously does not hold for the World system of politics, whose units they are. It may even be assumed that the overall autopoietic system may bring about a catastrophe within itself for the sake of continuing its evolution and increasing the communi-

cation process. This requires changing the dominant systems medium when the existing one has become inadequate for managing the complexity of the social world. The creation of new conditions for a growth in communication may thus demand shifting the cultural center to a new location with a different medium insofar as social media always reflect the observation position of the location to which they belong. The devaluation of one systems medium and its replacement with another may therefore be considered as necessary in view of the territorial extension of the societal system and its transition to a more adequate representation of the world.

In this respect, the hypothesis which will be advanced here is that the societal system may destroy the autopoiesis of any of its subsystems by redefining their boundaries from without or by excluding them not merely from one or another aspect of communications, but from the communication process of the societal system as a whole. Such a result can be attained by the *ex-communication of a particular social subsystem* from the world system of society.²¹ This *total alienation* or exclusion reduces the system in question to the state of an external environment, which is an object rather than a subject of communication. This can justifiably be regarded as an immediate cause for the emergence of the *feeling of alienation* on a mass scale experienced as an *emotion* created by the awareness of the deficiency of language or the lack of a social medium capable of mediating meaning. This constitutes a personal existence somehow outside of the social world, that is, a kind of social absence.²²

Furthermore, a social system as a territorial political unit may lose its autopoiesis (without even being colonized or engulfed by another system) as a consequence of a world war, whether hot or cold, which puts “World Society” in charge of defining its territorial boundaries.²³ In this case, a world war can be considered a “modern condition” for the emergence of totalitarianism. But in order to claim that totalitarianism is a modern phenomenon, it has to be proven that world wars were unknown in the pre-modern history of civilization.

On the Identity of the Alienated Man and the Social Function of Trust

While we are able to understand how the political system of a particular societal unit can collapse together with the rejection of its types of communication and the loss of control over its boundary, the latter by themselves do not explain how the entire organization of society, including its func-

tional differentiation based on the use of symbolically generalized media (such as money, truth, power, justice, and so forth), can also be affected. There is also the quite puzzling fact that organizations do not seem to have lost their ability to function and produce their products when the crowd appeared in the streets, but only somehow became weakened in that they lost the attractive force they previously had held for their clients. The question then concerns what the source of the power of organizations was and how it could have been lost.

In his theory of society as an autopoietic system, Luhmann ascribed fundamental importance to the problem of *trust*. Trust is defined as the basic and perhaps most effective mechanism for reducing a system's complexity (Luhmann, 1979, p. 8). Trust must be learned, and learning trust is an important part of the socialization process. Trust is not bestowed unconditionally but rather "within limits in proportion to specific, rational expectations" (Luhmann, 1979, p. 29). Insofar as "the object of trust enjoyed a certain credit" and "the persons and social arrangements in which one puts trust become *symbol complexes* (Luhmann, 1979, pp. 28-29), it appears that the person invests his trust in the general effectiveness of the system (Luhmann, 1979, p. 56). I assume, however, that the person does not invest" his trust in the generalized media of a particular system, but rather that his trust in the system makes possible the system's symbolically generalized medium, which in its very essence is *trust in a capitalized form*.

As Luhmann pointed out, the escalation of distrust among the members of a particular system can be turned into a destructive force, which makes it necessary for systems mechanisms to neutralize such processes and "shift forward the threshold of effective distrust". The question then becomes whether trust, "which has apparently come about 'irrationally', but whose function actually makes it appear rational, indeed has only a "limited role in systems maintenance" (Luhmann, 1979, pp. 91-92).

If social systems appear to us as powerful and almighty; if it appears that their rule cannot be abolished by any single individual, it is precisely because they live on "credit", the essence of which is *trust*. This means that the emergence of a social system is impossible without the prior accumulation of social capital (trust) upon the basis of its confirmed abilities to reduce the complexity of the world and thereby create a sense of security. If social systems are capable of introducing their media into society and channeling all human relationships through them, it is precisely because we trust them.

Social systems are quite vulnerable and are easily affected by catastrophic psychosis and mass panic or distrust, which normally emerge in encounters with new, unknown, and mysterious phenomena. In this respect, it is justi-

fied to say that rational systems have an irrational basis, whose eruptive force they need to be aware of. That trust can become the basic source of the power of any functional social system is not surprising when we reflect on the fact that *only trust makes communication possible*. A lack of trust, or distrust, can be a basis for action, but it cannot be a basis for communication.

The power of people, humble as they be, is that they control the system by holding its “shares”. When people stop trusting that the actions of the economic system are reasonable and effective, they cause the system to enter a severe crisis. If everyone in the world were suddenly to lose faith in the economic system and withdraw his/her money from the banks, the system of the economy would completely collapse. Analogously, a system may collapse merely as a result of groundless gossip and rumor, regardless of the actual state of affairs. If people stop believing in the power of science or religion to “perform miracles” and organize the universe symbolically, those systems may well vanish altogether. Of course, systems do have means within limits to protect themselves against such possibilities, such as the mechanisms of punishment and education.²⁴

From this point of view, it is possible to treat the issue of the psychology of the mass man from a different perspective. The mass man of mass society is *alienated* from the social world because *s/he does not trust*.²⁵ Such people do not invest their trust in any existing system in the present and do not believe in the general effectiveness of any of them. This may happen when they are faced with a contradiction the reason for which they cannot grasp, such as when they suffer a hard and undeserved punishment which they view as being without justification or legitimacy. For them there are neither words nor language capable of communicating the necessity or “law” according to which things must be so and not otherwise.²⁶ As a result, one might say that social systems lose their legitimacy for them, but it would be more correct to say that social systems then simply lose such people, not so much as members but as clients.

The totally alienated individual thus can be defined as the one who does not *trust*, who can find no reason, and who in fact is against reason altogether. There is also another issue which tells us something further about the identity of the alienated individual who has lost her trust, or rather her ability to trust. If trust has to be learned, then the same is true for distrust. War is a great teacher of how not to trust, and the greatest teacher of all in this regard is a World War, a paramount challenge to reason. The importance which Arendt ascribed to the war generation in this connection also thereby becomes more plain.

It is not surprising then that Thucydides presented the emergence of civilization in an enigmatic connection with certain changes in the everyday life of the Greeks which standard interpretations treat as quite unimportant.²⁷ Sociologically these supposedly minor details can be coded as the emergence of TRUST conceived of as a basic condition for the emergence of society as a system of communications.

The Two Types of Social Crisis in Systems Terms

The appearance of alienated people whose interaction has lost its quality of communication and who no longer trust will first of all be regarded as a consequence of a *macro-social crisis*. Non-living social systems acquire almost anthropomorphic features when we consider the fact that systems also have their own struggles and “private needs”. Thus, social systems struggle to impose their own media as the “supreme interpreters” of social life upon new territories, something which often is perceived as aggression or colonization, and they also struggle with each other over those social media which are of vital importance for them. A defeated system in the world of communications may also lose control over its own territory (which also means losing its autopoietic closure) without even being conquered. In this sense, struggles between large communities, or even between empires, are as much struggles for territories as they are struggles for media and media domination. Such inter-system conflicts may bring about the total destruction of particular social systems and the collapse of the process of production, reproduction, and distribution of their social media, the guarantors for the continuation of social life.

On the other hand, the emergence of the crowd can also be seen as the most probable prelude to the *micro-social crisis* that internalizes the macro-struggle on a micro level when people begin to struggle over the medium that grants them social existence. This may be suggested as the normal course for the “self-resolution” of such crises as long as no other factors or external influences interfere. This micro-social crisis is provoked by the sudden “shortage” or devaluation of the most important social medium, access to which on a personal, group, and even community level has become an object of severe competition. It is this crisis of weakness, much like that brought about by a severe “haemorrhage”, which makes people turn against each other, and even against themselves, in search of the enemy.

Only access to a social medium grants social being and thereby life. In principle, the medium should be available to everyone, like the air that we

breath, or like the blood that every part of the human organism needs. There is no such thing as a human being who has no access whatsoever to any social medium since we would then have to talk of a human being who exists outside the whole of society.

These micro/macro definitions obviously do not demarcate the scope of the disaster which each crisis may bring, but are simply designations of the level on which the crisis is experienced. It even appears that inter-system wars, or world wars as we call them, have not made the same impression in the course of human history as intra-system crises, regardless of the number of casualties. This is perhaps because it is always clear in a war who the enemy is and what is at stake. In a micro-social crisis, however, where no one knows the source of the disaster or who is to be blamed for it, even a former friend becomes an enemy and no previous social relations count any longer.

PART III

The First World War

According to the logic of this text, the roots of totalitarianism must be sought deep in the history of civilization. There are certainly grounds for the often expressed doubt that anything can be learned from what has happened in the past and that events distanced from each other by millennia can hardly be compared in any sense whatsoever. However, this difficulty can be overcome when we consider that what we have to deal with is one and the same social system in two different stages of its development. In other words, what is suggested here is that we cope with the problem by regarding classical antiquity as a kind of “childhood” of the autopoietic system of society where its boundary, basic structure, and primary functional differentiation were already established. Modern times, on the other hand, may be considered as presenting us with the same autopoietic system grown to maturity whereby its structural and functional potentials are fully developed.

If society is an autopoietic system, as macro-sociological theory assumes, then the difference between the world system of society today and that system in the days when it first emerged is nothing other than the same system now *writ large* due to the basic quality of any autopoietic system to differentiate itself. If this is so, then world wars or macro-system struggles

should have been as possible in antiquity as they are in modern times, even though these struggles are not necessarily over one and the same social media.

It is assumed that World War I was the main event that served as a catalyst for the societal nuclear reaction and chain of events that led to the disastrous consequences of totalitarianism.²⁸ However, I will attempt to show that modernity is original in none of the aspects discussed. Neither totalitarianism, nor the barbarism of genocide and mass extermination of members of one's own society are particularly modern phenomena. It can even be maintained with justification that modern democracy is related to ancient democracy in the same way in which modern barbarism relates to ancient barbarism; this does not, however, refer to the barbarians themselves, but rather to the barbarism of civilized men.²⁹ Furthermore, world wars are not a modern invention; it is just that our horizons have apparently broadened in a certain sense, leading to a change in our idea of what the world is.

I will begin with the claim that the Peloponnesian War (431-404 B.C.), in which the whole of the Greek world was involved and took sides, may justifiably be considered the first world war.³⁰ First of all, it was a war that involved the First World (Athens), the Second World (Sparta), and the Third World (Thrace, Persia, and all other barbarians). As Thucydides asserted, the Peloponnesian War by virtue of its magnitude and consequences could not be compared with anything else in its own time in much the same way that World War I could not be compared with anything else within the observable horizon of the modern world. Such a comparison may perhaps sound unconvincing to those who think that the new quality of the latter war produced by modern technology was incommensurable with even the most devastating wars of previous times, and they might very well feel that it is at least absurd to talk about similarities between these two events, which are separated from each other in the history of civilization by more than two millennia. But perhaps the feeling of "déjà vu" that certain participants in our modern wars have experienced after reading Thucydides' *History* can provide sufficient motivation at least to attempt an inquiry into the possibility that the present hypothesis rests on firm ground.³¹

The Peloponnesian War, in which the two great powers/empires of Athens and Sparta squared off against each other, seems to have been the greatest disaster that befell the classical world.³² Following Thucydides, classical scholars do not interpret the Peloponnesian War as simply a struggle for territory or wealth, as might have been expected, but rather as a struggle for power. In light of this definition of the decisive cause for the war, it can therefore be maintained that the subject of Thucydides' work acquires a sociological rather

than an historical significance. *The History* seems to be less a basis for chronological reconstruction than a basis for a sociological interpretation of the events that brought about the downfall not simply of a city or an empire but of a center of civilization. Surprisingly enough, the war known today as the First World War had a very similar plot, but perhaps it is even more surprising that both of these wars had quite similar consequences.

Thucydides apparently was of the opinion that Athens was envied for its power and was finally brought to ruin by an alliance of social and natural forces that successfully “plotted” against her. One of the peculiar things about the Peloponnesian War from a sociological point of view is that it began with an “innocent” local social conflict provoked by emotion (injured pride, lack of respect (*aidos*), envy, etc.), which was then brought for resolution onto the societal level where the “big powers”, pursuing their own aims, transformed it into a world conflict that boomeranged back to its initial point of departure in the form of civil wars. Stated otherwise, a war which began on the level of communication was transformed into a social conflict unresolvable by the available means of communication, a conflict in which the very medium of communication collapsed and returned to its original level as a *speechless* nightmare.³³

Furthermore, it is clear from the very first speeches in *The History* that while the Spartans longed for the power enjoyed by Athens, the Athenians, powerful as they were, became involved in the war mainly because they longed for *honor*.³⁴ The war for them was apparently an enterprise in which this precious medium could be “invested” and multiplied.

The social crisis that the Peloponnesian War brought to classical antiquity was a double crisis. It first appeared as a *macro-crisis*, which brought about the general collapse of the process of social communication and the appearance of distrust. This was a crisis in which neither law, nor power, nor honor, nor money counted any longer, but where trickery could be utilized in the pursuit of one’s own interests in a struggle for survival and all means were permitted.³⁵ The social media that were supposed to bring people into communion and understanding became devalued “goods”.

In order for something of this scale to happen to any society, whatever its size, we often assume that at least the devastating power of modern war technology would be needed. However, a national catastrophe of such a magnitude may also be brought about by much more primitive and natural causes. For example, there are grounds for maintaining that *the plague* as an “internal enemy” produced such effects in the Athenian *polis* during the Peloponnesian War. Thucydides connected the reasons for why this same

disease “never afflicted the Peloponnesians at all, or not seriously” and the fact that “its full force was felt in Athens” with the density of its population (Thucydides, 1975, II, p. 54).

In sociological analysis, natural disasters are as important in describing the picture as any other social facts. This is so because it makes no difference from a sociological point of view whether social events come about subsequent to a lost war – whether one against Nature or against human power. Thucydides, in order to support his almost fantastic claim that this catastrophe was an “unprecedented suffering for Hellas” and that there had never been such a loss of life before, pointed to natural forces as causes no less important than the war itself. Culture and nature thus cooperated in producing a previously unknown phenomenon more tragic than anything that had ever been associated with “human suffering”.³⁶

The first sign of total social crisis is the appearance of the crowd as a result of the breakdown of the social structure of society. The sociological ideas which we already have about this “modern” social force fit quite well the description of the so-called “people” of democratic Athens who had suddenly been transformed into a crowd, just as Thucydides referred to them.³⁷

Classical scholarship has been greatly puzzled by this text, and it has never succeeded in finding a plausible answer for why Thucydides, the “objective historian”, should have lost control of his emotions and referred to the “people” of Periclean democracy by such a humiliating name as the “crowd”. The explanation perhaps should be sought for in the preceding text representing a vivid picture of the plague, which Thucydides describes having begun with a “state of unprecedented lawlessness” whose most essential features were that people “became indifferent to every rule of religion or law”, “money and life alike seemed equally ephemeral”, and belief (fear of the gods), justice (fear of the law), and honor (fear for one’s name, the guarantee of citizenship) disappeared (Thucydides 1975, II, pp. 52-53).

Thucydides’ idea of “human nature” is not at all flattering.³⁸ He expressed the opinion that what keeps us from the dreadful experience of this uncontrollable natural power, which is otherwise covered by the mask of civilization are “those general laws of humanity which are there to give a hope of salvation to all who are in distress” (Thucydides, 1975, III, p. 84). The beginning of the disaster is connected with “the process of repealing those general laws” that was brought about by distrust in the causal connection between events. What was perceived, especially after the plague, is a world devoid of any regularities, where there was no necessary punishment after a crime and survival was not necessarily granted the innocent or the good. On the contrary, greater

chances for survival were seen in individual “salvation”, where even intelligence and trust place the individual at a disadvantage.³⁹ It seems that not only the rules but also the “game” itself changed, so that all previously acquired social skills became inadequate for and even an obstacle to survival.

What Thucydides actually describes is a world brought back into the realm of necessity, where both the satisfaction of basic human needs and life itself are at stake. In such cases, even the most civilized group of people may easily be transformed into a crowd in Le Bon’s (1925) sense. It is as true today as it was then that a nation at war, especially a war on more than one front, faced with the “pain of disappearance”, as Mauss put it, is hardly able to observe democratic principles and preserve human rights, which can only be the privilege of a state of peace (Mauss, 1992, p. 180).

The Peloponnesian War was the immediate cause of civil wars, such as that in Corcyra over which the conflict actually began. There are very many aspects of this war between the democrats and the oligarchs which directly remind us of the struggle between the red Bolsheviks and their White enemies. In *The Peloponnesian War* we also find clear evidence that *stasis*, or ancient revolutions, came about with the emergence of *mass parties* of an institutional type.⁴⁰ These “revolutions”, however, failed to acquire a struggle-for-democracy-and-justice “halo” regardless of their pretensions, just as was the case with another revolution that Kolakowski (1978) described in similar terms.⁴¹

But even these similarities are not adequate to render successful our inquiry into the ancient roots of totalitarianism. An important item still lacking is the image of “the enemy of the people”, who should not be expected in the case of the Peloponnesian War to be either a race or class enemy.

Media Crisis and Scapegoats

From a systems perspective, the Peloponnesian War, like all internal social cataclysms, can be viewed as arising from conflicts over one or another social medium that has suddenly become scarce, access to which means life.

In this section, I will give three examples from different historical periods which show that the social crisis typical for totalitarian societies can be interpreted as a crisis of the medium. These examples also contribute to discovering the identity of the “class” or “race” enemy as a holder of a medium that has become scarce. Such an interpretation gives credit to René Girard’s quite controversial theory of the scapegoat. According to Girard, the scapegoat is the person who has been accused of robbing the community of “the

sacred good". The sacrificial mechanism of the scapegoat comes to institute new hierarchies and differences that had been lost in a state of violent *disorder*, excessive *rivalry*, and *conflictual undifferentiation* (the plague). Thus, the scapegoat is not only the "troublemaker" but also the "peacemaker" who, according to Girard, is the sole agent of both *rivalry* and the "miracle" of the *redifferentiation* or restoration of order (Girard, 1988, pp. 202).

There is no problem in systems theory with presenting this enigmatic "sacred good", which the entire community so greatly cherishes, as the most important *systems medium*. From this point of view, the crisis which activates the sacrificial mechanism is by its very description and nature a *systems media crisis* brought about by the collapse of the process of social communication.⁴²

Something that could never be forgotten nor completely comprehended is the fact that the much praised civilized world of the Greeks did not succeed in ridding itself of the primitive "sacrificial ritual". The enigma of Socrates' death travelled down through the centuries as a paramount example of a scapegoat, the essence of whose "sacrilegious deeds" was never fully revealed.⁴³ This is all the more so because Socrates, who as Plato informed us refused to become "a partner in wicked deeds" of the Thirty (Epis. 7, p. 324e), was eventually convicted and put to death by the restored democracy in a time recognized for its restraint, when even the informal prosecution of supporters and members of the Thirty was forbidden. Yet it has been claimed that the killings of the Thirty were condemned "save perhaps in one single respect", namely, their persecution of the sycophants, a deed "remembered with approval" (Powell, 1993, p. 279).

The fact that Socrates belonged to the "war generation" is not without importance in the conception presented here in that his unquestioned virtue was obviously shaped by his experience at the front. Socrates' mock modesty (which even Aristotle mentions), his aggressive strategies, and surprise attacks, in which he does not actually have interaction partners but rather "enemies", leave the impression of an on-going war that never came to an end for him. The remarkable difference between Socrates and his "opponents" was his lack of trust, in respect to which all his friends appear naive and childish. For this reason, Plato's dialogues should rightly be called "Socratic duels", the only difference between them and actual duels being that the lethal weapons were made of words, not iron.

A systems interpretation of historical material convincingly shows that the main medium of Socrates' society was *honor*. Classical scholarship univocally agrees that honor in classical antiquity was more precious than money, land, and even than life. According to many interpretations of Greek

texts, it was apparently much better to be dead than to be dishonored. The explanation of this fact may have something to do with the dominant position of *sport* that emerged as an institutionalized and organized social sphere on a societal level capable of channeling communication between the different peoples in the whole of the Greek world. As the most developed functional social sphere, sport not only invested the spirit of *agon* in every aspect of social life, but also served as an organizational model that could be copied by other spheres. A sociological analysis of Plato's dialogues from a systems perspective may convince us that Socrates was not a great philanthropist who gave people everything he had and received nothing in return but the cup of poison. He was also participating in a "race", whereby the price of his honor was the shame of his interaction partners who, once entering the "Socratic game", always lost.

Socrates has always appeared unreal to us precisely because we have never seen him as a social being: he did not become drunk from drinking large quantities of wine, he did not love anyone else, and he did not take money for his "services". But even if he did not long for the honor which he finally attained, he was actually the "richest man in Athens" because everybody knew him and respected his power of reasoning. The mechanism through which Socrates received his "payment" without asking for it was the honor attached to his name. The name was so important that it controlled the entire mechanism of granting citizenship and ostracism. Thus, the name itself can be viewed as symbolic capital, as honor in capitalized form. One either has it or does not, and one may even be born "bankrupt" by inheriting the compromised name of his father. Socrates' enemies should then be sought for among the defenders of the "ancestral right" over the most precious social good, namely, honor.

Socrates' bad luck was that honor, the main social medium, became extremely scarce after the Peloponnesian War. Athens was dishonored and people desperately sought the "enemy" who had robbed them of their "sacred good" within their society.⁴⁴ Socrates, who was presented in Aristophanes' *The Clouds* (423 B.C.) as a sophist, could easily be associated with the already refined and generalized image of the sycophant in *The Knights* (424 B.C.), in which the treacherous slave victimized his master, *Demos*, in his own person. The hero of this play pretended to serve his master just as Socrates had pretended to serve the *Demos*, but he nevertheless could easily be perceived as the clever trickster who made his capital at the expense of people's naiveté.⁴⁵ It was not by chance that Aristophanes' *The Knights* was awarded first prize at the Lenaen festival in 424 B.C. by the "grateful" people. If we trust the good

sense of the poets, it can be maintained that the sycophant in this play, who in the end was “deservedly” punished for having made a fool of Demos, was meant to be the generalized image of “the enemy of the people”.

There are also other grounds and historical records which support the claim that the Greek *sycophant*, the innocent, servile, but self-seeking flatterer seen as a parasite on society, might fit the image of the main victim of totalitarian regimes. Unfortunately, as classical scholars maintain, there is no reliable account of an individual who was a sycophant, and we are thereby left without any means for understanding who he was unless we place him in the class of “mass enemy”. What is essential in this respect is that the sycophant acquired “popularity” after the defeat of Athens in the Peloponnesian War and was accused of having been its main cause. And it appears that contemporary feelings about sycophants were quite mixed, as if people were convinced that their extermination was not undeserved but had a reason. In fact, the sycophant still survived as “an enemy” a century after the end of the war.

The frequency with which the enigmatic term sycophant was used is surprising; it can be found, for example, in Plato, Aristotle, Isocrates, Xenophon, and others. Xenophon relates how there were people who “happily cooperated” in the killing of anti-aristocratic sycophants, while the rest of the population was apparently indifferent and did not object. It was during the regime of the Thirty when the persecution of sycophants was rampant. The fact that this was not the regime of a single leader does not diminish its likeness to the modern totalitarian regimes we know. It is reported that Lysis, who should have had no sympathy with the Thirty because of the suffering they caused his family, commented that “no one would have objected to them if they had been guilty only of the persecution and murder of the sycophants”. Some even claimed that people would have found them to be good men if this had been the case.

A recent inquiry into the nature of the Spartans, who “did not love their family but their state”, also serves to convince us that “with their visual propaganda and their state security, their efficient deceits and mass killings, there is without doubt something very modern about the Spartans” (Powell, 1988, pp. 224, 252). Parallels between the Spartans, who introduced the regime of the Thirty in Athens, and the German National Socialists are neither new nor hard to find. More surprising is the fact that *Aidos* (Shame), which was recognized as a divinity in Sparta, was also worshipped in the countries of the former communist block insofar as they were defined as “shame cultures” (Fehér, Heller & Markus, 1983) and the organization of the social life there quite resembled that of a military camp where war was “ritualized”.

The second example involves the quite sensitive question about the reasons for perhaps the worst nightmare in the civilized history of Europe, namely, the transformation of entire peoples into scapegoats. Perhaps many different reasons and interpretations can be given from other points of view, but none of them seems to be exhaustive or sufficiently convincing. There is, however, an opportunity to ascribe a new meaning to these events when they are analyzed within the framework of systems theory.

The claim here is that appointing particular people to be scapegoats, who are univocally recognized as such by the mass, cannot be completely arbitrary or incidental. Plausible explanations must be provided for why certain people who previously may have been well incorporated organizationally into a given society come to be perceived as complete strangers at a time of social crisis when institutions take charge. One thing that must first be emphasized is that the selection criteria of social organizations are quite different from those of institutions. It cannot be said that the mass “chooses” or “elects” the scapegoat as it elects its popular leaders, whose “charisma” is always language-based. On the contrary, the “chosen” are those who have never been elected in that they are not sufficiently capable of representing the whole. Thus, the first orientation in the search for “the sacrificeable” in a given society points toward those who have no importance from the point of view of its institutional evolution.

The present analysis assumes the existence of two *coordinate lines* that may have served for detecting the “race enemy” within the visual field of an entire given nation whose vision has been sharpened by its war experience. The *diachronic coordinate line* requires considering the case of peoples, the most prominent examples of which are Jews and Gypsies, who institutionally preserve their identities regardless of the given nation-state in which they live, never severing their community bonds that stretch across national boundaries and never actually giving up the observation positions and logics of thought suggested by the languages which they have inherited and preserve.⁴⁶ This provides the institutional grounds for designating some part of the systems environment as “the different”.⁴⁷

For historical reasons, this problem was created on the map of nation-states in Europe when peoples emerged there with languages that had been long dissociated from their places of birth, to which they could not return. Peoples without their own nation-states, having languages that designate observation positions devoid of any locality, perhaps should be expected to become easy scapegoats at a time of total social or media crises when language acquires supreme importance.⁴⁸ In addition to that, we have to fur-

ther explain how *the synchronic coordinate line* was drawn, that is, how the social position of “the enemy” was detected in the present. From a systems point of view, in order to understand why the Jews emerged more than any other people at the crossing point of these two lines as “The Enemy”, it is necessary also to discuss the crisis of the systems media as an organizational (not institutional) value brought about by the collapse of the functional subsystems of society, which are responsible for the utilization and distribution of specific social media.

The macro-systems analysis assumes that the dominant social subsystem at the beginning of World War I was the system of the economy and the dominant medium was money. After the war, however, this medium became extremely scarce. During that time of social crisis and instability, no one thought of investments, and money became transformed into *treasure* without the social function it previously had.⁴⁹ In the way the mechanism works when a crisis of the social medium emerges, the people, not knowing any theories, intuitively orient themselves towards the search for an internal enemy, who, just as René Girard (1989) put it, without being guilty, are accused of sacrilege, that is, of “stealing the sacred good”.⁵⁰

According to this conception, what happened had nothing to do with the particular racial or ethnic characteristics of, in this case, the Jews. I believe the story would have been much the same with any people whatsoever, from any nation whatsoever, who would have been found at that particular moment, in that particular place, to have the particular position of holders of a good that had become scarce. As was noted above, this would especially be the case when the people in question, having been deprived for centuries of the right to fix their observation point on solid ground and have a state of their own, must constantly be involved in the reproduction of their own language to the disregard of the official language spoken around them. If we further imagine that the Jews never emerged within the framework of European nation states, then, to be sure, the Gypsies or the Slavs could serve as possible substitutes. Thus, there is always one best “actor” for the part of the scapegoat, who was not given a social role but was finally called on to play the “non-role” of a victim, but if this actor is not available, then the “play” will not be cancelled but will go on with a *surrogate-scapegoat*.

The third example is the extermination of the kulaks in Russia, which represents as great a puzzle as the Holocaust. It seems that the “choice” of the scapegoat came after a long process of political hesitation, rigorous debates, and uncertainty. Obviously, the causes for this are intimately connected with the fact that the original “Bolshevik scapegoat” did not possess

a justifiable diachronic dimension in that capitalism had faced great difficulties in accommodating itself to Russian soil. It could be said that as soon as the capitalist was appointed to the role of a mass enemy and accused of sacrilege, he immediately “resigned”. Indeed, capitalism in Russia was an ironically weak enemy for such a massive mass struggle, while czarism, as Kolakowski (1978) observed, collapsed even before being attacked. Furthermore, the capitalists were never in possession of a social medium or a “sacred good” that was considered to be of vital importance. It was in this situation that the real “class enemy” of the workers was suddenly discovered in the face of the wealthy peasant (kulaks), something which seems to have introduced great confusion into classical “class theory”.

Those who were labelled “kulaks” were neither a class insofar as some of them were not even big land owners, nor were they capitalists in the sense in which economic theory would like to define them. They had neither money nor any modern means of production that could be expropriated. Furthermore, not only had they not been considered enemies before the bread shortage and before the time when money no longer counted, but their activities had been specifically encouraged by the NEP (Lenin’s New Economic Policy). Of course, we can search for a similar crisis of money to appear when we talk about a crisis of the economy, but Russia was not a modern industrialized country and did not have a market that could make money the main medium of exchange. And there was nothing to buy even when the people had money, which in turn happened to be one reason why the “kulaks” did not want to sell their crops.⁵¹

In other words, we may say that this case involved a crisis over the medium in a primitive economy. The articulation of the *diachronic coordinate line* for appointing the Russian scapegoat must necessarily consider the opposition between, on the one hand, the owners of the so greatly cherished “Motherland”, which, as Russian poetry demonstrates, has always been “the sacred object”, and, on the other, the landless peasants, who only recently had acquired their freedom and left their native villages in order to become “modern workers”. Apart from being in possession of “the sacred good” in a time of crisis without having any monopoly rights as the only “children of the Mother” (that is, in an institutional sense), the kulaks were also perceived to be the holders of the most important medium that assured survival in a time of famine, namely, grain. Thus, the *synchronic line* was drawn on the basis of the perception of a medium of vital importance, the grain itself, that had suddenly become scarce.

As with any other medium, the grain has the property of capitalizing itself, of fulfilling the requirements of Marx’s formula “Money-Goods-

Money”. And it is the same with the grain which, when “invested” in the land, will be transformed into a growing plant and capitalize itself in the form of the “crop”. Such *conversion cycles*, in which all systems media participate, are not always guaranteed. A given year’s harvest may be poor, the name may be dishonored, the money may be invested badly.

The process of the reproduction and distribution of systems media is secured by the normal functioning of the system. The social system is a powerful human invention that made it possible for “the fittest” to survive together with those who “do not fit”, “the same” to survive together with “the different”. But apparently when the system collapses, the civilized world rediscovers the truth of the natural law of the “survival of the fittest”, that is, the holders of that medium which had acquired vital importance. It is against the justice of this “law” that the rage of the masses is directed and against which they juxtapose the institutional “law”, according to which those to whom the medium belongs by “ancestral right” survive.

In this sense, the sociological analysis of the totalitarian experience may help to develop a more sober and realistic image of The System, which by itself is not “the source of all evils”. It is rather a lack of knowledge of its architecture and the unperceived obstacles to the realization of its original plan that makes it “derail” from the path towards the realization of a more just social world that was anticipated by our ancestors.

It is perhaps the firm belief that the social system is a kind of *panacea*, a *cure-all* for social diseases, which made the fact that it actually has all the qualities of a “Greek *pharmakon*” slip from attention. As such, the social system is both poison and remedy, and it brings both sickness and healing according to the circumstances. There are no reasons to maintain that old truths are no longer valid in modern times, and that the wisdom of the ancient Greek tragedians, who conceived of ignorance as the main source of the evil that befalls man, is no longer credible. The problem then is that *the pharmaco-poieia* containing “the most important knowledge”, that is, the knowledge that Socrates claimed the gods reserved for themselves, the knowledge that could have provided mankind with a guide to maintain social health and cure social diseases, has either been lost, misunderstood, unfinished, or was never written.

Notes

1 In *The Rules* Durkheim particularly made the point that sociology neither has a need to take sides, nor should affirm free will instead of determinism. All she may

ask for is that “the principle of causality should be applicable to social phenomena.” Although sociology is interested in practical questions, her problems thus arise out of facts, not out of passion, and the solutions “that sociology may provide to them will not chime exactly with those which attract the various interest groups.” Therefore, the role of sociology “must consist precisely in liberating us from all parties. This will be done not so much by opposing one doctrine to other doctrines, but by causing those minds confronted with these questions to develop a special attitude, one that science alone can give through direct contact with things” (Durkheim, 1992, pp. 159-161).

- 2 This has become quite obvious with the difficulties facing the process of post-totalitarian rehabilitation, where it seems that the only effective healing procedure is a “blood transfusion” in the form of spiritual and economic aid or, when nothing else is left, simply waiting for the coming of the new generation.
- 3 What should be taken into account in this respect is the difference between *words* and *deeds*, whereby the words that have been spoken or written have to be decoded or treated as a poetic text dealing with universals rather than concrete facts. Furthermore, such documents do not contain the *unwritten rules* according to which they were prepared. Thus, in the case of visual presentations of economic tendencies in the countries of the former communist block, graphs of any economic data whatsoever always had to have an upward curve according to an unwritten law. Indeed, producing such economic curves in many cases required specific professional skills having more to do with art than with science.
- 4 Even if we accept the collapse of the nation-state as a legitimate reason for the emergence of totalitarianism, the reasons why the ancient Greek *polis* should not be considered as a compatible example of a nation state, although unique to its times, are not entirely clear.
- 5 In this respect, Margaret Canovan makes a quite relevant observation. “(W)hereas a quasi-causal link between imperialism and Nazism is plausibly made through Pan-Germanism, of which Nazism was clearly a descendant, in the case of Stalinism Hannah Arendt has to claim a much more dubious ancestry by way of Pan-Slavism, the connection of which with Stalinism is scarcely obvious” (Canovan 1974, p. 38).
- 6 Such a statement might explain the difference between Fascism and National Socialism on the basis of the self-reflection of the Nazis themselves. Goebbels describes this difference as precisely a matter of deepness, or of levels. He states that Fascism “is... nothing like National Socialism. While the latter goes deep down to its roots, Fascism is only a superficial thing” (*The Goebbels Diaries* 1942-43, ed. by Louis Lochner, New York, 1948, p. 71, quoted in Arendt 1975, p. 309).
- 7 Exceptions to this rule are discussed below in the present text, especially in respect to the paradoxical case of living peoples who speak “dead languages.”
- 8 This particular feature of totalitarian regimes was emphasized in the first systematic reconstruction of the totalitarian phenomenon, which provided the so called “classical schema” of its six basic characteristics (Friedrich, 1957). But this has

often been found to be unconvincing since if only modern technology and industrialization are able to secure the conditions necessary for complete control over all spheres of social life and monopoly of power, then post-colonial repressive regimes in developing countries must be excluded from the analysis of totalitarianism (Spiro, 1968).

9 Some of these questions are discussed in Misheva (1993).

10 Messages are normally used in systems that make interaction between present and absent people possible, something which is in fact the case with an all-embracing societal system. But messages are quite incompatible with the principles governing face-to-face interactions, in which mutual presence is acknowledged. The totalitarian interaction space must be regarded in this sense as something quite strange in that the authorities used messages in an interaction with present people, that is, they spoke to them as if they were absent or had no reason.

11 Kornhauser defines the “situation in which an aggregate of individuals are related to one another only by way of their relation to a common authority, especially the state” as *mass society*, where organizations that previously gave structure to society were themselves transformed into “empty shells, run by faceless bureaucrats, unable to provide any meaning or gratification to the individual” (Hagtvet & Kuehnl 1980, p. 98.) In search for the reasons for this “internal weakening of organizations,” Hagtvet and Kuehnl conclude in a discussion of two possible implications of Kornhauser’s interpretation of Weimar society that “social isolation can be located on two distinct levels: 1) between the state and organizations, and 2) between organizations and their clientele.” They could find no sufficient evidence for the first interpretation, which implies the treatment of isolation simply as a type of “political impotence” in which the population, although well incorporated into organizations, enjoy few benefits from the communication of their concerns to the state. Their study rather lends support to the second interpretation, which implies that communications between the organization and its environment comprised of clients have collapsed.

12 For a summary of critical remarks on Arendt’s account of totalitarianism, see Canovan 1977, p. 38.

13 Certain recent efforts to create a “credible and morally attractive theory of human need” that is informed by the search for “a third way forward which rejects both market individualism and state collectivism” have come up with a more elaborated definition of the term “basic needs” (Doyal & Gough 1991, 3). It has thus been suggested that “*since physical survival and personal autonomy are the preconditions for any individual action in any culture, they constitute the most basic human needs*” (ibid., p. 54). While we can agree that “the need for physical survival on its own cannot do justice to what it means to be a person”, the same is also now true for the term “autonomous”. It is not the ability to act but rather the ability to communicate that defines who can and cannot be regarded as a person. The person is a person only insofar as he communicates and is recognized as an address or respondent (Taylor, 1985, p. 97). The question then is what the individual needs in order to

participate in the process of social communication. It is not the lack of physical health but rather the lack of access to a social medium (regardless of its nature, whether it be language, money, or power, and so forth) that makes every physically strong and autonomous human being, who has unrestricted opportunities for action, “invisible” within the social system, for which it serves as the criterion for personal presence.

- 14 Weber uses the term party to designate “associations, membership in which rests on formally free recruitment,” whose end is “to secure power within an organization for its leaders in order to attain ideal or material advantages for its active members” (Weber, 1978, p. 284). Even if Weber had kept his promise and offered a further elaboration of the notion of “party” in his unwritten *Sociology of State*, it cannot be expected that the question of parties as “compulsory organizations,” which denote institutions in his terms, would have been raised.
- 15 In the first years after Hitler’s seizure of power, the party offices in Germany had to extend their working hours because they otherwise would not have been able to enlist all those who had volunteered to become Nazi Party members.
- 16 The image of The Party as a motor or heart which beats, carries blood, and grants life to the whole of society is fairly widespread in, for example, Bulgarian pro-Communist poetry after 1944.
- 17 In the political language that was representative for the Communist countries in Eastern Europe, workers were referred to as “the soldiers on the labor front.” In principle, the functional differentiation of these societies can be conceived of only in the form of a “differentiating front,” or external boundary. Doctors were thus supposed to “struggle on the medical front,” scientists and scholars were “struggling on the scientific front,” writers were “struggling on the literary front,” spies and informers were “struggling on the silent front,” and so forth. Ironically, the word “soldier” was sometimes used as a reference to workers who shirk work. Indeed, observing such “work” could easily create the impression that it was “the struggle” itself which was most important, not the quality of the work, its efficiency, or its result. This suggests the idea of a military camp, where every soldier has to be involved in constant, but mostly inefficient, unprofessionally done, or even senseless activities in order to be kept in good physical shape (similar remarks were also made by Arendt). Perhaps we should even admit that in that world there was no “action” but only an *imitation of action* stirred up by skilful *interpreters*, whereby a peculiar, unreal, theatrical dimension is then attached to those societies.
- 18 Institutions represent a “standardized mode of behaviour” (Radcliffe-Brown, 1940, p. 9). They play a basic part in the temporal and spatial constitution of the social system and in day-to-day social activity. Moreover, they are responsible for the reproduction of social and biological life and for the socialization of the young into adults; embrace family and kinship relations; regulate the production, distribution, and consumption of goods; control and maintain social boundaries; and so forth (Giddens, 1990, p. 96). All of these functions were the functions and domain of the type of parties discussed above.

- 19 For a more detailed presentation of the theoretical background of the macro-sociological theory of the autopoietic systems, see Luhmann, 1990, pp. 1-20.
- 20 According to Luhmann, the system of economy has a dominant position today, although with the transition to the “world system of society” its supreme authority over the interpretation of the world has come into question (Luhmann, 1982, pp. 334, 349). It is also assumed that society is moving towards a scientific society where science is going to play the dominant social role.
- 21 Needless to say, the excommunication of particular individuals from a particular social organization, such as the Church, is not new in the history of civilization. We may even find that it is a quite old invention that was widely practiced in democratic Athens as a special means for preserving the political system (ostracism). Excommunication is obviously at least as old as the formation of the system of communications and the clear definition of its boundary. The new aspect under discussion here concerns the level on which it appears and its consequences rather than its essence.
- 22 The difference between internal and external environments is revealed in respect to their communication abilities. External environments do not have access to the systems medium and cannot produce communications from it. From the point of view of the system, the language is a medium of communication, but from the point of view of the environment, it is rather a means of production without which even human beings with reason cannot be considered as part of the system. This systems interpretation thus corresponds to Marx’s idea of alienation in economic terms as alienation from the means of production.
- 23 A war between two countries, however cruel and disastrous, can never produce the same effect. The situation which can be responsible for this is not one party against another, but rather all parties against the one who is stigmatized as “totally different” and as containing nothing that is the same.
- 24 It should be noted that systems use certain techniques, such as advertising and propaganda, to enlarge their capital of trust. No one today is surprised by the argument that propaganda played a decisive role in establishing power within the totalitarian regimes. The only thing lacking is a sociological interpretation of the role of these newly discovered mechanisms in creating the enormous trust in mass parties that was the source of the symbolic capital of these regimes, namely, “power.”
- 25 The man of the crowd can easily be distinguished from the man of mass consumption society. The latter is the ideal opposite of the former in that he trusts and is ready to trust, even beyond the limits of the rational expectations discussed by Luhmann.
- 26 Alienation understood in this sense is quite closely related to what Nietzsche understood by nihilism as the psychological state which will “be reached, first, when we have sought a ‘meaning’ in all events that is not there: so the seeker eventually becomes discouraged. Nihilism then is the recognition of the long waste of strength, the agony of the ‘in vain,’ insecurity, the lack of any opportunity to recover and to regain composure – being ashamed in front of oneself, as if

- one has deceived oneself too long.” See Nietzsche, 1968, p. 12.
- 27 “Among those people the custom of carrying arms still survives from the old days of robbery; for at one time, since houses were unprotected and communication unsafe, this was a general custom throughout the whole of Hellas and it was the normal thing to carry arms on all occasions, as it is now among foreigners. The fact that the peoples I have mentioned still live in this way is evidence that once this was the general rule among all the Hellenes. The Athenians were the first to give up the habit of carrying weapons and to adopt a way of living that was more relaxed and more luxurious” (Thucydides, 1975, I, p. 6).
- 28 Although there are good *prima facie* reasons for believing that totalitarianism is a direct consequence of World War I, Arendt does not have many followers in her discussion of the War as a “great prelude to the breakdown of classes and their transformation into masses” and of the war-generation with its “war enthusiasm” as being almost directly responsible for this (Arendt, 1975, pp. 328-29).
- 29 According to S. N. Eisenstadt, “(B)arbarism in the form of brutalities of different kinds, of genocide, of annihilation of subjugated populations, of invasions, killings and the like is not something new in the history of modernity. It became more extreme and widespread with the development and expansion of modern technologies of destruction and communication,” but it also acquired certain additional features. For example, Eisenstadt indicates the most important feature of modern barbarism to be “its principled ideological dimension; the legitimization of barbarism in terms of the absolutistic and totalistic exclusion of some parts of our population that were parts of a common framework with the excluders – but were defined as total others and excluded from any common human category” (Eisenstadt, 1994). He further claims that although such negation and exclusion had existed in the past, especially within the various monotheistic religions, it was never total. But if we go back to the very roots of our civilization, we may see that the pattern of total exclusion is not a unique feature of modernity and that exclusion itself (ostracism, stigmatization) was the main mechanism by which Athenian democracy defined its systems boundaries.
- 30 At the very beginning of *The History*, where we should expect the subject to be defined, we read that “This was the greatest disturbance in the history of the Hellenes, affecting also a large part of the non-Hellenic world, and indeed, I might almost say, the whole of mankind” (Thucydides I, 1). Such a “disturbance” concerning the whole of mankind would today rightly be called a “world war.”
- 31 In the very first page of his work on Thucydides, Connor writes: “That earliest struggle, The Peloponnesian War, in which democratic Athens fought totalitarian Sparta provided a simple but awesome allegory for our own times. Thucydides’ work revealed a precedent for our polarized world, and might, we hope, provide a guide through the perils of contemporary international affairs. In 1947 Secretary of State George Marshall called attention to the significance of the Peloponnesian War for an understanding of the contemporary world: ‘I doubt seriously whether a man can think with full wisdom and with deep convictions regarding certain of

- the basic international issues today who has not at least reviewed in his mind the period of the Peloponnesian War and the Fall of Athens.' And his views were widely echoed." Connor also points to an article from 1952 ("A message from Thucydides," L. J. Halle) in which it is stated: "It seems to me that since World War II Thucydides has come still closer to us so that he now speaks to our year" (Connor, 1984, p. 3). However, the analogy can be extended much further if we instead compare the Peloponnesian War with the First World War, the position of Germany after the war with that of fallen Athens, as well as the eventual coming of Hitler to power which revived the spirit of Sparta with the regime of the Thirty. This view gives credit to Gomme, who was the first to see the analogy between the First World War and the Peloponnesian War, an opinion which even the experience of the Second World War cannot devalue (Gomme, 1937).
- 32 That there are differences between historians and sociologists concerning the assessment of the war should not be surprising. Finley, for example, wrote in his "Introduction" to *The History* that "The Peloponnesian war between Athens and Sparta did not even last long enough (from 431 to 404, with a scarcely honoured seven-years of 'peace' in the middle)" to be remembered. If it does live on, it is "not so much for anything that happened or because of any of the participants, but because of the man who wrote its history, Thucydides the Athenian" (Thucydides, 1981, p. 9).
- 33 Thucydides, as well as Solon and Plato, distinguished between two types of wars, namely, *polemos* and *stasis*. It is assumed that the one takes place between the cities, while the other takes place between the parties inside cities. However, it is more important from a systems point of view that when Thucydides presents *polemos* he furnishes it with speeches, but there are no speeches when he turns to describe *stasis*. We are instead informed that "even the words change their meaning," by which we may assume that language has collapsed as a medium of communication. One plausible explanation of the lack of speeches in some cases, and especially at the end of the *Peloponnesian War*, is that the author intended it to be this way in order to suggest that the war had entered a stage in which communication became altogether impossible, not that some parts of the work were not yet ready for publication.
- 34 Consideration should be given to the fact that the function of *shame* as social medium is completely opposite to that of *honor*. While the former presumes an institutional order, equality in respect to a tradition whose authority is not challenged, and the sanctioning of all deviant behavior, the latter encourages difference, the pursuit of heroic achievements, and the rise of the individual above the mass of equals by virtue of his unique skills and deeds. In this sense, the shame/honor cultural code should not be seen as a unity, but rather as comprising two separate codes that are responsible for different cultural ideal types. In respect to social anthropology, perhaps a distinction should also be made between *shame culture* and *honor culture*, which cannot be one and the same thing from a sociological point of view.
- 35 In the chapter on the Civil War in Corcyra we read: "Fanatical enthusiasm was the mark of a real man, and to plot against an enemy behind his back was perfectly

- legitimate self-defence. Anyone who held violent opinions could always be trusted, and anyone who objected to them became a suspect. To plot successfully was a sign of intelligence. ... (I)t was equally praiseworthy to get one's blow in first against someone who was going to do wrong, and to denounce someone who had no intention of doing any wrong at all."
- 36 "Wide areas, for instance, were affected by violent earthquakes; there were more frequent eclipses of the sun than had ever been recorded before; in various parts of the country there were extensive droughts followed by famine; and there was the plague which did more harm and destroyed more life than almost any other single factor. All these calamities fell together upon the Hellenes after the outbreak of war" (Thucydides, 1975, I, p. 23).
- 37 "The mass of the people had had little enough to start with and had now been deprived of even that; the richer classes had lost their fine estates with their rich and well-equipped houses in the country, and, which was the worst thing of all, they were at war instead of living in peace. In fact, the general ill feeling against Pericles persisted, and was not satisfied until they had condemned him to pay a fine. Not long afterwards, however, as is the way with crowds, they re-elected him to the generalship and put all their affairs into his hands" (Thucydides, 1975, II, p. 65).
- 38 This idea is perhaps most clearly expressed in connection, once again, with the events in Corcyra. Athen, with the ordinary conventions of civilized life thrown into confusion, human nature, always ready to offend even where laws exist, showed itself proudly in its true colours, as something incapable of controlling passion, insubordinate to the idea of justice, the enemy to anything superior to itself; for, if it had not been for the pernicious power of envy, men would not so have exalted vengeance above innocence and profit above justice" (Thucydides, 1975, III, p. 84).
- 39 "As a rule those who were least remarkable for intelligence showed the greater powers of survival. ... (F)earing that they might lose a debate or find themselves out-manoeuvred in intrigue by their quick-witted enemies, they boldly launched straight into action; while their opponents, over-confident ... and not thinking it necessary to seize by force what they could secure by policy, were the more easily destroyed because they were off their guard" (Thucydides, 1975, III, p. 83).
- 40 The following description may sound surprisingly familiar to a post-world-war modern readers: "Family relations were a weaker tie than party membership, since party members were more ready to go to any extreme for any reason whatever. These parties were not formed to enjoy the benefits of the established laws... and the members of these parties felt confidence in each other not because of any fellow-ship in a religious communion, but because they were partners in crime" (Thucydides, 1975, III, p. 82).
- 41 "(T)he Corcyraeans continued to massacre those of their own citizens whom they considered to be their enemies. Their victims were accused of conspiring to overthrow the democracy, but in fact men were often killed on grounds of personal hatred or else by their debtors because of the money that they owed. There was death in every shape and form... people went to every extreme and beyond.

- There were fathers who killed their sons; men were dragged from the temples or butchered on the very altars” (Thucydides, 1975, III, p. 81).
- 42 It would be both premature and wrong to conclude that modern society, regardless of all its progress, ends up by rediscovering the same types of solutions which were at the disposal of pre-civilized man when it is faced with social crisis. While this question cannot be fully discussed here, I wish to remark that only a particular pathological development within the social system which is connected in some way with the collapse of the *poietic function* responsible for the production and restoration of social media leaves the collapsed society with no choice other than reconciliation through a common experience of violence.
- 43 It is important to note that Plato himself wrote that “a most sacrilegious charge, which he least of all men deserved” was brought against Socrates (Epis. VII, p. 325c).
- 44 The following text represents a good summary of the events that brought about the phenomenon of people turning against themselves in search of the enemy: The Spartan admiral “Lysander threatened any Athenians caught outside Athens with death, and refugees streamed into the city, where food soon ran short. ... The citizens resisted a Spartan blockade... seeking desperately, and vainly, to make terms that would leave them, not indeed their empire and fleet, but at least their Long Walls. Yet by spring 404 there was nothing to eat any longer, and they offered unconditional surrender. ... Lysander proceeded to Athens. However, he refused to agree with Sparta’s allies Corinth and Thebes that the city should be destroyed and its inhabitants annihilated. ... (H)e set up an oligarchic government at Athens, the Thirty, who before the year 404 was over had executed 1,500 Athenians and banished 5,000 more. Enforced by the presence of a Spartan garrison, this reign of terror was directed by the clever but sinister Critias, who put his more moderate, opportunistic colleague Theramenes to death for opposing the bloodbath” (Grant, 1987, p. 166).
- 45 In *The Knights*, the sycophant’s victim is presented as the “one of easy temper, mouth agape, and vacant look,” “some lambkin-witted dunce,” who, while found mainly among the townsmen, also appears to be “wealthy, void of tricks and malice, shuddering at disputes and fuss” (Aristophanes, 1930, pp. 263-68). As can be inferred from the description, the sycophant, who “flatters, and fawns, and wheedles, and cajoles” (ibid., p. 48), is not afraid of disputes, which indicates that he is at least a close kin of the Sophist. It is also surprising that the play reveals a clearly manifested influence from Pindar (Pindar’s words are even put into the mouths of the Chorus at line 1329), and it almost depicts the sycophant with the same language and contempt with which Pindar had described the “slanderer” or *diabolos*, who in his Choral lyric appears to be as much an enemy of Pindar as of the Chorus or community (ibid., p. 262). We know, furthermore, from Plato (*Protagoras*, p. 316d) that the Sophist’s art was a quite ancient and dangerous occupation, whereby those who practised it, “fearing the odium which it brings, adopted a disguise and worked under cover” (poetry, religious rites and prophecy, physical training, music). This cannot help but

suggest that the hatred against the sycophant did not involve some newly invented image of the enemy but rather had deeper and older roots that crystallized with clear contours in the aftermath of the war.

- 46 On the question of the otherness of the scapegoat, Girard notes that “the community belongs to the victim but the victim does not belong to the community.” Furthermore, “the victim will appear to be more foreign than native; as in many myths, the victim is a *visitor* that has come from an unknown world” (Girard, 1987, p. 78).
- 47 Girard assumes that “there must be real persecution behind the text of medieval anti-Semitism,” for example, in “those texts that relate episodes of anti-Jewish persecution during a medieval plague, the notorious Black Death.” The tendency “to describe the Jews as inhuman monsters” or the unbelievable tales about “the magical power of the Jews to harm the community, as a result of their unnatural acts similar to those of Oedipus” apparently arose in an age prior to modernity (Girard, 1988, pp. 210-211).
- 48 In her profound study *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Hannah Arendt (1975) emphasized that the Jews had the peculiar status of being the only nation in Europe without a state. But when it is taken into account that the Gypsies also represent a comparable case in this respect, the issue of peoples without states of their own living within nation states may be regarded as the “missing link” between the two victimized peoples.
- 49 Hannah Arendt writes that, “When Hitler came to power, the German banks were already almost *judenrein* (and it was here that Jews had held key positions for more than a hundred years).” But, on the other hand, the Jews were a people without real power, something Arendt referred to as “wealth without power.” Furthermore, “Even exploitation and oppression still make society work and establish some kind of order. Only wealth without power or aloofness without a policy are felt to be parasitical, useless, revolting, because such conditions cut all the threads which tie men together.” See Arendt, 1975, pp. 4-5.
- 50 In order to imagine how such a thing might happen, we could picture a game that was suddenly interrupted, at which point all the other players turned in rage against the player with the ball, as if he was the reason why the game had stopped. Although the accusations against this player are groundless, the choice of the victim is not without a cause.
- 51 Leszek Kolakowski writes that, “Substantial concession to the peasants in 1925 led to an increase in farm production, but by 1927 the output of grain had still not reached its pre-1914 level, while the demand for food was increasing with the progress of industry and urbanization. Smallholders had little grain to dispose of, and the kulaks were not in a hurry to sell either, as there was nothing to buy with the money they received. Hence in 1927, Stalin made up his mind to adopt extreme measures of confiscation and coercion. ... The increased economic and administrative pressure on the peasants led to a drastic fall in deliveries and a worsening of the already serious food situation. Stalin talked more and more of the kulak danger and the growing strength of the class enemy, but in February

1928 he was still insisting that rumours of the abandonment of NEP and the liquidation of the kulaks were counter-revolutionary twaddle. Barely four months later, however, he announced that 'the time was ripe' for the mass organization of collective farms. Such was the setting for the mass collectivization of Soviet agriculture – probably the most massive warlike operation ever conducted by a state against its own citizens." In 1929 Stalin decided to embark on the "liquidation of the kulak as a class". See Kolakowski, 1978, pp. 37-38.

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Dagmar Kutsar

INCREASING THREATS OF ALIENATION IN A POST-SOCIALIST COUNTRY: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

Introduction

My aim in this paper is to discuss alienation and the factors which determine it in a post-socialist country. Alienation can be understood as a disturbed process of interaction between individuals and society as the result of the weakening bond between them. Alienation is expressed in increasing non-participation and social pessimism among the population. In the post-socialist countries, it can be understood as the price of societal transformations. Here I would like to discuss the factors, objective as well as subjective, which are decisive in the process of alienation in Estonia.

Estonia was incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1940 as one of the Soviet Socialist Republics and remained in the U.S.S.R. sphere of influence and power until 1991 when she again declared her independence.

Estonia suffered from dependency on Moscow's dictates in all the spheres of its economic, political, and social life. New industries were designed to attract immigration. As a result, the rate of immigration from other regions of the Soviet Union rose greatly. The proportion of the population which did not belong to the majority ethnic group in Estonia reached about one-third.

Among the states of the Eastern Bloc, Estonia ranked quite high in the Human Development Index. That was caused mainly by the state's active

concern for the social sphere, and her relatively lavish investments in social services at the time of the Soviet order. An extensive network of pre-school institutions was developed. Free education and free health care were provided for everyone. The cost of housing was low. Overtly there was no unemployment, and the major trend was one of gender equality. The paternalistic welfare system relieved major tensions of daily living. There was government support, for example, for those in need: the families with low incomes, single parents, families with many children. Shelter was made available to the elderly who had no family and to those who suffered from severe disabilities or chronic illnesses. State subsidies for goods and services made it possible to keep salaries as well as prices on a comparatively low level.

From High Involvement to the Risks of Social Exclusion and Alienation

For the majority ethnic group of Estonians, the fact of being incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1940 was unexpected and in many ways a process engineered by force. New Soviet traditions were introduced to take the place of most of the old ethnic customs. New patterns of living, formally denoted as '*Soviet in their forms and ethnic in their nature*' were enforced. Many families were split up – some because members were deported, and some because people withdrew into exile. Those who stayed adapted to '*double-lives*' – continuously longing for national independence, but overtly behaving like loyal Soviet citizens.

In the eighties, when the Soviet economic system stagnated and more liberal winds started to blow, the national awakening in Estonia started. In the first grass roots stage, the peaceful revolution was dominated by concerns with problems related to national identity. The emerging new hopes for national independence were realized through the rapid activation of civic initiative. A popular front took shape as an informal organization and operated as a pressure group for the restoration of democratic relations and independent statehood. As a result of public pressure the Supreme Soviet of Estonia passed a declaration of sovereignty in 1988. This proclaimed the supremacy of local laws and declared all resources in this country to be her own.

The first wave of the democratic movement was lifted up with exalted feelings of participation among the majority of the population. Springing from the roots of the collapsing totalitarian system and fed by opposition towards it, the reinvigorated participatory democracy was *destructive* of the

old system and its power structures. The destructive participation was supported by faith in the deeds of new charismatic leaders and political elites.

In 1989-1990 the first attempts at restoration of civic society were made. A free press developed; a multi-party system emerged. An entirely new experience of free elections was achieved. The whole society became more open to the outer world. People were highly enthusiastic about setting up cottage industries and about other forms of individual entrepreneurship.

On August 23, 1990, the popular fronts of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania organized a human chain 600 kilometers long, from Vilnius to Tallinn demanding 'Freedom for the Baltic States'. The three states declared the Soviet power illegal. An indigenous constitutional power was formed in each of the Baltic countries in 1991.

The search for a national identity lost its importance as democratic institutions emerged and competition became dominant in society. Still, 'everybody' was committed to the community, deeply involved in public affairs, with high hopes. There was an atmosphere of impatience with the delay in attaining the condition of '*living happily ever after*'. Contradicting the expectations for imminent gratification, the entire population began to experience multiple losses. These were demonstrated in the restrictions on welfare resources. The result has been disillusionment, a significant decrease in social, political, and economic participation. The consequences are weakening bonds between an individual and the society (see *Figure 1*).

<p><i>National awakening and destructive participation</i> against the Soviet order aimed at independent statehood</p>	<p><i>Constructive participation</i> with high hopes and involvement after the restoration of independent statehood</p>	<p><i>Disillusionment</i>, increasing non-participation and alienation</p>
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Figure 1. Social participation in transition (Kutsar 1997).

As noted in the Latvian Human Development Report of 1996, participation is a non-monetary resource which can promote development without straining the state budget. Participation, or at least the opportunity for participation, is the most essential element of a civil society and the key to social cohesion. Linking people to the government, participation can help bolster popular confidence in public life more generally. At the same time, participation is an important factor for economic growth and individual self-realization both during crises and in periods of stable social development.

Estonia – among other new democracies, has had to face serious problems in promoting necessary but not altogether agreeable reforms and at the same time keeping social cohesion high. Since the decision was made to focus on economic development, human development has been relegated to a secondary position. Social problems were, therefore, gravely exacerbated during the period of 1991-1995.

People regarded as economic failures have come to condemn the state for an unjust situation. Their resources have been cut and they are left to fend for themselves. There has been a growing demand for restoration of the standard of living which prevailed before the transition began (Estonian Human Development Report, 1995).

Objective Risk Factors Leading to Non-participation and Alienation

The times of rapid societal transitions uncover several objective factors which are likely to lead people into non-participation and alienation. Factors operative in the case of Estonia are as follows.

Institutional and experiential vacuum

In a post-totalitarian society, democracy starts to develop in a vacuum of democratic institutions, applying its principles to people who are *uneducated and inexperienced in real democracy*, i.e. populations with a simplistic and often inadequate understanding of what democracy presupposes.

The weakness of democratic institutions rouses the concern of many foreign experts. Open public dialogue between groups with different interests is lacking. Governments rise and fall, and still fail to meet the public's expectations for a 'good life' and social participation. Moreover, inadequate procedural institutionalization causes fear of uncertainty and attendant pessimism among a significant proportion of the population.

Economic transition

In Estonia the economic decline has been catastrophic. The changing structure of property ownership and the reorientation of the economy from the Eastern European market to the Western market has led to a sharp economic decline and reduced production. This, in turn, has resulted in ex-

tremely low wages, unemployment, and a general decline in the well-being of the population.

During the transition the gross national product decreased by two-thirds. The demand for goods and services outstripped the supply; average prices went up and the purchasing power of the rouble decreased concomitantly. As a result of the 1992 monetary reform, with the liberation of prices, the cessation of subsidies, resulting unemployment, and a policy of low earnings, the incomes of the majority of the population decreased rapidly. Increase in the levels of prices outpaced increases in incomes. In 1994 an official decree defined a poverty line and approximately ten percent of the population fell into the indisputable category of the poor (*Estonian Human Development Report*, 1995; 1996).

Social and material deprivation and poverty

There is a large number of households with serious problems of economic survival. First, there is a large group put at a disadvantage. These are people of retirement age, mothers taking maternity leave, the handicapped, etc. They form a traditional group of people who in every way are dependent on the welfare system. The breakdown of the previous welfare system has produced a remarkable decrease in their resources and many people have fallen into grinding poverty. Secondly, there are people who, after losing a job or a permanent income, unexpectedly find themselves among the group which, at least temporarily, is in need of social welfare services.

A specific feature of the transformation in Estonia is the fact that people who still have possession of their old resources (a flat, a car, or a private house, for example), are not able to use them. Due to a significant decline in the accumulation of new welfare resources, they are unable to do necessary repairs on their homes, buy petrol for the cars, and so on. Moreover, they are unable to exchange the worn-out things for new ones. In the meantime there are new perspectives, with more and more goods and services available in the market. There are many people who remain unable to cope with the novel challenges, and in effect lack the freedom of choice. All that makes them concerned and dissatisfied.

In 1992, 63% of the households monitored by the *Estonian Household Budget Survey*, spent more than half of their income on food, and the opportunities for satisfying other needs were severely limited (Kutsar & Trumm, 1993). In three years (1995) the trend is somewhat improved, but still over half of the households are in a situation of social and material deprivation (Trumm, 1996).

Implementation of reforms

During the first years of her restored independence, Estonia's efforts were aimed mainly at setting up the political structures essential for an independent state as well as for the implementation of reforms. Still, there have been obstacles to the execution of the reforms. Privatization especially has been rather slow. As a result, there is little public confidence in entrepreneurship and participation has flagged.

Controversial roles of weak governments

The states "recovering" under post-socialism have built up their own democratically elected governments. So, like the entire population involved in intensive learning of new situations, the new governments are also forced to learn how to implement democracy. They face the highly complicated tasks of developing democratic political institutions, fostering a capitalist economy, and meeting the needs of different interest groups all at the same time.

The issue under debate is how to maintain the duality of the post-socialist transformation: to comply with the interests of those who need help without doing damage to the enterprising spirit of the economically successful people and without compromising economic progress in general. The socio-political developments in Estonia confirm that the wager has been on furthering economic development of the country and safeguarding the transition to political democracy.

Reconstruction of the social security system

The restoration of independent statehood, the transition to a market economy and the construction of a democratic civil society have brought to an end not only a particular type of political and economic system but a particular type of welfare state as well. The need for a new social security system is imperative because the state lacks the resources to keep the previous system alive. Basically, the reconstruction of the whole economy resulted in a decrease in the gross domestic product (GDP) and the real income of the population has significantly reduced the budget for social welfare services. Several services have been cut down, and an insignificant increase in social transfers in recent years has not been able to compensate for the losses of inflation. The situation of low state resources is most problematic because of the persistent problems of people who are not ready or able to support themselves.

The need for social assistance has been rapidly growing. At the same time, principles of the new order and a new welfare policy rely more on people's own initiatives. The implementation of principles of the market economy requires a new system of social security where personal responsibility, individual efforts, and self-help are the key to producing welfare resources for coping with everyday life.

Subjective Risk Factors Leading to Non-Participation and Alienation

Building a civil society requires laws and constitutional procedures, but its consummation also rests on the spirit of the people and their everyday actions. Some social psychological regularities and new phenomena intervene in the process of coping and adaptation to the new life situations created by the transformation process. These determine one's feelings of participation and control over one's own life situations to a great extent. On that ground – the post-socialist countries, including Estonia, experience trouble.

Individual coping with rapid changes and decreasing levels of subjective well-being as an outcome of adaptation

The multiple impact of this process of transformation is made manifest in the pressures on the population to engage in political, social, and economic reconstruction, pressures which demand the ability to adapt to change and to reconstruct personal identity. Changes on the societal level lead to the development of new patterns of interpersonal relationships – competition for the inadequate supply of jobs, the growing role of monetary relations among people, an increasing need to be able to fight for one's way of life. New situations create new demands for everybody, among them a demand for a readiness to further one's knowledge and skills; and to cultivate an enterprising spirit. Still, competing explanations of events in the mass media make the future less clear-cut and this, in turn, increases tension among people. Unrealistic social expectations create social myths, feelings of personal failure, distrust of the authorities.

In the situation of rapid societal change, individuals often are not able to adapt as quickly as the changes occur. For that reason, rapid change, even when it is positive in essence, brings a fear of losing cognitive control over situations and emotional tensions. These result in feelings of powerlessness,

dissatisfaction and alienation. Well-being acknowledges the *possibilities* for, as well as *limitations* on action. In general, the process of transformation in Estonia has been a strain for everybody if only by causing a decline in one's perceived quality of life, that is, a sense of decreased well-being (Kutsar, 1995).

Legacy of the totalitarian system

The philosophy of life underlying the planned economy and the paternalistic care of the socialist state has produced '*learned helplessness*' and a dearth of '*self-help mentality*'. This is an additional factor toward diminishing the levels of well-being and propelling towards alienation. The lack of a self-help mentality suppresses one's own activity and inclination for entrepreneurship, leaving an individual passively waiting for the kinds of help that the society has offered earlier.

Becoming aware that there is no help any more, overwhelms the person with discontent and confusion. On the other hand, rejection of the old social and political order as *wrong* cognitively rules out habitual coping strategies and puts an individual in a situation of higher uncertainty and non-participation.

Social demand and preference determines the personal challenge

In a country emerging from a totalitarian system, the meaning of an individual's previous experience is changing. For example, a person who did well in former times may now not be favored because his or her previous experience is likely to be assessed as invalid. This results in loss of personal identity, emerging anomie, perceived powerlessness and alienation.

As a post-socialist country, Estonia is attempting to foster purposeful new developments of the country and explicit preference is given to those people who are presumably able to meet the new demands. In parallel, some social myths intervene in the process, placing old and young people, men and women, the representatives of the ancient nationality in opposition to those not belonging to that nationality group; people with experience of the former regime opposed to those acquiring new social and political experience or even, to those who are still inexperienced.

One's age operates as a social-cognitive factor in Estonia, determining levels of participation and influence. There is social legitimation for granting greater positive opportunities and partiality to those who are young. This is connected with the understanding that the process of re-socialization

is rapid among the young, that they are more flexible and open to changing their habitual way of life, re-orienting to new jobs, and meeting new demands. Last but not least, the social experience of young people is perceived to be unspoiled, and they are not corrupted. Because every effort is being made to create a *normally functioning society in the quickest possible way*, the development of post-socialist Estonia favors young men. Even if married, they have more opportunities for professional growth and self-realization in comparison with a married woman with dependent children.

The reconstruction of the national state of Estonians creates an extra burden of tensions for the non-Estonian population who are left in the position of outsiders. Their deficiency in speaking and understanding the state language (Estonian) leaves them without authentic information and this contributes to a decrease in their cognitive control over the new life situations and in the levels of well-being as well as in scope for participation and influence. At the same time, many non-Estonians find themselves in a kind of social vacuum. Friends and relatives have left the country, and visa restraints create complications for making visits and keeping closer contacts.

Re-identification of personal adequacy and perceived new challenge

The level of social adequacy is highly dependent on how well an individual is able to meet new social demands. In seeking to fashion a new self-identity, people assess their own new perspectives by confronting their own individual characteristics, or personal resources, with the prerequisites for fulfilling perceived social stipulations. As a result, a new understanding of one's social (in)adequacy forms. For example, there are no age, gender, or family status restrictions set for private business in Estonia. As a matter of fact, it is more dependent on how one can understand the new principles of property and work organization and how psychologically ready a business person is to take risks, responsibilities, to look for new technologies, knowledge, and find his/her own way in the market. Failure in any of these and a poor perception of the challenges of the market economy lead to the risks of alienation.

Social justice and recurring distrust in the authorities

Deacon (1992) has pointed out that it is not an easy task to create a political democracy and a civil society while retaining an acceptable concept of social justice. Under conditions of unemployment, there are major difficulties in coping with the economic and psychological challenges of everyday life.

Convictions of social injustice discourage participation and produce anomie and alienation from the whole society.

On the other hand, there are 'arrogant elites'. Lamentowicz (1993, p. 215) points out that both domestic and international pressures push new elites to implement a kind of shock therapy based on the assumption that a rapid transition to a market economy is preferable to a slower transition. The most relevant values perceived to the leaders in Estonia are power, decent life, wealth, career, personal profit, control and influence over the people (Trumm, 1996). Thus, over-politicized and over-ambitious liberal reformers tend to alienate themselves from the main-stream of public opinion by the top-down design of guided change, by their open hostility to trade unions and workers' self-management, and by their insistence on special powers to enforce laws through the executive branch of the government.

Confrontation of 'right' and 'wrong'

The actions of the elite force a confrontation between the old and the new concepts, principles, and situations. The total rejection of the old and the attribution of highly positive meanings to the new situations embody the first wave of transformation. This is accepted in the abstract but presents hardship when encountered materially. 'Unemployment' is a 'good term' because it creates competition and propels the economy to higher work standards, until the person himself loses a job; the 'market economy' as a concept, is positive because it uncovers numerous possibilities for a better life, until one faces problems and unsuccessful attempts to find his or her own place in the labor market. Conceptualizing the old social and political order as *wrong* cognitively excludes habitual coping strategies and puts an individual in a situation of greater uncertainty. When the growth of new phenomena is a rapid process, different and sometimes contradicting explanations of events through the free press produce a 'culture of mistrust' in the new power structures and in the whole development of the country.

Empirical Case of Reviewing 'Alienation'

As can be concluded from the above, the multiple loss of welfare resources is a general regularity impacting people's lives at the times of societal transition. To measure the losses in the welfare resources in a country in transition, I proceed from Erik Allardt's (1975) three dimensions of welfare, based

on a conception of the basic needs as *'Having', 'Loving', and 'Being'* (see Figure 2; see also: Kutsar, 1997).

'Having' concerns welfare resources that an individual owns - income, housing, employment, health, education, etc. Loss or deficits in welfare resources of this dimension cause *'deprivation'* in the arenas of one's action (figure 2). Under deprivation a person cannot participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged or approved in the society to which he/she belongs (Townsend, 1979). Lacking material resources, one is unable to cope with the challenges of a consumer society: receive medical treatment, cover housing costs, socialize with friends, etc. In a rapidly transforming society where people experience multiple welfare losses, deprivation means lack of freedom of choice, as well as exclusion from one's customary way of life.

The dimension of *'Loving'* refers to belonging – community and family attachment, friendship patterns. Loss or deficits in the resources on this dimension pave the path to one's lack of social contacts, i.e. *'isolation'*. At times of rapid societal changes, social belonging and support networks that keep access to information as well as to the other kinds of resources, are significant to one's economic as well as to one's psychological survival.

The welfare dimension of *'Being'* from Allardt's perspective refers to resources such as personal prestige, in-substitutability, political influence/power, and *'doing interesting things'*. In the current understanding, the losses or deficits in this dimension of welfare involve a decrease in self-governance – loss of self-identity, feelings of worthlessness, disillusionment, powerlessness, political apathy – all that reflecting *'normlessness'* and alienation of a person from the society to which one belongs. At the times of rapid societal changes from one social order to another, the old and customary has become invalid, i.e. does not give any guarantee for one's success in the domains of action. There has to be a wholesale change in the prevailing philosophy of life.

The accumulation of deficits in welfare resources can be summarized as *social exclusion*. This is a broader concept than poverty, encompassing not only low material means but the inability to participate effectively in economic, social, political, and cultural life, and, in some characterizations, alienation and distance from the mainstream society (Duffy, quoted in Oppenheim & Harker, 1996, p. 19). Social exclusion can be recognized as a phenomenon of social disintegration reflecting the state of an individual of being unable to follow the way of life necessary for needs satisfaction, accompanying feelings of *involuntary non-participation* in the process of distribution of resources.

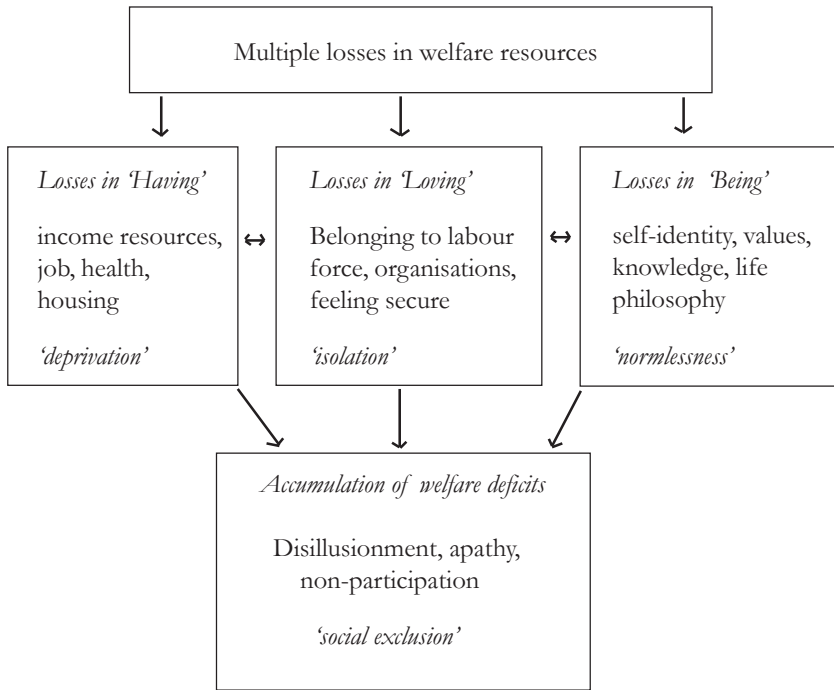


Figure 2. Welfare losses and accumulation of deficits (Kutsar 1997).

Evidence of Deficits and Social Exclusion

In my current perception, with a few reservations, social exclusion and alienation are identical. This is a trend which may endanger further developments of participatory democracy in Estonia. It is important, therefore, to assess evidence of multiple welfare deficits and risks of social exclusion (and alienation).

Data. The social survey of living conditions initiated by the Institute for Applied Social Research (FAFO) in Oslo, was carried out in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania simultaneously in 1994 (see also: *Estonia in the Grip of Change, 1996*; *Latvia: The Impact of the Transformation, 1996*; *Lithuania in a Period of Transition, 1996*). This was the year when relative economic stability was attained in each of the Baltic countries and the social costs of transformation were calculated as unexpectedly high. Poverty, unemployment, deteriorating public health, increasing criminality, and feelings of social insecurity were rife. This was the year when individual hardships became very conspicuous,

and the legacy of the former regime and political life were felt to interfere with people's lives more seriously than ever. Feelings of disillusionment and conceptions of social injustice became evident. In the following I describe the ways in which these phenomena were made palpable.

Sample. The sample for the current analysis consists of 4 455 respondents from Estonia.

Method. The method of estimations is based on a calculation of welfare deficits along the three dimensions of welfare defined by Erik Allardt (1975). For that purpose five indicators were selected from the questionnaire of the living conditions for each of the welfare dimensions. The selection was made by experts who took the characteristic features of a post-socialist rapidly transforming society into consideration. As a result, three summated rating scales (indexes) that vary from zero (0) to five (5) were compiled. The welfare deficits in one dimension were regarded as high if a respondent had a score of three to five points on a given scale. The indicators of welfare deficits – as disclosed by the survey – were selected and the indexes reflecting the levels of the deficits are presented (see Figure 3; see also: Kutsar, 1997).

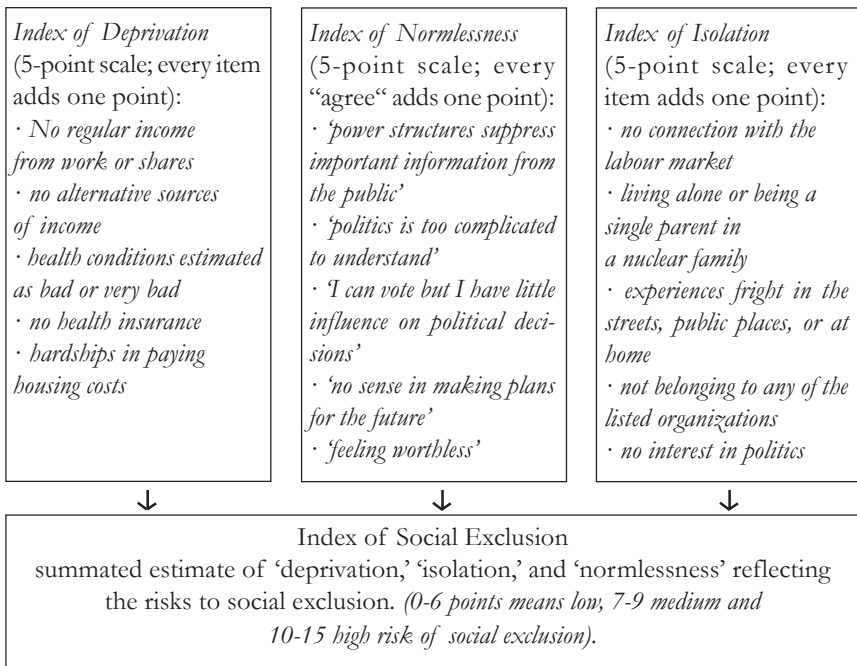


Figure 3. Composition of the summated rating scales (Kutsar 1997).

Among the respondents of the survey, there were various patterns of welfare deficits in the three dimensions of welfare resources (Table 1). The three per cent of the respondents who did not demonstrate any deficit in welfare resources on the *deprivation scale* were termed ‘well-off’. They have several kinds of income (i.e. do not live on public welfare or rely on it), have good health, possess health insurance, and have no problems in paying for the costs of housing.

About four per cent of the respondents had low scores on the *isolation scale*. These are the people who have a job, belong to one or more of the listed organizations, are interested in politics, are not afraid in public places nor at home, and live in a household with one or more adult members. Less than one per cent of the respondents did not score on the *normlessness scale*. They did not agree with any of the statements reflecting political or individual alienation.

Normlessness. The highest deficits are revealed in the norms reflecting one’s long distance from the power structures, high levels of political alienation, lack of understanding of politics as well as feelings of personal failure (table 1). More than three quarters of the respondents had scores of three to five points on the scale for normlessness. These are people experiencing reduced welfare and regard the situation as socially unjust and unexpected. High involvement and high hopes have turned into political alienation and growing feelings of distance from the power structures.

Table 1. Accumulation of welfare deficits in Estonia (cumulative %)

Dimension of welfare deficits	Number of welfare deficits in a welfare dimension (cumulative %)						Average*
	0	1	2	3	4	5	
<i>Deprivation</i>	2.7	41.4	85.9	98.9	100.0	—	1.7
<i>Isolation</i>	3.5	20.1	50.3	82.2	97.9	100.0	2.5
<i>Anomie, normlessness</i>	0.5	5.6	22.3	54.5	85.3	100.0	3.3

*Average number of welfare deficits by 5-point scale

A majority of the respondents agree that free elections and everybody’s democratic right to vote is not accompanied by real opportunities to influence political decisions (86%). Political powerlessness is related to a widespread perception of lacking information from the public authorities. More than half (54%) of the respondents agree with the statement that the public au-

thorities suppress important information which the public should be informed about. As a result, a rather large proportion of the respondents feel insecure about making plans for the future (44%). Ten per cent of the respondents face feelings of worthlessness in their daily life.

Isolation. About half of the respondents are exposed to high levels of isolation. The relation to the labor market is central to keeping contact with and being truly involved in one's society. The unemployed who were seeking jobs at the time of the survey, form almost one-tenth of the working age sample. As a result of structural changes, the unemployment rate is higher among the male respondents. The proportion of those out of the labor force among the respondents of working age forms 15%. At the same time, the proportion of those still working although they are of retirement age is still relatively high (22%). In all, sixty per cent of the respondents are connected with the labor market.

At the same time, participation rate in organizations in 1994 was extremely low. Only a third of the respondents belonged to one or more of the listed organizations. The largest number was involved in the trade unions (14%). Less than two thirds of the respondents showed any interest in politics as a resource for political participation.

Deprivation. The smallest accumulation of welfare deficits was in the dimension of deprivation. Less than one sixth (14%) of the respondents were exposed to high levels of deprivation, i.e. had a score of three to four points on welfare deficits. None of the respondents had full points in the losses counted on the deprivation scale. At the same time, we must admit that a deficit in even one welfare resource of this dimension may have a serious impact on all the living conditions of the household.

A lack of money is an indicator of poor living conditions. For example, those who did not receive income from any of the sources of income connected to work or property formed about one-fifth of the sample. Two-fifths (40%) had not received income from any of the listed alternative sources ('cottage economy', individual work, etc.). More than half of the respondents suffered from a lack of money and were having hardships with covering the housing costs.

Health as a welfare resource was estimated as bad or very bad by 19% of the respondents. One's health condition may be decisive in determining his or her relation to the labor market. Access to medical treatment using health insurance is a new socio-political regulation in Estonia. In 1994, for various reasons, only 14% of the respondents of working age and nine per cent of

those of retirement age, did not have health insurance; all the rest of the respondents did have health insurance.

Conclusions

During the social transformation from a totalitarian system, alienation results from the paradoxical situation of too many alternatives rather than too few. An individual has to make choices among different life philosophies, social groups, parties, even nationalities, and countries. People who are overwhelmed and distressed by multiple societal change are likely to find themselves rejected and excluded from society and distanced from participation in its development. The loss of social participation leads to a loss of personal identity, loss of control over one's life, and to the overall development of alienation.

People in Estonia experienced serious losses in their welfare determined by societal as well as individual factors. The need for re-integration and cohesion of those parts of the population who, due to their numerous deficits in welfare resources, are at high risk of being socially excluded and alienated from the mainstream of the society, is sadly evident. The general strategy for effecting re-integration and cohesion, is the expansion of the pro-democratic forces and the development of participatory democracy. Basically, the essence of participation lies with individuals. New values, attitudes, access to information, and education as well as shortening of the distance to the public authorities are created on the level of grass roots. At the same time, there is a need for general economic growth including the continuation of reforms. Concomitantly, there is great importance to strengthening the democratic institutions so as to guarantee the rule of law and respect for human rights on the one hand, and the focus on sustainable human development on the other.

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Sheila Allen

CROSSING BORDERS: LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

Introduction

In discussing a matter of considerable scientific and political significance, that of socio-cultural problems in border crossings, it is necessary to set out the basis of one's expertise and one's perspective. For the past 30 years I have researched, as a sociologist, cross-border migration historically and comparatively. My interest arose from the situation developing in Britain in the 1960's when race, socially constructed largely on the basis of skin color, became an increasingly high profile component in the political process. In response to post-war labor shortages a migrant labor force was drawn from British colonies and ex-colonies and as such they, unlike aliens and foreign workers, possessed legal, political and social rights on the same terms as the indigenous population. The public discussion was conducted, not in terms of race, but under the guise of debates on immigration control.

The racial politics surrounding the debates was already having consequences for the every day lives of black people, indigenous and migrants alike; and beginning to inform a whole range of policy decisions, in education, housing, and the provision of services. The political and ideological construction of black people as the problem intensified, and from 1962 immigration control legislation aimed first to restrict their entry and subsequently to remove their rights to immigrate to Britain completely. In order to understand and explain this particular migration, I found it necessary to

research theories of migration and labor supply of which it formed a part. To analyze the response to the migrants by the state, by politicians, and by policy makers, as well as by professionals and others, was increasingly pressing. This too required historical and comparative research into ethnic and race relations.

The contemporary context was one in which the civil rights movement in the United States was a live issue, memories of the recent large-scale extermination of European Jews and Gypsies among others were vivid and the movements and struggles for colonial freedom from European domination were part of every-day consciousness. All these informed academic discussion and directed attention to the problems of institutional racism, xenophobic policies and the practices of cultural and materialist imperialism. The perspectives adopted then to analyze practical and policy issues arising from specific migration and minority situations, and still largely applied today, focus on the *interdependence* of the production and reproduction of xenophobia and racism with global systems of economic exploitation and dependency.

The sociological issues are therefore not simply those of who and how many are migrating, and if they are 'different', or what problems arise. The issues are rather who is writing the laws, who is devising the policies, who sits in judgment on the rights of migrants and their children and what attitudes, assumptions, and interests they bring to these tasks. Furthermore, do fears about the migrants exist among the indigenous population, and if so, are there policies to manage and contain these or are they encouraged? In other words, what systems of power relations structure the relations between indigenous and migrant people? One test of democratic states, it has long been argued, is how they treat minorities within their borders and another is how they treat those who cross, or wish to cross, into the territory under their jurisdiction.

As a citizen of a city built on multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-faith, migration, I am very conscious of the difficulties which institutions and political processes dominated by white and Christian beliefs pose for those who do not fit these categories. As a citizen of a multi-nation state with a long imperial history, I am aware of the means by which through law, war and cultural and economic imperialism, migrants have been and are sorted and segregated. Some are denied access, some have only limited rights, while others are deported. The British state regards itself as a democracy in the liberal tradition, but its record in the twentieth century where minorities and migrants are concerned has been at variance with democratic ideals and its

tolerance of diversity limited (Allen, 1995; Dummett & Nichol, 1990).¹ In this, though the detail varies, it differs little from many other Western states.

With the end of the 'cold war', the dismantling of economic, military, and political agreements among Central and Eastern European states and the enlargement and developments in the European Union, critical issues have emerged or re-emerged around cross-border migration and minorities. First I shall discuss some of the problems of theory and method in studies of migration and minorities. Then I consider the concept of borders and boundaries in the context of social inclusion and exclusion, and conclude with the potential alternative analyses provide.

Migration: Theory and Policy

Many attempts have been made to theorize migration. Much of the work on migration produced by demographers and geographers does not address its causes and consequences beyond a push-pull description of factors thought to be associated in some way with movement from rural to urban settlements, across regions or from one state to another. In the sociological literature, models of migration have been devised to encapsulate different types of migration, ranging from forced to free (Petersen, 1958). The emphasis in research and in theorizing in Western Europe has been for the most part, however, on post-immigration issues and the consequences for the 'host' society. According to Morokvasic (1984) this can be explained by the dominance of the perspectives drawn from North American work on migration. In his words:

...where migration had been considered a definitive action, a departure with no return, an uprooting in the literal sense of the word... Such a conception of migration, in its finality, eliminates the need for reference to history: in this sort of analysis the migrant is deprived of his(sic) past ... while the process of migration is thus denied its dynamism...

(Morokvasic, 1984, p. 18)

The movement across borders may be permanent or temporary. It may involve a to and fro movement or a progression over more than one border. These different types of movement raise different issues. Nomadic movements which Petersen refers to as a 'primitive' type are less and less common in the modern world. They do not fit the interests of settled populations or those with interests in exploiting the land for primary products and mineral

wealth or, increasingly, tourism. The Masai of Kenya and the Amerindians of South America are among such peoples. The case of the Aborigines in Australia is interesting in that their attempts to regain land and other rights, usurped by Europeans over the past two hundred years, is now a matter of political struggle. The doctrine of *terra nullis* employed by the British to legitimate their possession of Australia is only an extreme form of a range of doctrines used to justify domination and the forcible movement out of and settlement in designated areas. In modern day Europe, policies legitimated by such doctrines are used most commonly to curtail the rights of Gypsies. Many, perhaps most, migrations are temporary from the migrant's point of view and a decision to stay may never be made. Anwar (1979) discusses this in relation to Pakistanis who migrated to Britain as the 'myth of return'. This myth was common among many migrants from Ireland to whichever part of the world they went to during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; and it is a general feature among those who are exiles and refugees.

Settlement is as much or more a matter of the laws of the receiving society as the voluntary choice of the migrant. Policies of control are widespread and hedged around by conditions. As the European Union developed its Single Market for capital, goods, and labor, it introduced from 1992 the right of free movement for citizens of member states across all its internal borders. Simultaneously, policies were enacted to exclude those from outside the Union more stringently. For the migrants in member states and their offspring – the second and subsequent generations – this freedom of movement is dependent on the legal rules which govern their status and their rights. The lack of citizenship status of *Gastarbeiter* and their descendants born in Germany is frequently contrasted with that of their peers in The Netherlands, Britain, and France, who are citizens.

Free movement is in reality easier for some than others. For example, Black citizens find moving across the internal borders of the European Union difficult and Britain's insistence on retaining its own border controls and charging airlines and ferry companies the costs of deporting those not allowed entry illustrates the selective application of free movement.

To assume that migration involves only the society of departure and the one of arrival is of limited use in explaining the causes. One of the largest movements of forced migration was, for example, that of the slave trade from West Africa to the Caribbean Islands and the Southern areas of the colonies of North America. This trade was organized and controlled by states in Europe, including England, for most of its existence. More recent examples are the large population movements out of, across, and into Eu-

rope prior to, during, and after the Second World War. These represent a range of types including forced, impelled, and mass migration as well as free movement. Two main reasons have been advanced to explain these; the migrations are either related to work or due to persecution. In some cases these reasons are combined. All these are to be understood in the context, not simply of relations between two societies, but as embedded in broader socio-economic and political frameworks of which the home and destination societies are part. The large-scale recruitment of foreign workers by Northern European states from those of Southern Europe, Asia, Turkey and North Africa in the decades from the late 1950's to the early 1970's is well documented and researched. This was a process of moving people to where labor was in short supply. As the demand for labor declined there were attempts, not always successful, to deport the migrants and prevent others from entering. With the development of new technologies and communication networks a new phase of the international division of labor took place whereby labor is used at source and no longer imported. In the heartlands of Western states these changes have created pools of surplus labor in many industries, including the migrants of the 1950's and the 1970's and the indigenous workers now unemployed. To this has been added competition from workers displaced in industries in Eastern Europe whose skills and labor can be bought at a lower price and who work without employment protection or citizenship rights.

Not all work can be exported and the prevailing market conditions encourage the importing of labor to work under illegal, unregulated conditions. The relatively booming construction industry in Germany is an obvious example in which contract labor is reported to be organized by German companies through 'foreign' middlemen, Dutch sub-contractors, for example. The labor force is drawn legally or illegally from inside and outside the European Union – Germans, British, Poles, Russians, Turks, and Bosnians. There is a financial hierarchy: "The Brits on an average of 30 marks an hour, then the scale descends to the Russians on as little as five. The Germans may be on as much as 60, but coming away with less than half of that after tax and benefit deductions." There is also a strict pecking order: "German gaffers, British and Irish tradesmen, the Portuguese and the Italians and, at the bottom of the heap, the various Slavs and Turks." Not surprisingly the pecking order is reflected in the living conditions of the workers with "metal containers stacked on top of each other like egg boxes, homes for the Poles and Russians, Bosnians, and Turks" (*The Guardian*, 1996a). This example of border crossings has much in common with many others in the past and is

thoroughly modern in its lack of regulation, to the detriment of indigenous workers, and its differential advantages to legal insiders and illegal outsiders. There are also women migrants crossing borders in this example, not to work on the building sites, but to supplement indigenous provision of leisure time services, in bars, nightclubs, and brothels (see Allen, 1993 for a fuller discussion). The socio-cultural problems to be analyzed here relate to hierarchies of gender and ethnicity and the crossing of the boundaries of legality and illegality.

We need to remind ourselves that Weber writing before the World War I, saw the immigration of Polish workers as threatening the hegemony of German culture and advocated that it be stopped, and the eastern border be made secure (Giddens, 1972). The 'boundary problem' east of the Elbe appears to be as alive today as when Weber wrote despite the many changes in Europe and beyond.

A further tendency in approaches to migration has been a concentration on migrants rather than on the social processes of migration. For example, explanations of migration are frequently based on questionnaire or interview responses from migrants, sometimes long after their migration. However meticulous the design and execution of research using this method is, and however much information results about an individual's experience and memory of migration, it cannot provide an understanding or explanation of the processes and structures involved. To assume that individual motivation can satisfactorily account for the migration of particular people (and the non-migration of others) ignores the structuring of social constraints on individual decision-making and neglects the pressures of family, community, and state to which they are subject. Each individual can provide reasons for migrating (or staying at home), but to interpret these as explanatory is to treat individuals as autonomous and free from the constraints of complex social relations of which they are a part and/or to endow them with a measure of control which in reality is possessed by very few.

Many studies of the social processes of migration have been conducted within a framework which relies heavily on research projects developed by North American scholars to explain the achievement of a 'melting-pot' American society by accounting for the relations between different ethnic groups of European origin migrating to the US in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The major concepts: assimilation, accommodation, adaptation, absorption, and integration were seen as evolutionary phases or stages; and they were used to explain both the processes of individual adaptation and inter-group relations. None took on board either the Native American

or the Black populations and so for this and other reasons were unable to theorize adequately the development of an hierarchical poly-ethnic, racially stratified, and class divided society.

Despite these major limitations this framework continues to be used in studies elsewhere. Some of the insights are useful and can be applied. For instance, the harsh programs of Americanization during the World War I, did not succeed in preventing the use of the European languages and the wide circulation of newspapers published in the vernacular. The introduction of strict immigration controls in a selective quota system favoring northern and western Europeans (and the deportation of ‘political undesirables’) which are occasionally referred to, reinforced an already established hierarchy of ethnic stratification with Anglo-conformity as its major imperative for inclusion. The process was one in which the pressures exerted on those educated in the public school system led not only to a fluent command of English and an ability to pass the language tests required for citizenship, but also to a devaluing and in some cases a rejection of the language and certain social customs. It took another two generations for a revival in such language learning and to be able to acknowledge differences of origins publicly. The hyphenated form of identity, for example Italian-American, Irish-American, German-American, and so on, flourished particularly after the civil rights and Black power movements of the 1960’s, when it was no longer seen as a threat to national unity or as a sign of being ‘un-American’. These and many other such insights are not remote from processes of inclusion and exclusion in European societies. And where situated in the overall structure in terms of, for instance, the availability or non-availability of citizen rights, the on-going modes of stratification, and the levels of racial or ethnic ordering, can serve to facilitate an understanding of where problems arise and how they may be dealt with.

Deconstructing Borders and Difference

I shall not spend very long on discussing the merits or demerits of modernism and post-modernism. To characterize the changes over the past four decades as post-modern is possible only if a very limited conception of the nature of these changes is embraced and if the evidence that social thinkers for well over a century have raised and explored the questions now being put forward as new, is ignored. To understand these changes requires in my view not a rejection of modernist analyses, but a demystifying of their limitations

and a development of conceptual frameworks which can be applied to current concerns. The various theories of post-industrialism, post-capitalism, post-socialism, and postmodernism maintain that the conditions structuring the relations between individuals and collectivities have changed. When and how this happened is rarely theorized; instead statements of a deterministic character are put forward. Many are couched in technological terms, others embrace a romantic or utopian vision of a market which will eventually provide for the cultural and material needs of all. Some point to movements among those subordinated or marginalized in modernist theories and in the development of modern society and claim them as the basis for their post-modern approach.

There are two major limitations which apply to almost all modernist thought in the social sciences. First, the neglect of half the human race, women, and the neglect of the part played by ethnicity and race in constructing ideologies of legitimacy. Second, the pervasive use of a concept of 'other/otherness' for those who deviate from the white male and, as far as Europe is concerned, also for those who are not Christian. The bodies of literature which now deal with these limitations have been growing steadily over the past three decades, but in general they have not been incorporated into mainstream theorizing or analyses. This is nowhere clearer than in migration theory and research. On the one hand, migrants are still assumed to be men and as far as Western social science is concerned they are conceptualized as 'other,' as culturally alien (Allen, 1980; Morokvasic, 1983). These conceptualizations reflect the common-sense ways of thinking of modern society. They are, in other words, social constructs which reproduce the dominant ideologies of the societies in which they are produced. The task of deconstructing them requires what Elias (1987) calls a distancing, both of time and space from the specifics of the particular instance, and, according to him, a more fact-oriented diagnosis.

If we apply to the terms 'border' and 'difference' a critical approach of distancing and diagnosis a number of interesting and important sociological questions emerge which can then be explored. 'Border' has several everyday meanings each understood from the context in which it is being used. It denotes more than one place, an inside and one or more outsides, which are defined by the perspective of each definer. It is not too difficult at first sight in the context of a paper on 'border-crossings' to surmise what meaning we should give to it. But I suspect that this may prove to be too simple an assumption on my part. 'Difference', on the other hand, implies not only a difference from, but also a similarity to other individuals, groups, states,

classes, families, communities, and so on. Exploring the creation, maintenance, and change of such collectivities, the integration of individuals into them, and their integration into societies, together with conceptualizing boundaries between societies, has been the stuff of sociology since its inception. None of these are new problems, though new paradigms may be required to analyze them more adequately (see Maynard, 1994 for a fuller discussion).

In the changes since 1989 there has been much talk and action which implicitly and explicitly involves the idea of territorial, ethnic, and national borders linked to ideas of cultural, including religious, differences. At the level of political discourse and action these have been associated with freedom, independence, and security, and, at the economic level, with the language of the market. In this context, crossing borders takes on not one, but several possible meanings within and across societies. The movement of people across borders is taken in some circumstances to be a symbol of freedom, not just the freedom to travel, as with, for instance, the demolition of the Berlin Wall. In other circumstances, it is taken to be a negative action to be prevented at all costs, such as the movement of Gypsies from Rumania or Slovakia to Germany, or Albanians to Italy, or Black people from anywhere to Britain – the current examples are endless.

The breakdown of the stability and certainties of the post-World War II accommodations between ideological and military power blocs, in and beyond Europe, carries with it not only new and re-emerging conflicts between groups and quasi-groups, but structural and cultural contradictions at institutional and system levels. This means that crossing borders operates simultaneously at the levels of individual experience and inter-group relations, in contexts of the macro-forces of division and integration which are far from being well understood. In consequence, particularistic views are taken as generally valid. Issues and problems are couched in simplified and stereotypical language and the task of the social scientist – that of analyzing – in order to reduce or resolve conflicts – becomes formidable. For instance, much of the movement which is across state borders has come to be represented in political discourse as relating to nations, nationalities, and nationalist projects. There is a continuing need for clarification of the ambiguities inherent in such discourse and the interests it serves (Allen, 1991; 1994; 1995; Allen & Macey, 1990; 1994; Macey, 1992). Where recent ethno-nationalist claims have secured international recognition, this has been as states not as ethnies or nations. The continuing use of the term nation-state obfuscates the reality of most political units (states) which have jurisdiction

over a bounded territory and those living within it who may define themselves or be defined as of other nations. 'Nation' is, as Weber argued long ago, an ambiguous concept. It is nevertheless much in vogue and is linked by many to ethnos or ethnicity (Anthias, 1992). In many parts of Europe it has historically been associated with allegiance to and observance of religious belief, notably some particular form of Christianity. For example, in nineteenth century Britain, made up of four national traditions, with Protestantism as the established religion, it was argued of the Catholic minority that "we very much doubt whether in England, or indeed in any free Protestant country, a true Papist can be a good subject" (*The Times*, March 3rd, 1853).

The distinction between nation and state is a crucial one in analyzing cross-border issues. Nations as 'imagined communities' (Anderson, 1991) straddle state borders in innumerable instances and the jurisdiction of the state over a bounded territory and those living within it creates two kinds of national minorities, those who are nationals of their states and those whom Worsley referred to as nationalities (nations without states). He regards the latter as nations that have failed to establish their own states (Worsley, 1984, pp. 247-248). But, as Ratcliffe (1994) comments, this is not necessarily the case as empirically many nations never stake a claim for statehood. The *National Question* attempted to deal with the incorporation of both in a common polity. In benign regimes at times of relative stability, constitutional arrangements or personal protection by monarchs safeguarded, or were meant to safeguard, their position. In times of change and conflict nationals of other states are ready targets for attack, detention, or expulsion. Churchill in 1940 told the authorities "to collar the lot", meaning German and Italian nationals, including those long resident in Britain and refugees from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, who were then detained, along with supporters of Nazism and Fascism, as enemy aliens.² European history is replete with such examples and since 1989, not only in the former Yugoslavia, but in many re-emerging states in the former Soviet Union. Eastern Europe nationality has been a high-profile issue in the political process.

This has had much to do with claims to rights – civil, political, and economic. Citizenship has therefore become a major concept not only in political, but in analytical terms. Sociologists in Western Europe have raised this issue in terms of social order, the relations of state and society, the meaning of and decline in the institutions of civil society. Much of this discussion was premised on a nation-state model, but increasingly other perspectives have been taken which address the questions of human rights in the context of movements across state borders (Baubock, 1992; 1994). The context of

these discussions around citizenship was initially that of the changes taking place in the European Union which called into question the meaning of 'national' sovereignty both within and between member states. But during the past decade other questions have been introduced. Notably are those questions relating to the draconian measures devised by the lawmakers of the European Union with regard to refugees and asylum seekers, many of whom are from the Third World. Further questions are related to the complex and contradictory situation of people from the former Soviet Union and the states of Central and Eastern Europe who seek to work or live in the states of the EU. These are not unrelated. Integral to attempts to frame a European (EU) citizenship has been a clear attempt to differentiate such citizens from others. The borders are strengthened and legitimated on grounds of difference, using well-established ethnic and racial and class hierarchies. Human rights, though much referred to, exist in practice more in their breach than in their implementation for those coming from outside these borders. Moreover, the asylum seekers and refugees and the migrants from Eastern Europe are set against each other in much current discourse.

Many thousands of apparently genuine victims of torture and political repression are finding an increasingly cold reception on arrival in the European Union. EU countries have become increasingly less willing or able to distinguish between job-seeking illegal immigrants and genuine victims of repression.

(The Guardian, 1996b)

One of the problems consistently neglected in discussions of difference is that the drawing of boundaries is neither static nor one-dimensional. For example, in much of the work which uses ethnic differences to explain social relations and social actions in contemporary Europe, if not in the world, the phenomenon of mixed or multiple ethnicities and how these relate situations and structures is rarely discussed. A myth of ethnic homogeneity appears to be espoused to differentiate 'them' from 'us.' This is not to argue that ethnic exclusiveness is not striven for and where it involves religious belief can be said to be the norm. The practice is, however, somewhat different. Crossing the borders of ethnic, religious, or national communities, imagined or not, is in some situations highly dangerous for those who engage in it and is regarded as disloyal, subversive, and a threat to community, nation, and religious survival, depending on the context. Negative sanctions against such interaction may be life-threatening, or simply disapproval or exclusion; and these may be transferred through to subsequent generations of offspring. The contradiction is clear. Strengthening group cohesion through

support networks on which group survival may be seen to depend entails boundaries against out-groups, and sanctions against in-group members associating with those of an out-group. In practice such associations exist and the task for social scientists is to follow through an analysis of the present marginalizing and subordinating of those in this situation in some parts of Europe.

Conclusions

The potential for theoretical advances in the field of cross border migration is hindered by the failure to share knowledge across these very same borders. As a global phenomenon, albeit with some specific regional and local differences, the topic requires discussion and debate on the same scale. Without advances in theories of migration and minorities, there will be little possibility of devising and implementing policies to reduce conflicts and improve the lives of those involved, indigenous and migrant, in subordinated and marginalized categories. The advance in the twentieth century, both in theory and practice, has been patchy, non-linear; the concerns of nineteenth century social thinkers are as relevant now as they were then. In the nineteenth century Lord Acton wrote: “the combination of different nations in one state is as necessary a condition of civilised life as the combination of men in society... those states are substantially the most perfect which...include various distinct nationalities without oppressing them” (Acton, quoted in Carr, 1945, p. 66). And Carr (1945, p. 66), writing at the end of World War II, suggested that:

...a political unit based not on exclusiveness of nation or language but on shared ideals and aspirations of universal application, may be thought to be a distinct advance over a political unit based simply on the cult of a nation, or even over a political unit like pre-1939 Yugoslavia or Poland, where it made all the difference in the world whether one was a Serb, Croat or Slovene, a Pole, Ukrainian or Lithuanian.

Such statements are rare in the present-day discourse of European political leaders inside or outside the borders of the European Union and even intellectual discussion is muted on these issues. In the media -and what is deemed to be common-sense or popular views, they are almost totally absent. Resort is made more readily to notions of innate, inevitable, and immutable differences and hatreds to explain such situations as the war in former Yugoslavia,

the continuing problems in Northern Ireland, or the position of Islamic minorities in Western Europe. There is a considerable literature written from a variety of modernist perspectives which could be applied to these and other similar issues. This literature stresses commonalities among social groups rather than differences, stresses the benefits of co-operation rather than unregulated competition, and takes seriously the attention that has been given to the systemic contradictions underlying a global market in which the concentration of power increases and spheres of unmet need expand.

Notes

- 1 The term immigrant became and to a large extent remains in the vernacular synonymous with Black. The presence of a much larger foreign labor force which was white was ignored in the political debates. The largest element of migrant labor had long been and remained Irish. For a fuller discussion see Allen, 1971a and b.
- 2 The Order was known as 1 8B and although the Irish were not subject to it, those considered a danger to the state were kept under close surveillance and in some cases removed from cities to outlying areas. Japanese-Americans were similarly treated after Pearl Harbor.

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Lauren Langman

BAKHTIN THE FUTURE: TECHNO-CAPITAL AND CYBER-FEUDALISM

Introduction

In the last few decades, advanced technologies of information creation and transmission have radically transformed the nature of late capitalist commerce and industry. This new globalized, computerized moment has been termed “techno-capitalism”. The computer has transformed the nature of the production of goods as well as culture and communication. It has created the first new mass medium since television and the first new means of communication since the telephone. But the social implications of these transformations have been little theorized.

I will argue that as a result of computerization, techno-capitalism has fostered what I term “cyber-feudalism” consisting of two related moments. 1) There has been a “feudalization” of the class system in which a small elite who control or manage intellectual property (information, knowledge) possess great wealth while the masses grow poorer. Like classical feudalism, it has its elites, priests, and serfs. Its social life is highly local, emotional and often violent. Feudal society was a remarkably stable order; it endured for almost a thousand years. But shorn of nostalgic fantasies and the fabrications of mass media, for most people, life in feudal societies was short, brutish, and harsh. Death, illness, famine, blood feuds, torture, marauding

bands, and superstitions were aspects of everyday life. Finally, while classical feudalism was legitimated by the priests of Christianity that promised salvation, “cyber-feudalism” is legitimated by the priests of “technophilia” who promise the good life through consumption as a moment of hegemonic ideologies that organize cultural understandings to foster “willing assent” to the new orders of privilege. 2) At the same time, there has been what I would call a “carnivalization of society” in which mass mediated forms of popular culture offer a variety of hedonistic experiences. Ever greater populations find meaningful identities and communities in carnivalesque consumption and/or lifestyles apart from the realms of repressive work. The alternative sites that valorize boundary transgressions have become an essential moment of techno-capital. The carnivalization of cyber-feudal society has had several consequences: it has fostered a new localism of indifference, it has dulled capacities for critical thought, and it portends a more violent and dangerous life.

Techno-Capitalism

Techno-capitalism, the private ownership of advanced technologies of computerized production, distribution, and communication has had fundamental consequences for economic, social, political, and cultural life. These changes have been theorized as “post industrial society” (Bell, 1973), “late capital” (Mandel, 1975), the “third wave” (Toffler, 1990) and/or “unorganized capital” (Lash & Urry, 1987). The production of knowledge and symbolic information from software to genetic engineering is now more important than steel or chemicals. The computer, now a fixture in almost every business and office, has vastly increased productivity and corporate wealth. More and more production is done by computers and robots. In some fields, productivity has increased tenfold (Aronowitz & DeFazio, 1994). Computer assisted drafting and manufacturing (Cad-Cam), is now linked through electronic data interfaces to administrative offices as well as to “dark factories” where robots produce vast quantities of goods twenty-four hours a day. Other computers check quality, order materials, track inventories, direct shipments, send/pay bills, and keep accounts. A great deal of economic activity now consists of capital transfers, e.g. international currency speculations, bonds, real estate investments, and so on, in which a trillion dollars worth of commerce flows through cyber-space every day (and few jobs are created). “Post-Fordist” techniques of flexible production have been globalized; there are more var-

ied models and styles of goods. Designs, whether of cars or clothes, may originate anywhere, may be produced anywhere, and shipped anywhere. More people now perform services than make goods.

The computer has also transformed culture, media, and entertainment. From the simple computer games of Nintendo and Sega, variations of Hunt, Hurt, and Kill the Other, to the various games for home computers and finally the explosion of Internet “computainment” has had considerable impact on popular culture. These moments of computerized production and cultural consumption have been under-theorized. The critics of techno-capital fall into two ideological camps. Technophiles proselytize the new religion of abundance; technophobes or neo-Luddites share a dystopian view that sees dehumanization at best and new forms of surveillance and control at worst. They would save humanity by smashing the machines.

How might we best understand these new realities? Various critiques argue that we have now entered a “post-modern” age with its own distinctive “hyper-reality” more ‘real’ than ‘real’ with new cultural forms and aesthetics. Marxist and Weberian views of modernity and development, “grand narratives” that describe “universal” processes, are no longer relevant (Lyotard, 1984). Baudrillard (1975) argued that insofar as both Marx and Weber valorized work, neither was pertinent to the new order of mass consumption and the new ‘society of the spectacle’ (Debord, 1967). Baudrillard (1975) claimed that the key to understanding modern consumption was neither exchange value nor use value, but “symbolic value”. This is the value of objects in a “semiurgical” society of meanings where consciousness has been colonized by mass-mediated images that foster consumption. Identities and/or memberships in various symbolic communities are based on patterns of consumption and amusement that are located in matrixes of signs (cf. Langman, 1992). There is an “elective affinity” between post-modern theories that celebrate the new order of reality and see it as liberating, and the new computer culture. Such theories, indeed ideologies, render opaque the contradictions of late capital and ignore the “dark side” of globalization in which millions of people, many of whom young women and children, work in sweatshops under onerous conditions producing goods for the consumer markets or provide sexual services. Critical sociological interrogations are wanting.

For Marxists, the fundamental reality of capitalism at any stage of its development has been the appropriation of surplus value (profit) for the ruling classes with alienation and immiseration for the masses kept blind about their conditions by ruling class ideologies. Marx first noted the role of technologies in general and the tendency to replace workers (living labor)

with machines (dead labor). Today this trend foretells a “jobless future” (Aronowitz & DeFazio, 1994). But while the fundamental dialectic of capital endures, the specific expressions of class have changed. Further, human labor often has a minimal role in producing value, raising serious questions for the labor theory of value (Harris, 1995; Postone, 1993). Finally, the problematic of techno-capital is not simply the ownership of capital, but broader cultural considerations. Can a Marxist perspective on techno-capital still be relevant?

Toward a Critique of Techno-Capital

While post-modern critiques may be extreme, they force us to rethink the critique of domination. The fundamental problem of theorizing techno-capitalism and its cultural productions is locating a position sensitive to the nature of images, meanings, and identities, yet noting the ways in which cultural hegemony serves political economy. That is to say, it sustains capitalism as a system of private property that produces profits for the owners and alienation and misery for wage laborers. The current system of disorganized techno-capital includes the production of commodified information, knowledge, entertainment, and intellectual property. The new computer-based political economy remains a class system in which the elites prosper amidst growing disparities between rich and poor; greater gaps in education re-inscribe inequalities of access to, or knowledge of the new information technologies. Theorizing the computer as an economic force of production and a mode of ideology-laden entertainment requires locating computerization as a moment of techno-capital with its cultural frameworks of techno-science and techno-culture (Aronowitz, 1996). Computer-based techno-culture provides possibilities of abundance, relief from onerous toil, amelioration of illness, new and even undreamed of forms of human fulfillment. But at the same time, insofar as this technology is controlled by private interests for the sake of profit, it produces instead new forms of inequality and degradation as well as cultural practices that serve hegemonic functions.

The foundations for a critique of techno-capitalism began with the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory and their critiques of Instrumental Reason, culture, ideology, subjectivity (character), and popular culture (cf. Kellner, 1989). While the classical Frankfurt School focused on the domination of Instrumental Reason, authoritarianism, and tendencies toward fascism, later theorizing extended these interests to mass media (the culture industry) and consumerism as post-war subjectivity and consciousness migrated from the

political economy to the many worlds of play, pleasure, and *jouissance*, located in malls, theme parks, cyber-space, and the mass-mediated sites of hyper-reality that provide “micro-spheres of empowerment”, realms of gratification and ersatz forms of freedom.

From Carnivals to Capital

The carnival, a popular celebration of festive rituals and practices, located in alternative times and sites, emerged in feudal Europe as a moment of peasant culture (Bakhtin, 1968). The carnivals were sites and places of resistance and liminality, reversals of norms and sanctioned deviance in active opposition to the official feasts and tournaments that celebrated the power of the elites. Typical patterns of hierarchy, deference, and demeanor were ignored in favor of that which was proscribed and violated boundaries. There was a suspension, if not a reversal of the usual codes of morality in favor of the lower body, excreta, the profane, the vulgar, the grotesque and obscene. These were times and places of total indulgence in wine, song, dance, and sex. Alternative meanings could be negotiated. The ‘sacrosanct’ elites of Church and State were typically parodied, mocked, hectored, and ridiculed.

The carnival was not simply a relaxation of sexual repression and of constraints. Whether one engaged in casual sex, serious drinking, or simply in mocking the Bishop or the King, the carnival provided a realm where the subalterns could find alternative communities, identities, and rituals that provided dignity, recognition, empowerment, and meaning apart from everyday life and structures of elite power. Transgression against moral boundaries was alluring. To parody, to mock, to stick out a tongue, a finger, or one’s butt to authority is to give one a sense of power over authority. And one could gain recognition from others for so doing. Fleeting, perhaps momentary glory, but so is life and in the medieval era, it was especially so. The carnival was the realm of the dream, of wish fulfillment of the child, before the censor (super-ego) could declare repression, boundaries, and punish transgressions. The carnival mocked death, and for a few moments dulled the fears of death among adults moving ever closer to his/her demise (Becker, 1973). These realms of wish, dream, and desire, rooted in the universalities of embodiment, prolonged dependency, and eventual death, long antedated particular social orders and their repression (Bloch, 1986).

How did the chaotic, vulgar, passionate, superstitious society of the Middle Ages become the ordered, rational, capitalist society in which the private

ownership of advanced technologies produced unprecedented wealth. Weber's theory of progressive rationalization describes the triumph of Apollonian rationality over the Dionysian passions of the carnival. He argued that while the key elements of capitalism were found in many societies, only in the West with traditions of ascetic Christianity did the elements come together in a way that would launch the "demystification" of the world. But Weber did not specify the mechanisms and interpersonal processes by which institutional changes impacted the social behavior of empirical subjects, the forces which led to the demise of the carnival. His analysis focused on institutional and cultural levels. Why would a society demand and reward renunciation or denial of bodily gratification? Why would people give up emotionality, immediacy, spontaneity, and perhaps sex and passion for self-discipline and/or guilt and shame-based controls of the self.

For Freud (1961), guilt-based repression constrained desire for the sake of the social cohesion and labor demanded by civilization for "it was not a matter of indifference that people be motivated to work". Elias (1982), however, argued that repression was a historically variable outcome of a "civilizing process" in which manners and social rituals of restraint and control arose among the European courts that gradually attenuated the impulsiveness of the carnival. Social graces and interpersonal skills became increasingly important for diplomacy and the administration of States. The emergence and elaboration of the "courtly" rituals and manners sustained relationships, alliances, loyalties, fealties; and social ties now served to maintain and/or to gain power. The fierce, brave knights and warriors of the medieval era, quick to anger and kill, quick to love and laugh, became "civilized", self-disciplined, well-mannered courtiers practiced in etiquette, with well-honed skills of charm, sociability, and cultural sophistication.

With trade beyond the local manor or village came an urban merchant class whose exemplars shared the manners, graces, and self-constraint of the courtiers. But unlike the nobles, they were concerned with producing their own economic fortunes rather than taxing others. The cultivated manners of the courtiers were gradually adopted and internalized by the bourgeoisie insofar as "rational" business practices, record keeping, contracts, and future planning were required by capitalist markets now free from emotional, interpersonal, or traditional considerations. By the fourteenth century, the merchants of Italy initiated a market economy that would become the capitalist world system. In the views of Nietzsche, Freud, and Weber, the restraints upon feelings and passions made modern society possible; but an essential moment of humanity was suppressed.

In face of the ascendancy and eventual domination by the “civilized”, there were vast cultural and psychological distances between the elites and the masses. With the ascent of capital, courtly manners became generalized, if not imposed throughout the society. Repression of desire became a badge of honor and an indication of trustworthiness in business. The discipline, self-control and restraints required by capitalism would erode the hedonistic appeal of the carnival. The carnival would slowly contract to a few scattered sites of liminality. The magic of bourgeois society was its ability to get people to prefer work and promises of future reward to current bodily gratification. But this was not a conscious choice. Rather, the bourgeoisie created a market society in which work had acquired a moral quality, that of a *Beruf* (calling). The Protestant ethic made a moral virtue of the repression necessary in this emerging market society which in turn fostered cultural systems in which work and self-restraint were the bases of a valorized identity, of self-esteem and membership in a moral community. The new elites repressed the sensual and the bodily; eventually they valorized repression by extending shame and guilt to embodiedness and bodily functions. Slowly but surely, the market impacted a variety of social practices while the values of the market infiltrated the socialization processes to intentionally foster repression-based achievement in their children. As the merchant classes prospered through trade and manufacture, so too did the aristocratic courts gain wealth and power. But the ascendant bourgeoisie would soon contest their political power. With the growth of the bourgeois classes and the new agentic subject with internalized restraints, there were contradictions between aristocratic rule and bourgeois practices. Freed from traditional ties and bonds, people were disposed to join new forms of community. Thus began nationalism that promised the nation as both a structure of governance and an imaginary community that enabled the bourgeois elites to rule in the “name of the people”. The merchant classes fostered revolutions, claimed power, and created prosperous nations

Trans-National Capital

By the sixteenth century, a “world system” was in place, and insofar as that system produced vast wealth and political power, it would grow and prosper and destroy land-based feudalism almost everywhere. Following World War II, the capitalist nations forged a number of economic and political policies and organizations to seek mutual prosperity as well as common defense against

challenges to capitalism. The United Nations and NATO were established to “maintain” world peace. Exchange rates, tariffs, interest rates, technology transfers, basic economic decisions are increasingly based on organizations such as the International Monetary Fund and the G7, the club of well-established western nations. Economic linkages were forged between the capitalist industrial economies. Trade across borders began to assume unprecedented forms – and nation-states became subjected to this new international order. The new actors on the world stage are the Trans-National Corporations in which widespread interconnected networks of corporate offices, research centers, factories, and warehouses control most of the world’s economy. More employees of TNCs work in other countries throughout the world than in the “home” office. Top executives may not necessarily be nationals of the company while the “owners” of the TNCs that gain the profits are likely to be other corporations or financial institutions (insurance companies, pension funds). Their shares are sold in international stock markets. Throughout the world, the global cities are homes to enclaves of TNC executives from widely different points of origin, running companies all over the world with no particular loyalties either to their countries of birth, their current address – or often even to their companies. The TNCs have lost the distinct qualities of their national origins (cf. Barnett, 1974).

Today the Trans-National Corporations produce a vast array of goods, services, transport, tourism, and entertainment – most of which were almost beyond imagination a century ago. The world has now been divided into regional trading blocs and trade organizations that largely determine the political and economic policies of member nations. Commodity production, which would expand to include leisure, travel, and cultural products, now rests on two fundamental moments, advanced computer technologies and global organization. The TNCs have been a primary factor fostering mediated entertainment in particular and the society of the spectacle in particular. By the end of the twentieth century a globalized system of post-Fordist production, distribution, and consumption, connected by vast computer networks, stood triumphant.

The restraints on impulsiveness that first enabled capitalism to flourish, would later stifle its further growth and expansion. Capitalism first created psychic scarcities through “surplus repression” that encouraged work – albeit at the costs of the ‘discontent’ Freud charted (Marcuse, 1966, p. 64). To encourage mass consumption of the many goods made possible by capital required transformations of desire and values. Campbell (1987) argued that the growth of Romanticism – an anti-modern movement – was the earliest

attempt to erode the values of constraint and encourage self-realization and authenticity through consumption. But it would require the industrial technology and mass media of the twentieth century to produce a vast array of goods, to colonize consciousness, insinuating identities and desires for consumption.

Cyber-Feudalism

The computerization and globalization of production, commerce, and investment has had major effects on the work forces of advanced societies (Reich, 1992). The “older” industrial jobs of smokestack industries are now in decline. As a result of increased productivity, fewer technicians and engineers are needed to produce ever more sophisticated goods, while fewer managers are needed to execute policy and fewer clerical workers to control records. But while there is a need for small numbers of most highly trained specialists, for the large numbers of the untrained, and even for many of the generalists called college graduates, the job future of a McDonaldized world is far less sanguine (Ritzer, 1995). Many see a world with “jobless futures” (Aronowitz & DeFazio, 1994), where “work has disappeared” (Wilson, 1996) or ended (Rifkin, 1995). This has been termed the Brazilianization of the world (Therborn, 1986).

The same computer/information technologies of industry have also transformed mass-mediated cultural production. Advertising moved from the selling of products to the creation of desires and images. By the 60’s the spectacle had become an all-pervasive feature of advanced capital (Debord, 1994). Since then, it has increasingly taken on carnivalesque qualities. Between the creations of a themed world (Gottdiener, 1997), new sites of liminality and alterity, and the constant transgressions of boundaries, we can see a “carnivalization” of the world with new alternative forms of community and identity. These two moments of techno-capital in its globalized phase, seen together, constitute a new feudalism, a “cyber-feudalism” in which advanced techno-capital produces new forms of inequality and a carnival culture.

Inequality and the New Lords and Serfs

In the medieval era, there were vast inequalities between the elites and masses. Capitalism would eventually foster an affluent working class, large relatively prosperous managerial and technical classes and relatively well-off petty bour-

geois merchants /state functionaries. The relative prosperity of these intermediate classes served to secure legitimacy. In the emerging cyber-feudalism, we can again witness the reconstitution of a wealthy aristocracy, a shrinking middle class, and great masses of the poor. For Jefferson, one of the great dangers to a democratic society was the possibility of a new aristocracy of industry. Less than 50 years later, De Toqueville (1969/1830) echoed this fear, and warned that such a class together with a strong central government would foster a “retreat to the small circle of friends and family”. About 80 years later, Weber expressed fears that a new aristocracy of industry was emerging. The TNCs have created a new, cyber-feudal structure of lords, serfs, artisans, and a growing class of expendables. The new elites are those with advanced symbolic skills/technical expertise/business acumen, while the new serfs toil in the growing numbers of McJobs of malls, fast foods, and personal services (Reich, 1992). Wealth is based not on control of land or gold as in the *anciens regimes*, nor even tied to industry in the sense of what Marx or Weber would have called industry; but on the control of knowledge and information in a world where money has become another form of digital information. The new lords are not tied to place, their fiefdoms and kingdoms are “markets” or fields, often located in cyber-space with no fixed boundaries. Indeed, with the computerization of the financial, there are vast markets in cyber-space. The new lords may not be titled, save the many with post-graduate degrees, but they are members of global courts of Trans-National Corporations and organizations. Their education-based knowledge, their access to complex symbolic information, and their well-honed manners and social skills (empathy, communication, persuasion, and leadership), provide them and their financial fiefdoms with vast wealth and power. Numbers of the new aristocrats are expanding by over ten per cent a year. That means that in the course of very few years this class will grow from about 2% of society to over 4%. In the last fifteen years, the gap between the income of the Chief Executive (CEO) and that of the workers has grown manifold. The elites of business and technology are rapidly gaining an ever greater share of the wealth. While fewer managers are likely to be needed, those remaining, the highly skilled, are likely to prosper as part of the new aristocracy. The lower order artisans and managerial cadres are likely to be less plentiful and less well-compensated.

The classical aristocracy depended on lineage for claims to wealth and authority. For the techno-capital elite, family background remains important, but primarily in terms of instilling the motivation for education and access to educational resources. The elites attend prestigious universities to acquire the

cognitive skills and the abstract knowledge required at the upper echelons of the TNCs. The managerial-technical artisans attend the second tier private and higher ranking state universities. The increasing use of computers in management has enabled the downsizing of corporations and under-employment for the graduates of the intermediate level State and private schools. Such schools will face declining enrollments and many will not endure. Artisans in the lower strata attend the community colleges and trade schools to amass technical skills. The growing ranks of serfs and expendables attend the inner city travesties called “schools” (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993)

One of the first observers of the new feudalism was Ehrenreich (1989) who noted that the over-classes of New York were increasingly likely to buy prepared foods for dinner, while the foods are largely prepared by minimum wage under-classes. Ehrenreich saw the kitchen workers as the new serfs of the castle, but today they work for multiple ‘lords’ and ‘ladies’. Thus the growing disparities of wealth portend a growing number and variety of serf-like jobs. Thurow (1996) and Eco (1986) have also noted a return of the medieval, as the people of the growing under-class lack literacy, impulse control, and social constraints.

The new aristocrats live and work in settings far removed from the “rabble”. Like their forbears, they live in elegant castles on high hills, behind thick walls and across moats (Blakely, 1998). But the current versions of these hills, walls, and moats are inter-state highways, cul de sacs, “gated communities”, and doormen-guarded buildings. About one-third of America now live in such ‘castles’. The growing dysfunctions of capital, the inequalities, crime, violence, and degradation are little evident to the elites. While the cities have become meaner and more dangerous, the elites need not worry. Secure behind their walls and virtual moats, guarded by their knights for hire (also known as security guards) they live well, dress well, and eat even better.

With the decline of heavy industry, migrations of jobs to suburbia and computerization, there has been a rapid growth of unskilled urban under-classes (Wilson, 1987). These under classes are typically composed of structurally marginalized minorities that have long been stigmatized by prejudice and discrimination. There has been a re-appearance of surplus populations much like the expendable classes of medieval society that perhaps comprised as much as a quarter of the population (Lenski, 1966). Many are beggars and panhandlers; many turn to drugs, crime, violence, and prostitution, “carnavalesque” lives with little amusement that often result in premature death. This portends a more violent society.

The Carnivalization of the World

Transformations of the political economy impact culture; globalized techno-capital of finance and production has been closely intertwined with the 'culture industries' to produce a mass-mediated popular culture and ludic sites that would foster consumption. I previously noted the origins of consumerism during the romantic era. The subsequent history of the transformation of capitalism from industrial production to mass mediated consumerism has been traced by many (see for example Lears & Jackson, 1994; Ewen, 1976). Technological advances at the end of the nineteenth century created new forms of information transmission and media. The rotary press, the camera, the telegraph, and the phonograph would prefigure the mass media of the twentieth century. Improvements in transportation and printing enabled the catalogs of mail-order department stores such as Sear's and Ward's to reach about half of the rural population. An important moment of globalization of consumption began with the introduction of corporate-based brand name goods – among them, Levi's and Coca Cola. With radio and television we begin to see the intertwining of corporate capital, mass media, advertising, and consumerism that attended the growth of broadcast networks. Mass-mediated amusements expanded at the same time as did the urban proletariat and legions of clerical workers with free time and disposable incomes.

Late capitalism systematically shifted production to consumer goods, images, and experiences which, together with advertising, fostered a consumer's utopia. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the production of consumer goods and of experiences vastly expanded and moved from more basic needs of food, shelter, and clothes to "wants" created by advertising. Many of these "wants" were designed to treat the "afflictions" of urban life. These various moments converged in television as the primary means of colonizing consciousness. For television sets became a consumer product and programing ubiquitous. With UHF, cable, and satellite dishes, a consumer can receive over 500 channels. Television sets are often connected to video-recorders to enable access to the viewing of commercial film or of one's own 'memorable' vacations and forgettable weddings.

An unintended consequence of television has been to valorize visual images that in turn fostered the creation of "spectacles" (Debord, 1994). The mass proliferation of valorized images became the means by which consumer society subverted traditional values of restraint and control, and provided gratification and fulfillment through consumption. Mediated images colonized bodies, desires, images, and identities to insinuate the "wants" to

be fulfilled through consumption (Ewen, 1988). Thus everyday life got framed by a hedonistic consumerism where the individual constructed his/her identity and presented himself/herself in spectacular forms to gratify the socially constructed forms of desire (Langman, 1992). Insofar as visually-mediated hedonism became an intrinsic moment of late capitalism, there was an inherent tendency to transgress boundaries of restraint to foster greater consumption. Thus consumerism began to take carnivalesque forms in modern drag. But contemporary carnivals are not indigenous folk cultures that joyously celebrate antagonism to the official. Rather the carnivalesque as boundary transgression is part of corporate strategies to encourage consumption. These constructed transgressions of modesty and restraint colonize desire and inscribe a variety of consumption-based identities.

Just as the medieval carnivals emerged as alternative realms apart from the hardships of the pre-modern, so, too, are the cyber-feudal carnivals alternative realms to the routine, repetitive, and dehumanizing forms of modern labor. Capital not only produces alienation and contradictions, but finds ways to profit from its own adverse consequences. The ritualized spectacles of self-presentation based on fashion, life style, and cultural consumption provide the person with the status and recognition lacking in the worlds of work (Langman, 1992). The carnivalesque provides profit-generating realms of gratification and empowerment in place of routines of work, nation, and civil society which have lost allure for many. In the alternative sites of the carnival, people can find community, even if virtual, meaning and dignified identities that are denied by capital and no longer provided by God or Nation. These alternative worlds elide the mundane realities of boredom, exploitation, and the *ennui* of existence. Thus, for ever larger segments of society there has been a migration of selfhood, subjectivity, and meaning from the institutional realms of work, politics, and family to the various realms of the personal and private modes of selfhood especially those that privilege *jouissance* – sheer enjoyment. Capital provides respite from the “iron cages” of disempowered work to encapsulated “micro-spheres of empowerment” in the “neon cages” of consumption (Langman, 1992). But while these realms may seem to enjoy autonomy from the realities of political economy; in the post-modern feudalism they *are* the political economy.

The medieval carnivals served to stabilize the social order by celebrating the bodily and tolerating, indeed encouraging, hedonistic boundary violations. In much the same way, the new carnivals of consumption have become realms that could discipline the body through gratification; but in fact, they serve not so much as resistance to the social order as they do celebra-

tions of its mass-produced and mediated identities. The body is thus not only the basis of desire, subjectivity, and identity, but the site where cyberfeudal society would seek to construct, regulate, and control for the sake of preserving political power. Left without such discipline, the body could, as Marcuse (1966) hoped, become a site of political struggle and contestation. It is fit that the Right should so fear and abhor sexuality. Yet it is the very encouragement of hedonism – especially sexuality – that borders on the excess. Transgression of boundaries becomes an aspect of hegemonic process as a moment of the carnivalization of society. The carnivalization has several important consequences.

The Fragmentation of the Social

Localization

One of hallmarks of feudalism was the isolation of most of the population from the political process. The medieval world was a collection of isolated manors in which most people had little contact or knowledge of those at a distance. Dialects were such that ordinary people could not understand those living more than 30-40 miles away. The feudal carnival was a communal celebration that brought the peasants of local communes together and affirmed their solidarity in collective hedonism. But the growth of commerce and industry eroded these communities and created needs for new forms of community. To claim political power, the bourgeoisie fostered democratic nationalism that brought the masses from isolated “peripheries” to the “centers” of society. While such nationalism did serve the hegemonic interests of the bourgeoisie, popular democracy also created sites where publics could have some influence on policies.

By the nineteenth century, a number of factors had eroded this insularity, among them education, literacy, national governments. Early forms of capitalist carnivals were the first traveling circuses, amusement parks, museums of the bizarre, and spectator sports. These amusements were typically integrated into community life, that is, people often went to them just to see friends and families. The early amusement parks that emerged with growing leisure time and discretionary income might have Ferris wheels, roller coasters, freak shows, and several games of skill. Friends, families, and communities attended en masse. The general concern with the political grew along with the rise of the bourgeoisie and their distinctive forms of agentic sub-

jectivity. But what the early capitalist giveth, the late capitalist taketh. The combination of deskilled and dehumanizing work, the valorization of privatized hedonism and the proliferation of cyber-feudal carnivals have fostered a migration of consciousness. The privatization of amusement to the home has led to a general retreat from the public sphere. Thus, one of the major facts of current politics has been the decline of political participation, what has been called the ‘retreat from politics’ (Boggs, in press).

Life style segmentation

Unlike the communal medieval carnivals, cyber-feudalism offers a number of highly differentiated consumer niches or segmented marketing sites based on the systematization of difference and the transformation of these differences into stylized representations that inscribe consumption-based identities (cf. Wright & Hutchison, 1996). Post-Fordist methods enable modern factories to produce unlimited variations of models, colors, and styles. This diversity of production enables the segmentation of life styles by the myriad of fashions that can be seen in any secondary school (and in most primary schools) where ‘nerds’, ‘jocks’, ‘climbers’, ‘hip-hops’, ‘bikers’, ‘punks’, and ‘druggies’ are instantly recognized by their clothes and accessories such as studded leather bracelets, shoes, nerd-packs (plastic pocket protectors), coke spoons or body piercings with rings and balls (some of which are not visible).

The production of carnivals has been intertwined with the pluralization of sub-cultures with a multiplicity of life styles and identity formations based on the organization of emotions, desire, and identity around diverse forms of cultural consumption such as in leisure, travel, sports, dining, fashion, etc. The modern carnivals, socially constructed aspects of consumerism, are more likely to reproduce, and even to foster the fragmented relationships of the larger community. There is now a carnival for everyone. The technologies of post-Fordist production and the pluralization of media markets, which would now include the Internet, have thus further facilitated the fragmentation of the social. The “clustering of America” into market niches ranging from the “down and out” of the inner city to artistic/creative urban types to upper class “blue bloods”, represents one such classification scheme (Weiss, 1988). Some groups retreat to “life style enclaves” in which people with common tastes in leisure from golf to boating to gardening live in close proximity, claim certain territories, and construct “gated communities” (Blakely, 1998). Often these territories and communities are not spatial but virtual. Then there are the dispersed sites of consumption. Travel is again

divisible by interest in sports (ski, scuba, or safari), culture (theater, music), cuisine (France or Italy), or exotica (Afghanistan by armored camel, Angkor Wat). There is a vast number of media cultures which further segment audiences and fans by age, gender, status, locale, and education. The cultures are epitomized in a range from 'gangsta rap' to 'punk' to salsa to classical quartets, disco, or ballet.

Finally, the creation of the Internet enabled the growth of a large number of consumption sites, meeting places, and fanzines in cyber-space. The computer world is itself fragmented into a variety of users and experts. While some argue that cyber-space offers a new "public sphere" and site of common discourse; in practice, it is a moment of social fragmentation. Millions of people now spend time on the Internet. More do so every day than rent videos. Some may send E-mail messages to friends, letters to lovers real or cyber, or flames to 'enemies'. There are over 100,000 'sites' (home pages) where you can visit the Smithsonian, read *The Nation*, learn to build atom bombs or observe the grandiose narcissism of the owner. Then, of course, there are various sites for shopping to buy everything from computers to cars to vacations and even cyber-sex (the most profitable line on the web).

Theme parks

The production of spectacular carnivals is now a basic element of generating profits for techno-capital. The medieval carnivals took place in the village square at designated times, the modern simulations have no fixed time or real place. Mass-mediated culture can be found in a plurality of sites from living rooms with gigantic TV screens to stadiums to virtual realities and theme parks located in the dream worlds of capital; Disneyland remains as the archetype of the cyber-feudal pleasure places where the very environment is consumed (Gottdiener, 1997). Some of these pleasure sites may be mimetic where commodified nostalgia consists of a pastiche of castles, holographic dragons, and microchips with no contradictions. Nor do the squeaky clean 'knights' and 'damsels' much simulate the unwashed originals. If history cannot provide identities, the future – or at least Disney world and television versions celebrating techno-culture will do fine. In the leisure worlds of techno-capital, amusement parks now called theme parks, are typically owned by large corporations that invest billions in various computer-directed rides, shows, and displays. The sites are no longer places of community gatherings but collections of people seeking community in simulated forms. Perhaps the ultimate theme park is now Las Vegas in which the entire city has

been themed and simulations range from Ancient Egypt (Luxor) to the Star Ship, “Enterprise” of television fame, and includes New York City (cf. Gottdiener, 1997). The modern theme park is the arch symbol of the cyber-feudal carnival where the preference for simulation is part of the growing localization of consciousness – and its movement away from public concern.

The Erosion of Childhood

The civilizing process led to the demise of peasant societies and folk cultures in general, and of the hedonistic carnival in particular. The civilizing process was a moment of the bifurcation of the public and private that fostered the rise of bourgeois childhood as a separate moment of the life cycle and as the site where repression was insinuated into the psyche to transform desire and create a self-disciplined subject (Aries, 1962; Zaretsky, 1976). Socialization became a sequential process of insinuating civility by controlling and repressing emotions, and internalizing long term goals – in short, fostering a character type psychologically disposed to participate in a capitalist order. Achievement goals were internalized as ‘ego-ideals’ and impulsiveness was constrained by the superego (Fromm, 1941).

In recent years, the proliferation of television, theme parks and spectacular versions of consumption-based carnivals has contributed to what has been termed the erosion of restraint and in turn, the “disappearance of childhood” (Postman, 1982) or the “erosion of childhood” (Sommerville, 1982). This is not to wax nostalgic for a mythical past, but merely to note that whereas modern telecommunication and computers might have led to children being the best informed, we now have the “best entertained”. As childhood was a period of isolated innocence, its erosion has been seen in such diverse ways as more violent youth, road rage, and the ultra-simplification of every kind of communication.

While conservatives may decry the sexuality on television, it is not so much sexuality that has been the problem, but the breakdown of the separation of childhood from the various aspects of adulthood. Television has made what Goffman called “backstage” into “front-stage” and public (cf. Meyrowitz, 1985). The sequestration of childhood was a means to prepare him/her for adulthood, to make it possible for a child to learn the social skills of civility, acquire required verbal and cognitive skills, and perhaps most of all, to internalize restraint. The result of carnivalization is that children “mature” beyond their years and grow up to become child-like “adults”.

The mass-mediation of the carnival, the erosion of childhood, and demise of constraint have been major elements in the resurgence of vulgarity as “taste” and politics as bumper sticker slogan complexities. This general trend, sometimes referred to as “dumbing down” or the “dumbing of America” has also been seen as a sign of ‘carnival culture’ (Fussell, 1991; Twitchell, 1992). While many right-wing intellectuals fear the loss of their “privileged” culture and their received wisdom, far more serious is the very demise of any critical thought or reflection.

The Eclipse of Reflection

Critical thought is being eclipsed not by the ‘profound’ thought of conservatives, but by the demise of abstract thought itself save its link with the academy where social critique has been neutralized by post-modern theories. The privileging of the visual and the dumbing down of communication have led to the carnivalization of the political, now just another spectacle that has led to the photo-op and sound bite, reduced to seven seconds of prime time, a form of amusement. Politicians must apparently be entertaining and appeal to emotions rather than facts, logic, or morality. Tele-politics has become an arena for expensive entertainment which has led many to escape the political. In sum, cyber-feudalism, like its earlier form, leaves the masses indifferent to electoral politics. If the carnivals of consumption do not lure people away from the political, comic book politicians scare them away.

In the medieval era when most were illiterate, iconic expressions were used to communicate meanings. The massive sizes of elite buildings, the towering spires and stained glass of churches, and events of public torture or executions were advertisements of state power and warnings to those who would transgress against secular or sacred rules. In sum, the privileging of the visual masked the unseen powers behind the appearance. But as the civilizing process proceeded, and the printing press led to the expansion of literacy, there were a number of consequences which undermined the hidden forces. Although the Bible was printed in the vernacular in order to ensure a comfortable morality, literacy served to foster questions to authority. Literacy privileged the cognitive and demanded an active imagination and reflection to translate letters into words and interpret meanings. In a print culture, discourses tend to be logical, coherent arrangements of facts and ideas; illogical connections, contradictions, and lies are evident to the reader (Postman, 1985). Literacy created conceptual spaces in the imaginary

where new understandings could flourish and be communicated to other readers. Even though written understandings and the literacy-based imagery were generally the products of elite intellectuals whose understandings undoubtedly suffered from certain historic blocs; reading can be a subversive activity when alternative critiques can find an audience. It is for this reason that dictatorships always try to control media.

The general proliferation of television as a moment of the post-modern carnivals again privileges visual signifiers. Carnival culture privileges emotion and impulse, not abstract thought, reflection, or critique. The visual is experienced without reflection, seeing is believing and calls for no greater scrutiny. The fundamental premise of social theory in general and critical theories in particular is explication of the unseen. The central thread of Western thought has been to illuminate what is not visible. For Marx and Freud, that meant piercing barriers of ideology or defenses that were erected just to prevent people from seeing their own nature, and from seeing how they are exploited by capital. Thus without waxing nostalgic for a golden age of the bourgeois 'public sphere', it is still valid to insist that current social and political questions require more complex reflections than sound-bytes or sight-bytes.

The erosion of childhood and the infantilization of adulthood by cyber-feudalism has led to the demise of critical, progressive contestations at the same time as national states are increasingly disciplined by global organizations. The modern carnivals erode literacy in general and a critical consciousness at the very time when they are most essential for economic survival and for the survival of democratic process. A striking example is the campaign of Perot for the presidency of the United States in 1992. Perot's use of 'charts' was pretty much of a joke to reflective thinkers left or right. It was the topic of many cartoons and late night par. But at the same time, Perot well understood the power of the visual, the incontrovertibility of seeing turning into believing. The multibillion cyber-porn industry, the most profitable part of the Internet, is "computainment" for those who prefer active involvement to the passivity of tele-viewing.

Violence

Techno-capital has not only fostered greater inequality, but its moral imperative, neo-liberalism as quasi-religious demands for sacrifice, has led to the decline of the welfare state at the very same time as the 'expendable' classes

are growing and likely to become ever more violent. While these classes are banished to either minimum wages, homelessness, crime and incarceration, they are not insulated from the universality of the mass-mediated post-modern carnivals that permeate society. The carnivals of media valorize consumption and everyday life reminds the under-classes of their poverty and denigration. But this poverty is no longer seen as due to God's will and therefore arouses anger and violence. The carnivalesque that privileges the bodily and valorizes transgression, including violence and cruelty, provides encapsulated micro-spheres of communities that grant and recognize dignified identities and provide realms of power and control. For the post-modern 'expendables', carnivals of violence do not represent alternative worlds interspersed within the "official". They are the only world, the only show in town. Without recognition, dignity, or hope, there is shame and rage; hatred of others becomes an identity and violence secures that identity and its boundaries of difference (Langman, 1998; Scheff, 1992).

Gang crime and violence are the price for creating an underclass. In carnivals of street cultures there has developed a new "aesthetic of violence" (Benjamin, 1968). The valorization of "toughness" culminates in street crime and random violence. Life imitates simulation as many young criminals delight in watching Hollywood gangster movies and modeling themselves after the movie 'heroes'. It is among such youth that we see the market for the various "assault" weapons such as Tech-9s, AK47s, and Uzis. In a society of spectacle that privileges the visual, as has been claimed, these weapons are valuable precisely because they have such awesome appearances. Insofar as carnivals provide empowerment by valorizing and aestheticizing violence, owning weapons provides compensatory empowerment, respect, and dignity for expendable youth. And the use of weapons to take a life gives even more power, if only for a moment. In every large American city, and in many smaller towns, there are now growing under classes youths seething with anger and resentment. Many such youth are often no more than 10 or 12 years old. Most such men-boys are finding community, meanings, recognition, and dignity in the carnivals of war and in the simulations of warriors – sometimes in the framework of terrorist groups. While in "real life" they may be small farmers, clerks and mechanics, in the alternative carnivals of weekend 'training' they turn into the last well-armed bastion for the defense of God, freedom, and democracy.

Another indication of cyber-feudal violence is the growing number of young, homeless blue-collar white nomads who call themselves "garbage punks". These young men and women, often products of families torn asun-

der by financial pressures, wander from city to city. They are typically squatters taking over abandoned buildings. They support themselves by begging or in some cases by prostitution or petty crime. They pride themselves on never taking baths and recognizing each other by smell. (We would remember that in the middle ages, bathing and changing clothes were so rare that most people had chronic skin diseases.) In a recent *New York Times* article, one young man said “there were three things in life that mattered: fighting, fucking, and getting high”. This statement echoes the virtual reality created in the most popular forms of computainment, among them computer games and web-sites catering to sexual denigration, racism, anti-semitism, and even fascism. One such game, for example, allows a player to compete at gassing the most Jews for the least costs (Langman, 1998).

The expendables of today suffer multiple levels of deprivation, stigmatization, and injury. In encounters with the larger society, they are reminded of their inferiority. But unlike the serfs and peasants of old, capitalism, which individualizes rank, blames the victims and locates their condition in their personal or cultural inadequacies. We can expect that the increasingly humiliated under-classes will react in rage and anger (Scheff, 1992). Although the medieval period was a violent age at the level of everyday life, it had a highly stable social structure. There is little reason why cyber-feudalism should be any less violent or stable than its earlier form.

Mad Max vs. the Enterprise: Evil vs. Virtue

The impact of technology on society has been debated for over a hundred years. Technophiles from scientists to inventors to businessmen [sic] to writers herald the marvels technology has, can, and will provide. The high priests of “technophilia” craft a hegemonic ideology for the computer age that promises not only a Utopian golden age of plenty and a new humanistic consciousness, but suggests that we can soon find immortality. At the same time, neo-Luddite technophobes lament the domination by Instrumental Reason, the loss of meaning, and the adverse effects on people’s life styles and relationships. In all fairness, we need to locate the production of technology in a capitalist system, consider the ways elites produce and use technology, and how they gain the assent of the general population. As many have long noted, technology holds the promise of reducing toil and freeing time for communal life, creativity, and more fulfilling lives. But the nature of globalized techno-capital in which the quest for profit is the driving force,

has created a rigidly stratified society with a growing gap of rich and poor and growing under classes and surplus populations. Insofar as the access and control of computer technologies is located in a class system, the computer re-inscribes another dimension of hierarchical power. The under-classes cannot even get to the net!

Science fiction has often used the future as metaphor for the present and an often not so subtle form of social critique. Science fiction has long suggested that we are moving toward two realms, separate and growing more unequal. In perhaps the archetypical critique of modernity, Fritz Lang's film, *Metropolis*, a technologically advanced affluent society rests upon impoverished masses toiling in dismal underground labyrinths. The current incarnation of this bifurcation can be seen in the juxtaposition of *Star Trek* and *Mad Max at the Thunderdome*. On the Starship, in the veteran television series, everyone gets along regardless of race, gender, or species of origin. In this post-scarcity world, the world-wide Federation had long since ended conflicts and wars, the last being the genetic wars of the early twenty-first century. Food is plentiful, if you like replicated synthetics, the men are all handsome, and the women comely especially in their crisp form-fitting uniforms. The place is clean, and life quite comfortable. Health care is free, and seems excellent, since no one ever dies. There is no want, everyone lives well; they even allude to the greed and poverty in "earlier societies". But their scanners miss what is really happening on the earth's surface below. There it is quite a different story.

In the world of the Mad Max movies, a nuclear war has destroyed the cities. Surviving groups of bizarre freaks and characters roam about from one chase to another using some sort of strange car-like contraptions. The central gathering place is the Thunderdome, Tina Turner's gladiator palace. In a bizarre bird cage like structure, men on bungee cords must fight till the death as the crowd chants "two shall enter, one shall die". Mad Max movies are just one version of a dystopic future of conflict, violence, and death, a theme that appears in many contemporary films. While such films are of course made for profit, with the dystopias as backgrounds to frame the adventures of superstars, they can also be seen as not so subliminal warnings that if the world does not change, this is what will happen. The popularity of such films speaks to underlying fears of the future directions of our economy.

A Dialectic of Hope

The carnivalization of techno-capital has many adverse consequences, but shall we abandon all hope? The medieval carnival emerged as an alternative culture where serfs and peasants could create communities of celebration outside the official institutions. For much of the year the peasant's body was disciplined by the structure of the seigniorial system. The liminal sites of the carnival created spaces for alternative communities, identities, meanings, and practices in which subjects expressed agency by contesting the official disciplinary practices of the body. The transgression of limits and expressions of the otherwise forbidden provided a daydream, a utopian realm of dignity, meaning, and empowerment. Bakhtin (1968) understood the carnival as a response to contradictions of deprivation and desire. He saw a Utopian aspect to the carnival. Bloch too thought the carnival a dream world of wish fulfillment and an element of hope for a better future (Bloch, 1986).

I have argued that techno-capital has both fostered a bifurcation of the class system and a carnival culture in which mass-mediated spectacles have become the distinctive feature of mass culture. But unlike the carnivals of the middle ages, cyber-feudal carnivals are systematically produced, commodified simulations to impel consumption and secure hegemony. Such carnivals provide profits and at the same time exercise discipline and control. Nevertheless television, theme parks, and alternative subcultures do provide sites and opportunities for counter-hegemonic imageries and alternative identities that could contest representations, policies, and received wisdom (cf. Kellner, 1990). There is a basic contradiction between the deprivations of techno-capital and its inability to ameliorate its own malaise. The carnivals are provided by the TNCs – but the lure of the carnival depends very much on the social dysfunctions and psychic scarcities that are created by techno-capital. The cyber-feudal carnivals promise that consumption will offer happiness but techno-capital insures that scarcities will never be overcome. For most workers, historically and in the current age, save for perhaps artists and those at the upper echelons, work has not been the arena of fulfillment. But at the same time, neither have consumers found genuine forms of satisfaction. This creates the possibility of an emancipatory prospect.

The great secret that techno-capital would hide, that its carnivals would mask, is that consumerism does not bring the promised happiness (at least once basic needs have been met). Insofar as consumerism systematically needs to produce ever new and 'different' identities that create or tap mar-

kets, techno-capitalism creates its own 'cultural contradictions'. Techno-capitalism, and its valorization of consumption, commodified identities, carnival culture, and the new religion of 'techno-science', has provided no more 'happiness' than did the earlier promises of religious salvation or glorification of the nation. As priests, prophets, and sociologists have long known, people seek ties to other people, community. They pursue dignified identities that glean recognition/esteem and world views that provide meaning and purpose to their lives. Techno-capital fails and its cyber-feudal carnivals do no better.

In the advanced societies, we face long-term trends that will temper the growth of domestic consumption. In the face of economic stress, the historical pattern has been to mobilize for various conservative, or indeed reactionary, agendas. But the fragmentation and localization of the social problematizes mass mobilization of any stripe. At the same time, the new technologies of communication offer possibilities for new forms of communities, identities, and of mobilization. While some suggest that the Internet is the new 'public sphere', with its several thousand scattered home pages and Usenet sites catering to specialized interests; nothing could be further from the truth. But notwithstanding, as work becomes more problematic and consumption threatened, people are more likely to share their experiences and millions will do so in cyber-space. The problematic for the critique of domination will be to understand the rapidly changing nature of techno-capital, its contradictions and sites of contestation.

The carnivals of consumer culture, like their medieval originals, have become momentary realms where meaningful identities are created or selected and recognized, where social ties are maintained, and people find microspheres of empowerment away from the boring, routinized, and mundane nature of everyday life. The carnival, like the day dream, promises a better future; but unlike the dream that is rooted in the individual, the carnival is a communal celebration of meaningful identities and affirmations of self. The carnival of the middle ages was a time and place of laughter. Humor has long been a means where the dominated find meaning and hope disguised as critique of authority. The "carnavalesque" celebrations of violating "established" boundaries of dress, gender, and sexuality create spaces for contesting and renegotiating meanings. Thus social critique must now consider the role of humor, even though the *jouissance* and pleasures promised by the carnivals have not, so far, been delivered. The thwarted promises of the carnivals may yet become the foundation for an emancipatory praxis based on hope.

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