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Perhaps, most fundamentally, what I wish to do in this paper is to confront the taken-for-granted world of the anthropologist – or at least one presumably important sector of that world. (I should note, parenthetically, that this taken-for-granted world, however narrowed by cross-cultural experience, is both experientially and ideologically validated by the experience of field work and the refractions of that experience.)

Let me begin with a story – a story which has become for me at least a parable for the antrhopological presumption, the anthropologist's *hubris*, if you will – and the problem of objective knowledge of another culture. An Indian graduate student from Central America was asked what he thought of the anthropological research done on his tribe. He answered:

> The antrhopologist comes. He asks us how many souls we have. We wonder: What can he mean? To count souls! Finally, to please him – the Indian student laughed – we give him a number, say, thirteen. He writes the number down. And then *we* know how many souls we have. And the anthropologist, well, he doesn't have to ask himself whether or not souls can be counted.

Here is the anthropological dielmma in its full complexity. On the one hand the anthropologist has learned that some people believe that an individual can have more than one soul. He has become aware of cultural difference. On the other hand, he has not had to recognize the possibility that souls cannot be counted. The presumption that souls can be counted is never questioned. It is part of his taken-for-granted world. Indeed, his discovery that people may believe in more than one soul provides him with *the illusion of sensitivity to cultural difference* and blinds him to his own presumption.

I do not personally believe that there is any way to overcome this dilemma. It is an essential feature of the anthropological endeavor, of any interpretive endeavor for that matter, and should be accepted as such. The anthropological enterprise rests upon dialogue – with our informants, with the texts we, and others, produce, with ourselves. It is a continuous movement of construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction in the field and in the academy. Indeed the movement of field work, so central to anthropology, is perhaps so central precisely because it is a symbolic enactment of the larger enterprise. Anthropology retains its life as long as the constructions and reconstructions – and the deconstructions as well – are questioned. It loses its life as soon as it is petrified into rigid theoretical confabulations; Marvin Harris' *The Nature of Cultural Things* (1964) is hopefully the limiting case here. These confabulations are regarded all too often as truth rather than as a mode of expression with a certain rhetorical force – as symptom, really, of the ethnographic encounter. The hope for the anthropological endeavor lies in further encounters both in the field, the academy, and, in our dreams. The hope lies ultimately not in ourselves but in the question posed in our parable, by the Indian. Can souls be counted?

Somewhere in Castenada's Don Juan series, Don Juan tells Carlos that he decided one day to abandon his personal history. This admission, like so many others in the series, caught the imagination of many of my students (and others too, including inevitably myself) who found in Don Juan's gesture the hope of liberation from their own personal history – from the weight of their past. Whether or not any of the student tried, by whatever means, to rid themselves of their personal history I do not know. What I do know is that they were exhilerated by the possibility. They did not, however, question what Don Juan meant by personal history.

In *Divinity and Experience* (1967) Godfrey Lienhardt tells of a Dinka who had been imprisoned in Khartoum and then named one of his children Khartoum "in memory of the place, but also to turn aside any possible harmful influence of the place upon him in later life." "The act," Lienhardt comments, "is an act of exorcism, but the exorcism of what, for us, would be memories of experiences." He adds:

> That the experience of the past, whether of people, places, or events, may have permanent and profound influences upon the personality is of course a commonplace of European thought also; but there they tend to be regarded as proximately and most importantly derived from the mind or imagination of the remembering self, on which their traces are thought to remain. Our view of the passage of time influences the value we attach to past events far more than in the case of the Dinka, whose points of reference are not years counted serially, but the events themselves. In the example of the man who called his child "Khartoum" it is Khartoum which is regarded as an agent, the subject which acts, and not as with us the remembering mind which recalls the place. The man is the object acted upon.

Here Lienhardt has recognized what the readers of Castenada may not have recognized: that the articulation of the self and thereby of memory, the past, and its significance, are not to be taken for granted. Don Juan's feat may not after all have been so extraordinary.

Personal history – and its various objectifications into the case history, the life history, the biography, and the autobiography – are indeed presumptions on our part no less compelling than the presumption that souls can be counted. They are contigent of what Hegel would call an "appropriate world condition" – a world condition which Coleridge noted is one emphatically of personality. Michel Foucault (1970), goes so far as to see *man*, at least as a subject of scientific investigation, as the result of a general redistribution of the eighteenth century episteme, or epistemological space.

> The first thing to be observed is that the human sciences did not inherit a certain domain, already outlined, perhaps surveyed as a whole, but allowed to lie fallow, which it was then their task to elaborate with positive methods and with concepts that had at last become scientific; the eighteenth century did not hand down to them, in the name of man or human nature, a space, circumscribed on the outside but still empty, which it was then their role to cover and analyse. The epistemological field traversed by the human sciences was not laid down in advance: no philosophy, no political or moral option, no empirical science of any kind, no observation of the human body, no analysis of sensation, imagination, or the passions, had ever been encountered, in the seventeenth or eighteenth century, anything like man: for man did not exist. . . .

I do not wish either to procliam or disclaim Foucault's conclusions here. I wish simply to call attention to the fact that that which we constitute as a legitimate subject for scientific research may, in the most profound sense, be nothing more than a sector of a world contingent epistemological space. That we recognize as anthropologists that the conceptualization, if not the experience, of self varies from society to society may prevent us from questioning our own assumptions about the subject we study – in the case in point about man and his personal history – and the form which we give to that subject in our writing – in the case in point – the life history and the case history.

Like the autobiography and the biography, the case history and the life history are distinctly Western genres, contingent, as I have said, on the appropriate world condition. And, as such, they shape a particular, pre-selected range of data into a meaningful totality. They reflect not only the more superficial concerns of a particular historical epoch or a particular cultural tradition but also the more fundamental attitudes toward and evaluations of the person, of time, nature, the supernatural, and inter-personal relations. The Freudian case history, which provides a model for subsequent psychiatric and anthropological case histories reflects, for example, the distinctive Romantic genre of the *Bildungsgeschichte*. Such a genre, as M. H. Abrams observed in his brilliant *Natural Supernaturalism* (1971) translates "the painful process of Christian conversion into a painful process of self-formation, crisis, and self-recognition, which culminates in a stage of self-coherence, self-awareness, and assured power that is its own reward."

The case history, like the biography, presents a view of the subject from the perspective of the outsider; it bears the impress of the narrator. The life history, like the autobiography, presents the subject from his own perspective. It differs from the autobiography in that it is an immediate response to a demand posed by an Other and carries within it the expectations of that Other. It is, as it were, doubly edited, during the encounter itself and during the literary re-encounter. Not only do the specific questions posed by the Other reflect certain generic expectations within his own culture but the very question of life history itself may be an alien construct for the subject and cause in him an alienating *prise de conscience*. (A non-autobiographical example of this is perhaps the Freudian perspective developed by Reichel-Dolmatoff's informant for *Amazonian Cosmos*. (1971)) The frequent elimination of the Other, at least in the form of the narrative I, from the life history renders the life history timeless and static. Ironically, this elimination of the I in the name of objectivity would totally preclude both clinical and cultural evaluation were it not that the voice of the Other sounds through his own self-expurgated text.

Although the life history and the autobiography can be distinguished in terms of the demand of the Other, such a distinction is in the final analysis superficial. The life history and the autobiography, all writings for that matter, are essentially self-constutive; they are moments, fixed in time by the word, in the dialectival process of self-constitution. They require as such the mediation of the Other. The Other includes not simply the concrete individual who stands before one, but all that he stands for symbolically. At the most abstract level, he is the transcendental locus of meaning; he is, too, typified by social roles, conventionalized perceptions, culturally determined styles, and a whole array of idiosyncratic associations which may be less than conscious.

The life historical text is a product of its author's desire for recognition by this essentially complex Other. It is not simply informative but evocative as well. Its evaluation requires the understanding of the relationship between the author of the text and the Other, the inevitable interlocutor, whom he is at least symbolically addressing.

When we distinguish between the personal historical text produced by the anthropologist's informant for the anthropologist as embodied Other and the life history or case history produced by the anthropologist for his audience, his Other, we recognize the complexity of those documents which anthropologists – and psychologists and psychiatrists – have been producing all these years often with the naive hope of obtaining "a view from within." We must be aware of the fact that within the case historical or life historical text produced by the anthropologist, the Other is essentially a bifurcate Other. The anthropologist is addressing not just his "anthropological audience" and their deep symbolic counterparts, he is addressing too his informants (Crapanzano, 1977). He is, if you will, completing the dialogue and he is responding to what we might call the silent undersong of the dialogue: All that the anthropologist could not say and, to be sure, all that his informants could not say but could, often enough through their silence, reveal. (I do not wish to sound mystical here; I wish simply to call your attention to all that is communicated, and not said, during any encounter, including the ethnographic encounter.) It is to these paralexical messages that we often, wittingly or unwittingly, respond. (It is not so much the fact that Bateson's (1972) cat is on the mat that irks us – it is the message of that fact that produces annoyance.) We must recognize too the bad faith of many of our stylistic manouevres which produce the illusion of neutrality if not objectivity.

What I am asking you here is to recognize the extent to which the stylistic manouevres, the genric constraints and the literary conventional limitations impose upon not just simply those ethnographic, those life historical and case historical texts, we produce, but upon the very dialogue from which such texts arise.

more than formal differences. They are cultural constructs and reflect those most fundamental assumptions about the nature of reality, including the nature of the person and the nature of the word, that are considered, if they are considered at all, self-evident by the members of any particular cultural tradition. The recognition of differences in these assumptions may lead to recognition of the possibility of another more-or-less successful way of constituting reality. Such a possibility may produce a sort of epistemological vertigo and demand a position of extreme cultural relativism. Wittingly or unwittingly, however, the differences often disappear in an act of translation by the anthropologist – or his reader. (To what extent is Lienhardt's description of Dinka mind and memory, cast as it is in neo-Thomistic concepts, adequate. To what extent is he, the anthropologist more generally, destined not to adequate description but to an essential act of suggestion: a plea to recognize difference? Such translations may render bizarre, exotic, or downright irrational what would have been ordinary in its own context. They may do the reverse as well: render the exotic and the extraordinary – and, despite ourselves, we do from time to time encounter the exotic and the extraordinary – downright proasic and ordinary. The ethnographic encounter is lost in timeless description; the anguished search for comprehension in the theoretical explanation; the particular in the general; the character in the stereotype. In the case of the life or case history, the informant comes to occupy both in the life historical or case historical text – and in the encounter itself insofar as these genres infuse it – what Andras Zempleni (1977) has called "the comfortable space of the enthnographer's imagination *(son imaginaire)*". What space does the ethnographer himself come to occupy?

The question must be asked – and continually. We must not succumb unquestioningly either to the generic and literary conventional models at our disposal – and the ontological and epistemological assumptions embedded within them – or to the theoretical models. These latter too must be seen as possessing a rhetorical force not simply in our texts but in our encounters as well – a rhetorical force which may be more important to us than any truth we describe. The message of the ethnographic text may, in other words, be less important to us than the fact of its communication.

Let me try in the remainder of this paper to illustrate several of these problems more concretely but by no means more systematically. I am of course destined to failure; indeed, in giving illustrations, I am contradicting my very argument. Ideally the ethnographic exchange, however unreadable, should be allowed to speak for itself.

I will use as my example an interchange I had with an illiterate Moroccan tilemaker named Tuhami. Tuhami was a gentle man, a man of great dignity, whom I came to admire greatly. He was too a man who had suffered much in his life. He was married to a she-demon, a camel-footed spirit or *jinniyya*, named Aisha Qandisha. He was not unique in this respect. Other Moroccan men – outsiders always – were thought to be married to Aisha Qandisha. Aisha held Tuhami, as she did her other husbands, in tight control; she governed particularly their amorous lives. Unlike some of the she-demon's victim's, Tuhami was unable to participate in those ceremonies which would have given him some liberation from the she-demon. He was torn between the belief in her power and a distaste, if not a disblief, in the power of those who could liberate him from her.

Tuhami was a story teller – and he was known among the women of the poorer quarters of Meknes for his knowledge of magic, herbal brews, and the ways of saints and demons. He was not considered threatening to the men of his milieu; indeed, they allowed him even to visit their women.

Tuhami defied from the start stereotyping. Initially I set out to question him on his knowledge of the Hamadsha, the religious brotherhood I had come to Morocco to study, and his involvement with them. I wanted to learn as much as I could about the significance of the order for the non-member. I was anxious to learn not just what people said the order was about but the role it played in their articulation of experience, including their personal history. I encouraged, accordingly, reminiscence and free association.

Tuhami was, as I have said, very much the story teller – and in talking to me, he used all the rhetorical devices of the story teller to create the effects he wanted. Encouraged by the ambiguity and the unfamiliarity of our initial encounter and by my "neutrality" as an anthropologist, he permitted himself greater freedom of expression during our meeting than in the more structured encounters of everyday life. He was able, in other words, not only to create the relationship he desired but to create me for himself as well. I presented him with minimum resistance but, through insistence and the direction of my questions, resistance all the same. It was I who provided the frame for our encounters. Tuhami was free within it.

Tuhami responded to our encounter with an ease of fantasy and self-reference that was not characteristic of other Moroccans with whom I worked. It was often impossible to distinguish what was real from what was dream, fantasy, vision, or hallucination. He would begin to describe in a most *realistic* fashion a trip to Fez to get supplies and end with an erotic fantasy out of the Arabian nights. His women, like the heroines of Gerard de Norval, were realistically differentiated, then embellished, and finally collapsed into a single woman, usually Aisha Qandisha or one of her refractions. Tuhami contradicted himself so often that even the minimum order I bestow on his life belies its articulation. What I take to be real in my understanding of it is in fact my own assumption.

At first Tuhami and I spoke mutually unintelligible languages. I was primarily interested in information; Tuhami in evocations. Our discourse was asymmertrical; it moved from the informative to the evocative and then back to the informative. We both tried to determine the direction. I with my prosaic questions. Tuhami, sometimes more extravagantly, with pronouncements. I remember his beginning an interview with a kind of Delphic announcement of World War III. He looked as if he were not speaking; his eyes were focused somewhere far off in the distance; his voice was deep and throaty; his words were uttered with finality. "There will be trouble in Casablanca and Rabat, then in Taza and

Meknes. Fez alone will be spared. Tangier will be razed. There where there are now houses, plants will grow." More often he would begin by telling me a dream – he knew I was interested in dreams – or by announcing his decision to take along trip. He never did.

There was always something captivating about Tuhami's discourse. It was as though he wanted to entrap me, to enslave me in an intricate web of fantasy and reality – to reverse if you will the colonial relationship that I as a foreigner must have suggested to him. (He had had very close relationships with a French family.) There was something seductive in his discourse too. He did not want me in fact or anyone else. That, I think, would have been to much for him. What he wanted was rather the imaginary fulfillment, I believe, of a lack, a *Manque a etre,* to use Lacan's (1966) phrase, that he suffered. I became an articulatory pivot about which he would spin out his fantasies in order to create himself as he desired. I was, so to speak, created to create him. . . .

As for me, I was soon captivated and seduced by Tuhami's evocations. I see this even in my notes of our first encounter. I guarded myself with ((anthropological perspective" but this perspective was in fact to break down as Tuhami revealed more and more of himself and his suffering. In the end, I had to abandon that perspective. I became curer, burdened with the knowledge of imminent departure.

Tuhami must have felt some of the relief I did by this change in stance. He yielded to me. He came to speak my language – the language of the real rather than the imaginary, however sanctioned by his traditional idiom. The colonial relationship was restored. I was secure and could rationalize my position as protector-therapist. Tuhami accepted the reversal with ease – because, I think, he could at last articulate our relationship in a manner meaningful to him. I became curer, and Tuhami desired to be cured.

For me, the moment of my transformation, into a curer, came with Tuhami's more or less accidental recitation of a childhood event. I was asking him if he had ever been afraid.

Were you ever afraid of water?

No, I've been afraid of rivers. Ever since I was little. I was a shepherd. My friend fell into the river and was carried away. Since then I've always been afraid of rivers. I was with my friend. He said that if he ever saw Lalla Aisha he would hit her or throw a rock at her. There was thunder, and suddenly the river swelled and carried him away. We were trying to climb on a mule at the moment, and the mule fell into the river. My friend let go, but I held on to the mule. I didn't know how to swim. I couldn't help him. My parents always said they would throw me in the river if I ever cried. I was afraid of nothing else.

How did you feel when this happened?

My heart was dry like a rock. I was mute for two days. Ever since then I have found myself in misery and on the road. Some say I'll die. Others say I'll never marry. All my friends are married except for me.

Tuhami blamed his inability – his impotence – on Aisha.

I took the death of Tuhami's friend to be real just as Freud had taken the fatherly seductions of his female patients to be real. I had discovered the event which was central to Tuhami's articulation, the subject of his persistent fantasies, the root of his emptiness, his impotence, his being dead. I had discovered the fatal instant – to quote Sartre ( ) – that Tuhami, like Genet, carried in his heart, the instant that had lost none of its virilence, the instant that Tuhami continued to live and relive. . . . I could have written his entire life around that instant – much as Freud wrote the case study of rat man around the rat punishment.

At the time I did not recognize my presumption. I *understood.* I did not realize that Tuhami's recitation was for me symbolic of my own transformation and what I took to be Tuhami's transformation. I committed what Erikson would call the sin of originology. The story became a pivotal point in my articulation of our encounters; the questions I posed. It reflected then not simply a theoretical perspective which precluded, incidentally, an appreciation of Tuhami's own manipulation of the dialogue; it reflected too a genre into which Tuhami was being formulated at the time.

I use this example of the infusion of the ethnographic encounter with both literary and theoretical conventions to demonstrate the degree to which these conventions affect the articulation of the exchange and then its literary write-up. They serve – and this is my point – a rhetorical function within the ethnographic encounter that formulates it, gives it a certain direction, and embeds it with the anthropologist's unquestioned presuppositions.

Of course, I am precluding the role that the informant plays within the interchange. It was not just I who, for whatever reasons, wanted to convert my relationship with Tuhami into a therapeutic one. Tuhami was not without initiative; he was not simply passive. The essence of even the most directed relationship is one of creative mutuality. It is dialectical. Tuhami's recitation of his friend's death may not have had the same rhetorical force for him as it did for me. Other recitations did: they involved the intracacies of his relationship with Aisha Qandisha. Their force for him was confirmed by my interest. How then can I judge of their significance in his life's articulation?

Freud ( ) in the rat man case I mentioned was moved, as you will remember, by rat man's fear of the rat punishment. He assumed that rat man's hesitation to tell him of the punishment was resistance. Not only did this presumption determine his therapy with rat man, but it also formed the focus of his highly influential case history. What Freud did not recognize was that rat man may in his hesitation have been using the gossip's oldest trick. "Do you know what I saw Marvin doing yesterday? No. I'd really like to tell you. But it is just too awful." Should such hesitation be interpreted as resistance or rhetoric?

Let me conclude with an irony. I have written up a portrait of Tuhami. I include in that portrait not only Tuhami's recitations but my own questions, explications, musings, and theoretical confabulations. I try to avoid the presuppositions of the case history of the life history – presuppositions that did inevitably influence my exchange with Tuhami, as I have shown. They have influenced my text too insofar as it is a reaction to them. What has resulted is a manuscript that is uncannily

familiar. It resembles less the case history or the life history than the modern novel of the alienated individual who cannot communicate. Both Tuhami and I emerge as alienated anti-heroes. One genre has replaced another. We are, I suppose, destined by the idiom into which we have been caste.

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