The World as it is and the world as it wants to be #HumanRights

Allegra
June, 2015

This Thursday, Allegra TV gives you a recent talk by Mark Goodale held at the

University of Copenhagen on May 7, 2015. This talk uses insights from the anthropology of human rights to reflect more generally on current debates in Denmark and more widely about the possibilities for intercultural moral understanding. The talk will draw from the ethnography of human rights in order to develop a framework of inter- and transcultural engagement that samples theoretically from Erich Fromm's argument for normative humanism, Isaiah Berlin's emphasis on a non-relativist form of pluralism, and James Scott's classic study of the relationship between resistance and power. The goal is to explore how the work of anthropologists—in dialogue, as always, with a diverse mix of theorists and case studies—can point the way to what Fromm called a more "sane society."

We are very pleased to feature this talk in two different formats: a video and a related paper.

"And it was during this exact moment that we anthropologists started to take an interest in the spreading influence of human rights and its consequences. This was largely unintentional or serendipitous. In my case, I had gone to Bolivia in 1998 in order to conduct ethnographic fieldwork on conflict resolution among indigenous villages in the Andean highlands. I wasn't thinking of human rights at all, at least not as a key concept for anthropological research. When I think back to that period, I must blush with a certain embarrassment. I was the stereotype of the naïve anthropologist—Indiana Jones hat, filled with a spirit of adventure, but most of all, motivated by the belief that I was on the verge of a very important discovery. In my case, I was convinced that I would find the secret to peaceful relations among people out there among the quinoa fields at 4000 meters. So I spent the next year walking over 1000 kilometers from village to village, asking intrusive questions, studying archives where I could find them, and observing dispute processes when I was permitted to. "

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_yFykkBv7KE

Read the accompanying paper at our ISSUU page!

#REVIEW: Rice Talks: Food and Community in a Vietnamese Town

Julien Ehrenkönig
June, 2015

In his book *Rice Talks: Food and Community in a Vietnamese Town*, anthropologist Nir Avieli brings to light the importance of understanding the historical and socio-cultural elements that dictate food and consumption in society. Using his dissertation research from 1999 based in the town of Hoi An,

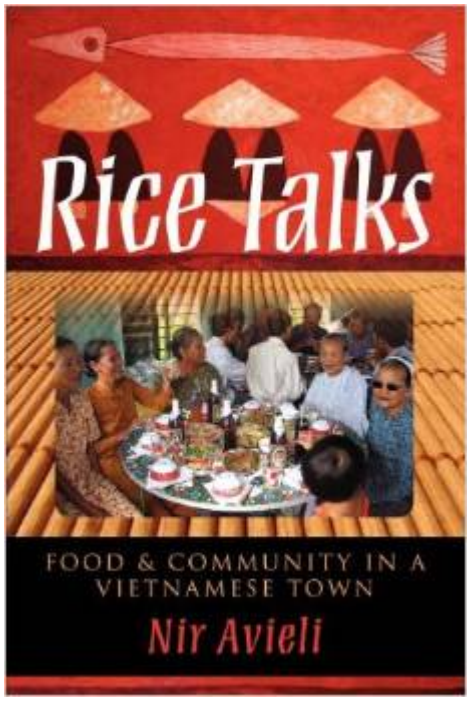
Avieli discusses the greater cultural and social processes that underlie the preparation and consumption of food in Vietnam. Composed of seven chapters, Avieli's ethnographic account and analysis illustrates how social order and cultural constructions are reproduced in the Hoianese meal.

> *Using Don Handelman's (1998) paradigm on public rituals that consists of model, mirrors, and representations, Avieli argues that gender, social status, ethnicity, and religious cosmology are revealed and reconstructed within the Hoianese culinary sphere where food and consumption are involved in an intricate process of cultural production, reproduction, and negotiation (p. 15).*

Avieli's introduction begins with the historical contexts surrounding the town of Hoi An and follows with the analytical lens he used during his field research in Vietnam. In Chapter 1, Avieli outlines the basic dyadic structure of the Hoianese meal that consists of rice and "things to eat", which further develops into a "twofold-turned-fivefold" structure consisting of five levels of transformation of edible ingredients into food (p. 19). Avieli analyses the cultural elements involved in nutritional logic and the cosmological symbolism found within the structure of the meal. Chapter 2 focuses on the social dynamics of gender and space in the preparation of food inside the Hoianese home. Avieli discusses the preparation stages of a meal: the symbolism in presentation and aesthetics such as the colours and textures of the dishes served in harmonious "complementary oppositions" (p. 54), and the patterns of consumption dealing with gender and age. Stepping out into the streets, Chapter 3 discusses the cultural and historical elements that construct Hoi An identities through local food specialities. The chapter explores why certain dishes are consumed on a daily basis more than others, such as *cao lau* and *banh bao bahn*, which carry the existence of various representations of Hoianese identity.

Chapters 4 through 6 examine the communal rituals of Hoianese society, and the important role that food plays within them. Beginning with Chapter 4, Avieli discusses ancestral rituals such as the mortuary rite of *dam gio*. While the

function of these rituals are to assist the deceased in the afterlife, the preparation and consumption of food in these rites also represent a social interaction between the deceased and the living. Avieli argues that these rituals are not specific life-cycle events, but rather family-cycle events oriented towards the family unit as a whole, encompassing more than one generation of family members (p. 101-102). Wedding feasts, as described in Chapter 5, are the single most important event in Hoianese lives. Lasting for several days, the preparation and consumption of food plays an important role in each ritual stage of the marriage ceremony. Avieli provides a chronology of the stages present in a Hoianese wedding and separates each stage to discuss the different social contexts that exist within the accompanied traditional feasts.



Chapter 6 delves into the family as a social unit, and expands the discussion of food and ritual in the context of community festivals. Focusing on different communal meals present in Hoianese society, Avieli discusses clan ancestor worship, Protestant holiday celebrations, and annual communal feasts that take place throughout the year. While the eating arrangements for community festivals are similar to the family-oriented style of preparation and consumption, prepared food served at communal festivals features diverse, specific sets of dishes distinguishing each communal meal from other festival foods (p. 173). Community festivals, such as clan feasts, serve as a way to create familiarity and closeness among people who participate in these celebrations. In Chapter 7, Avieli discusses the food served at the three most prominent festivals in Hoi An: *Tet Nguyen Dan* (Vietnamese New Year), *Tet Doan Ngo* (Summer Festival), and *Tet Trung Thu* (Mid-Autumn Festival), and examines the culinary symbolism existing within the special dishes prepared and consumed during these celebrations. Avieli wraps up

his discussion on food and consumption in Hoi An with a brief conclusion and reflection on his research that discusses the challenges of conducting fieldwork as an outsider of the Hoi An community.

> *Rice Talks: Food and Community in a Vietnamese Town is an excellent introduction to the complexities underlying the study of food and culture within Southeast Asian societies.*

Each chapter is full of vivid descriptions of food preparation, taste, and consumption interwoven into the cultural fabric of the Hoianese culinary sphere. Avieli focuses on the importance of nutrition, consumption, and cultural practices in Hoi An through a combination of analysis and personal accounts. For students, researchers, or everyday readers looking to explore the area of nutritional anthropology, Avieli provides a wonderfully written ethnographic narrative that is as engaging as it is appetizing.

Avieli, Nir. 2012. *Rice Talks: Food and Community in a Vietnamese Town*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 336 pp. Pb: £15.99. ISBN: 9780253223708

Circulating the state idea and establishing a state system in

Palestine

Kareem Rabie
June, 2015

Since 2007, the Palestinian government in the West Bank has been working to build a state while under occupation. Already almost entirely dependent on international aid and shedding many of its responsibilities to its citizens, the putative state increasingly and officially emphasizes private investment and privatization over public service.

Analysis of this state in the making, this state that may never emerge, can provide insight into the ways that private developers are profiting in previously unprofitable markets and territories. And how aid, governance, and everyday life form in relation to those imperatives and the ideas that circulate to justify and establish them.

More specifically, I ask: how does the government and private sector's stated "national priority to develop affordable housing" help establish new markets in housing and finance in the West Bank. How does an abstract priority orient practice? In a state that is perpetually in a condition of becoming, NGOs, developers, and the government produce documents and statistics that provide evidence, make claims about the present, and presuppose a future they help ensure.

The government, donors, and the private sector come together to create large-

scale development that claims to meet needs for housing. Developments that physically anchor political economic transformations, alter the landscape, and incorporate ordinary Palestinians into a wider vision for the future. And set precedents for future interventions and investment.

More specifically, the government acts as a conduit for aid to reach the private sector, and alters laws such as those regulating land tenure and tenants' protection. Aid agencies and donors back development and finance projects in order to minimize risk for Palestinian investors. "Middle class" Palestinians enter into projects as consumers in new markets for housing. Markets that did not exist prior to large development, and with forms of financing that *could* not exist prior to reforms in land tenure and foreclosure laws.

> *The Palestinian Authority, donor institutions, and Palestinian capitalists have differences, but they share two goals: to make Palestine stable and profitable.*

At different times between 2008 and last year, I conducted field research on privatization in the West Bank, where I focused on Rawabi, a massive new planned town under construction 9 km north of Ramallah, and mostly funded by Qatar. The idea for Rawabi began to take shape in 2004 in order to meet needs for housing, and eventually it is supposed to house 40,000 "middle class" Palestinians. No one lives there yet.

Rawabi is a massive, visible indication that Palestine is moving towards private development and governance. It quickly became a topic of conversation well before there was any Rawabi to speak of. It's constantly in the local and

international news. The highest levels of Palestinian and Israeli government continuously negotiate over its specifics, its road, its water hookup, and so on. The resources, the land, the political capital it marshaled are unprecedented there, as are the changes it enables and forces in its wake.

The context for state building

West Bank Palestinians' relationship to Palestine substantially changed after the 1993 Oslo Accords. The PLO leadership returned from exile in Tunis and elsewhere. In 1994, the Palestinian National Authority, the PA, formed for an *interim term of five years*, during which time negotiators would iron out the "final status" issues of borders, settlements, Jerusalem, and Palestinian right of return. Today of course the PA still exists and final status issues are unresolved. First of all, Oslo created the idea of a Palestinian interim government operating with meaningful sovereignty coming at some later date. Second, it carved the West Bank into three areas of territorial control: Area A, where Palestinians have civil and military control. Area B is under Palestinian civil and Israeli military control. And the rest, more than 60% of the West Bank, is Israeli-controlled area C.

In 2007, Salam Fayyad, formerly of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), became Minister of Finance partially at the behest of donor countries. Later that year, the two largest political factions, Fatah and Hamas, split. After a Hamas legislative victory, ongoing tensions became open hostility in both the West Bank and Gaza, and the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas dissolved the unity government and appointed Fayyad Prime Minister.

The split and Fayyad's ascendance were the basis for new kinds of pro-privatization initiatives in the West Bank by establishing Fayyad as the ideological center of government, and narrowing the government's focus to the West Bank. Fayyad focused on privatization and reform at the scale of the West Bank. He established an economic agenda based on the need for profit, and worked towards a national economy that would encourage stability, investment, and ultimately the state

> *Rawabi is the marquee project and important precedent for ongoing state and economy building projects, and it demonstrates the way the two are intertwined, mutually-produced, and inseparable.*

Palestine is an alphabet soup of ministries, NGOs working in the public interest, NGOs working narrowly for private interests, International NGOs, and so on. And they all constantly produce reports. Development in Palestine is now focused explicitly on growth and privatization. This means a partial shift from public works, municipal projects, cultural centers, and so on, towards aid to private developers.

Palestine is both circumscribed and almost entirely dependent on foreign aid. Any reformulation of how capital enters and what it is supposed to do has enormous consequences. And ideologies and practices formed at the scale of the state and

international organizations touch the ground in places like Rawabi.

The PA, the private sector, the Palestine Investment Fund, UN HABITAT, the pro-free market think tank Portland Trust, and others, proposed a “national priority to develop affordable housing” in order to meet demand in a context of a housing shortage. This coalition of actors suggests that there is a need for something like 500,000 housing units in the West Bank over the next decade. So housing is a national priority, elaborated by the PA and representative coalitions of large developers. Why is it a priority? And what needs to happen to accomplish such a priority?

The question of priority

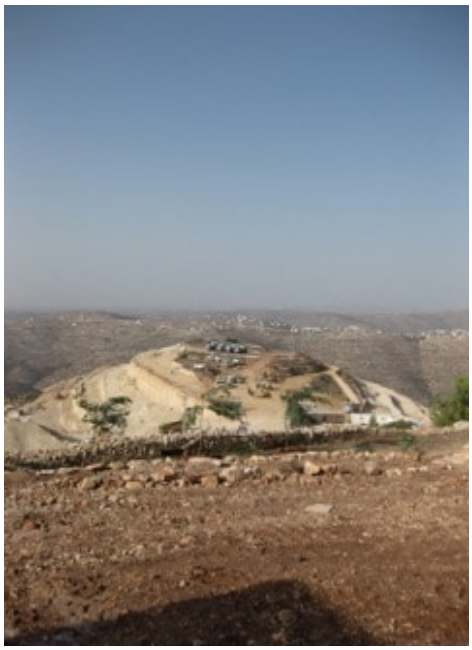
There is some dispute about whether or not there is enough need among Palestinians for housing to be a national priority: a member of the Higher Planning Council questioned the idea of a housing shortage. “It is important,” they said, for the private sector “to eradicate critical analysis…I can find a house in 24 hours if needed.”

According to that official, there may be a deficit, but it is nowhere near the numbers that developers cite. Does it mean that people will move to Ramallah rather than commute? Is it a rural/urban problem? It is at best “approximate.” And he notes that building patterns around Ramallah exist because of, and in response to, the current normal conditions of military occupation, Israeli control over the majority of the West Bank, and closure. If this is true, what are the

“national priorities” here? And what does the national priority mean for the polity?

Banks in Palestine typically do not grant long-term loans for two reasons. The first is that political and economic instability make them reluctant to tie up large amounts of money in loans. And Palestinians are reluctant to take on long-term debt. The social preference is to save and to build on existing houses. The second reason is that land tenure is very complicated, and plots of land can be held collectively. Without clear title, land can’t be used for collateral. But clear titling is difficult: PA law, Israeli civil or military law, Jordanian law from 1967, or Ottoman law can govern what happens in certain places.

So the government stepped in to solve this problem for developers.



Developers bought a patchwork of land where they wanted to put the new town. They bought lands from surrounding villages, and supposedly they sent teams out into the diaspora. In Jordan, Lebanon, Latin America, Dearborn they tracked down the families and individuals who owned that land. The government then did a fairly large land reparcelization/eminent domain to tie together the land beneath the site’s footprint. Typically, eminent domain must meet “the public good.” This is the first time the Palestinian government did eminent domain for a private entity.

As a result, land on a large scale has clear title, apartments can be collateral, and a mortgage market can emerge. And, as I understand it, the eminent domain happened using a rush provision in the Jordanian Law. The Palestinian Land Authority set up a fund to pay out people who had their land seized, and notified them. Compensation was based on prices in the area pre-speculation and development. Owners had two choices: they could take the money, or they could file a complaint. Either way their land was already a part of Rawabi.

Ideas circulate at the scale of government and reach the ground: priorities are materialized, and inflect everyday life and change the way people hold and use their own land.

Is it a state?

In “Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State,” Philip Abrams contrasts the state-system, the institutions and practices of government; and the state-idea, the state’s “symbolic identity.” He urges a focus on the state as a mechanism of political subjugation, or in Engels’ terms, “the first ideological power over man” (Abrams 1977:64). The state is nevertheless ambiguous. It was in 1977, and it remains so today. Abrams proposes abandoning questions about the state’s reality in favor of a focus on the idea of the state, and more specifically, the state as an ideological project, and the idea of the state under capitalism.

> *The ongoing process of state building in Palestine is an attempt to create the idea of the state and fabricate a state system around it. Through practice, a state system emerges in the form, and in terms of the precedents of, the state idea.*

The state is important, but its dimensions are less important than the ways it is productive. How is such a state, an administrative system under occupation linked to the global economy? To Israel?

On the one hand, the PA and Palestinian capitalists say they are building a state,

and I argue that by producing and orienting practice around the idea of the state, they are succeeding in terms of state scale systems of economic practice, markets, and in terms of what Lefebvre has called the state mode of production, and the importance of a state for organizing space in order to ensure forms of capitalist accumulation. But this is also a truncated state, a set of administrative institutions, in a territory long subject to colonization and stabilization attempts, and born from the context of colonial violence.

But this is not only an abstract question. People are linked to economic and political phenomena at distant scales. Ideas circulate globally, and touch the ground in specific places with specific forms. Following the anthropologist Janet Roitman, the relationships between citizen and subject are mediated not only by regulatory regimes and fiscal institutions within states, but through regional political economies, shifting laws, institutions, infrastructures and mobility. Practices at different and multiple geographic scales make important contributions to "national" and state political economy. Moreover, sovereignty and state form around questions of global capital. A state is being purpose-built to organize accumulation in ways specific to Palestine, but consonant with the ways that states are part of local accumulation strategies and integration into world markets generally and as part of a global network of nation-states.

> *Moreover, interventions like housing developments are physical places, not just ideas and forms of investment. They tie together people and ideas and structures of government through the state project. They tie together actual Palestinians and material, physical objects.*

Housing is intimate—it brings families and everyday life into the wider vision. Whether or not housing developments expand or a state emerges, this broad suite of changes to the economy, aid, and governance includes aspects that might forever alter how Palestinians live in their homes and their homeland.

This post is based on a longer talk, "Palestine's shifting priorities: how private development is transforming aid, governance, and daily life in the West Bank". All photos except the header image are courtesy of the author.

Emergent Conversation: Being Like a State #anthrostate

Miia Halme-Tuomisaari
June, 2015

Today we are very pleased to continue our #AnthroState debate via this collaboration with the Political and Legal Anthropology Review (PoLAR). We are very pleased to be sharing this post that initially appeared in the journal's new feature, Emergent Conversations.

For years, PoLAR has featured online spillover conversations that capture discussions sparked by articles in the pages of the journal. Recognizing that articles are merely textual snapshots of longer, iterative research projects, PoLAR now includes reflective pieces that highlight ongoing dialogues in political and legal anthropology. While not yet in the journal, they are nonetheless shaping the conversations in and about the field.

Being Like a State

By Joshua Clark, Miia Halme-Tuomisaari, and Tess Lea

If the state was once regarded as the province of disciplines other than anthropology, those days are now firmly behind us. Much recent work demonstrates that anthropological modes of analysis and methods offer unique perspectives on how states are constituted and experienced as "real" by those who they govern. Yet it remains the case that considerably less is known about the lived experience of state-ness from the perspective of those for whom "the state" overlaps with the self. This was the starting point for the panel, "Being Like a State," organized by Joshua Clark and Miia Halme-Tuomisaari for the 2014 Annual Meetings of the American Anthropological Association (AAA).

Panelists presented ethnographic material offering insights into the cognitive and affective worlds of public functionaries. In particular,

> *the panel sought to consider, on one hand, how and to what extent these functionaries internalize "the state," and on the other, how they infuse state structures and practice with their own subjectivities, values, and beliefs.*

Panelists also discussed contradictions that "being the state" may create for their ethnographic interlocutors: the tedium of tasks versus the gravity of missions; moments of identification and belonging versus rejection and disavowal; and the exercise of individual discretion and influence versus feelings of powerlessness and hierarchical oppression, to name a few. How do such contradictions affect public functionaries' understandings of themselves as "self" and "other" in relation to "the state" and its projects?

The organizers of "Being Like a State" invited Tess Lea to serve as the panel's discussant, recognizing her work – *Bureaucrats and Bleeding Hearts* (2008) in particular – as a notable contribution to the ethnographic investigation of many of the questions posed. The bulk of this reflection is an adaptation of Lea's

comments, which she delivered in response to the five papers presented at the December 5, 2014 panel. Those who are interested may also access the panelists' full abstracts, which are featured in the final section of this conversation. We have chosen to base this contribution to Emergent Conversations on the discussant's comments in order to reflect the current stage of what panelists hope will be a continuing dialogue. If readers feel that they are "coming into the middle of the conversation," we hope that this will serve as an invitation to join in, or to pursue, some of the open-ended threads and provocations captured here.

Many common themes bound the papers that comprised "Being Like a State." Not least of these was the presenters' focus on European Union or human rights initiatives, sometimes both at once. The papers also brought a shared concern with method and the question of what a researcher must do over that elusive ethnographic whole when she is left with only fragments. But above all,

> *the panel spoke to the complex oscillations between anonymity and subjecthood and between structure and agency, concerns with which anyone dealing with ethnographies of the state must grapple.*

The session began with Elif Babül's "Dramas of Statehood: Protocol, Cynicism, and Bureaucratic Intimacy in Human Rights Training in Turkey." In this paper, Babül discussed performances of state-ness among variously positioned Turkish officials undertaking human rights training, being congratulated for completing training modules, or conversing between sessions. As the Turkish officials learn what is required for the country to be embraced by the European Union, they also learn how to enact the state.

Babül's ethnography illuminated tactics of navigation and comportment, and the subtle ways in which mimicry and controlled displays of cynicism are also techniques of learning. When one stands in an ovation and others follow, the compulsion to do likewise is heavy. Not to stand would draw attention to oneself, something to be avoided unless making a deliberate statement. And, cynical

statements, Babül showed, are reserved for performances of a different kind, when irony can also be a display of the flexible dispositions required of "good operators." One of the key traits being imbibed through these processes is in fact dispositional flexibility. The Turkish officials do not know if the whole EU human rights agenda is a passing fad or something that may later be held against them. They have to hedge their bets while also displaying their earnest uptake of the current protocols.

Some of these protocols – like obeying the hierarchical order of events and noting when these are transgressed – are generic. They are skills that can be carried into new situations, new content fields, without alteration. Others are more content specific and may have to be adjusted. Here we see cynicism enter as a practical device, not so much of critique but as a display of savoir faire, as a canny form of quasi-involvement that can, if necessary, later be declared as intentionally half-hearted. In her comments, Lea noted that cynicism is indeed a powerful organizational attribute, and that future ethnographic work on the state could make more of cynicism's "double-edgedness" in particular. She cited Peter Sloterdijk's (1987) *Critique of Cynical Reason* as well as Robert Jackall's (1988) *Moral Mazes*, as good resources for thinking this through.

In Miia Halme-Tuomisaari's "'The State is One': Performing 'Statehood' for UN Human Rights Monitoring Bodies," it is anonymity and loss of personhood that put official state delegates to the UN at their ceremonial best.

> *The fantasy sustained here is that human rights monitoring can indeed be done through carefully crafted, grand representations in which material considerations – the roles of multinational corporations, other international regulatory arrangements, competing authority structures, and, Lea added, the military-industrial complex – have no role to play in the decision-making of states.*

These are rituals of audit and oversight that entail acceptance of the idea that the state is the body standing in the way of fulfilling humanity. Committed

individualism through wordsmithing is the proffered remedy.

Halme-Tuomisaari did not enter into micro-tactics of how these state effects are performed, as Babül did, but instead explored the ways in which the state's grandeur is symbolically and structurally enacted. Myths of stateliness require exclusions. Securing access to study UN human rights monitoring processes is harder than the relatively tame subject matter would predict. Such gatekeeping gives life to state-ness: it declares there are secrets here that matter greatly, which, by being enshrouded, amplifies their imputed significance. Think the Wizard of Oz, or Michael Taussig's (1999) public secrets.

Halme-Tuomisaari offered an account of how to create ethnographic inroads despite the impasses. Matching the mystery or vagueness of enclaved field settings with the methodological jettisoning of expectations of ultimate clarity opened new concepts. For functionaries to be like a state at the UN is to be simultaneously mundane and special. Lea posed the question of how over-preparation for hypothetical questions in UN forums – rehearsals that are intended to ward off the possibility of performance failure on the big day – play into the wider ritual enterprise of creating grand state effects. What is the role of personal shame in this context? Not wanting to be found wanting, as Lea put it, may propel much of the arduous work of preparing for events that are often arcane and immaterial given their high abstraction and forgettability.

Lea noted that this dynamic seems to structure the relationship between highly charged, personally invested preparation and highly impersonal event. If the possibility of transgression is real, then the possibility for ritual event gone wrong is also very real. Lea noted the intrigue in the relationship between the mundane backstage work of exhausting preparation, and the sacralized event that, when done well, does little (see also Halme-Tuomisaari 2013). This, she continued, is the beauty of a methodological approach – ethnography – which abandons the search for generalized meanings in order to pay attention to the importance of managing for happenstance in the inauguration of grand effects.

Joshua Clark's paper considered the contours of state "internalization" of international human rights commitments by examining Costa Rican policymakers. Clark is concerned to re-people the state, to again explore processes of self-socialization, but this time through charting how those charged with instantiating human rights obligations undertook their work, and how their tactics and rationales altered with their own altered emotional states. Lea considered this deeply important, saying that while it is a simple matter to insist that the thing we call the state is both spectral and deeply human, it is another to account for how affect and embodiment actually make a difference.

In particular, we learn from Clark's discussion of one participant, "Azalea," the powerful motivation of a mid-level technocrat in driving policy initiatives through to a minister's attention, as well as the deeply social effort that such pushing requires. Bureaucrats have all sorts of words for this – networking, alliance building, and so forth. Meetings, mini-meetings, tracking shifting hierarchies of status and influence, and even simply knowing the name of a particular individual who might open a door are the tools bureaucrats use to herd ideas through the labyrinth of their organizations. As Halme-Tuomisaari's paper pointed out, technocrats are sometimes so busy working to this end that they have no time for the ethnographer!

Clark's paper showed that the true believers, or the already-convinced, in Costa Rican state institutions initially see their task in quasi-evangelical terms: they must coax conviction from their less-committed colleagues. Later they come to see such emotional convictions as a weakness: they want impersonal processes to take the place of individual arduousness, arguing that otherwise the state's human rights obligations will always be personality dependent.

Lea described the methodological intervention here as being the pursuit of the ephemeral, emotion-laden labor of policymaking prior to its hardening into an event.

Clark's paper captured the movement in which functionaries' personal

> *exhaustion – months of paperwork, meetings, and political networking, including long days and weekends – transmutes into a rationality of impersonality: this level of effort will not be sustained by them. This movement shifts from zeal over (the idea of) rights to something slightly less personally invested, in which functionaries assume a friendly, open demeanor in hopes of making "the state" appear as "a friend" to rights claimants.*

This approach reflects a compositional view of subjecthood that Ira Bashkow (2014:302-3) recently analyzed in the case of the private corporation. In it, a corporate "being" is conjured, represented, and endowed with a personality through its employees' embodied public and interpersonal performances thereof. Clark's interlocutors, however, soon abandon this approach, instead seeking to erase the state's subjectivity. Neither friend nor foe, it is simply the way things should be done – to make the policy that they are shepherding immune to personal passions. The shifts show relationships between structure and affect, which are ethnographically hard to capture but vital for understanding how the state is able to present itself as depersonalized by the very people whose subjective labor hold the edifice together.

Greg Feldman's paper approached the relation between mundanity and spectacle, personal investment and impersonal rule, by taking panel attendees to the streets where undercover officers in an unnamed city hone in on a Europe-wide human trafficking ring. These policemen operate in the grey zone, using semi- to clearly-illegal actions to prosecute their own form of justice. Operating in the breach does not make them saints, and Feldman did not suggest that heroic actions disentangled them from a wider system of state policing that upholds the very economic inequalities that perpetuate clandestine migrations in the first place. Rather, his paper attended to the space between structure and affect with which the panel's other papers also grappled. Lea identified this as Feldman's explicit analytical problem: how do we reconcile accounts of structural inequality with phenomenology's demand that we attend to intersubjectivity, to understand the enabling conditions for joint political action? Without this reconciliation, our

accounts of inequality will be stocked with automatons with no possibility for a breach.

Framed in this way,

> *operating in the breach becomes an important ethnographic site in which to view the stitching of impersonal organizational edict and structured inequalities being combated, worked with, subverted and maintained, all at once.*

As Feldman argued of his case study, the curious part is how "the people whom the state endows with the power of violence are also the ones conducting ethical actions in the space of appearance."

This discretionary grey zone – as also named by Michael Lipsky (1980) – is the place where policy is enacted, where it actually comes alive, whatever the state or bureaucratic norms might be. Lea suggested that Joshua Clark's interlocutors might be reminded that this interpretive space, where people circumvent their rules and norms in the name of another collectively agreed ethical pursuit (here, saving entrapped girls), is also an essential requirement.

> *Impersonality alone does not work. The rule of law is a cruel, bloodless affair without this interpretive nuance.*

Getting at this micro-world where actions and interpretations in the netherworld of rules is an important task for ethnography. It is also a longstanding concern of older techniques pioneered by ethnomethodologists such as Erving Goffman and those who followed – John Van Maanen's classic work on policing, for instance (see Van Maanen 1972; Manning and Van Maanen 1978).

Police partners collectivize interventions, which see them acting in their own terms and at their own risk. And, as other papers showed, the space of discretion is also the face of the state. Arguably, the state depends on such enactments and the distribution of liability that goes with them. If things go pear shaped, it is on

the police officers' heads: they are acting with limited authority to maximize their authority after all. Yet case closures and the pursuit of intelligence requires that these corners be cut, that the norms be subverted. It raises the question: if working in the breach is constitutive, is it then a tacit norm? And, is the spectacular "nab" the sublime moment that justifies the dull routines of watching, waiting, and tracking down mundane details? They make up the in-between of undercover cops' long hours, similar to the work of bureaucrats preparing for the spectacle of the UN meetings.

Finally, Valerie Lambert's contribution took attendees inside an institution headquartered not far from the site of the AAA meetings: the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). More specifically, Lambert examined the workings of the BIA's Branch of Acknowledgment and Research (now the Office of Federal Acknowledgment), in which anthropologists, historians, and genealogists evaluate petitions of groups applying for federal acknowledgment as Indian tribes. The BIA is unique among federal agencies in that 90% of its employees are Indians. In their work to apply the federal criteria by which Indian tribes are recognized as such, we encounter what Lea called an "inter-structural heartland" in which localness and sovereignty are re-read through the prism of refusal.

For members of the Choctaw nation, for example, sovereignty is nested and embedded within (federal) state-administered regulatory frames which, yes, are rooted in bloody, dispossessing histories, but nonetheless are essential to their ongoing structural project to assert and manage nation-hood. The Indians working in the federal bureau are not unaware of the complicity they are accused of when they decide who is and who is not an authentic Indian claimant. They too, like Feldman's undercover cops, sometimes insist on making their ethics "appear" in public. In one instance, the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs speaks against the historical legacy of the agency he represents, and suffers the approbation of doing so. This isn't crafty cynicism, but more the ethical-thinking position for which Feldman argued.

Lambert made clear that new claimants to Indian identity cannot be admitted or

denied without some kind of adjudication. She, like her ethnographic interlocutors, rejects a system that would do so on the basis of reified cultural displays. Writing an ethnography from multiple positions of insider-ness and outsider-ness, Lambert acknowledged that the work of bureaucratized recognition is fraught, even reviled; yet judging membership is essential to the persisting necessity of protecting Indian sovereignty. Sovereignty, as Audra Simpson (2014) states, pushes back on settler logics of elimination. Lambert's paper showed that it is indeed disturbing to find anthropologists in cahoots with would-be Choctaw claimants. Like the international generalists who have appeared to play a similar role in other countries, their support reinforces a kind of liberal recognition based on a reified idea of cultural identity that tends to dematerialize the real stakes on the ground.

> *Together, the five ethnographically rich papers that comprised the panel offer suggestive analytical and methodological lessons for deepening anthropology's engagement with the constitutive social, cognitive, ethical, and affective fabrics of state-ness.*

As one audience member pointed out, these lessons may in fact extend to analyses of other types of corporate entities as well. One clear example is the private corporation, which over a century ago F.W. Maitland paired with the state as two species of a shared genus (cited in Bashkow 2014:301). Recent analyses of the legal, regulatory, and political effects of transferences of beliefs, characteristics, actions, and commitments between both types of corporate "persons" and their corporeal constituents indeed seems fruitful grounds for comparative analysis (e.g., Benson and Kirsch 2014; Bose 2010; Clark 2014; Tucker 2014). What broader lessons might we learn by juxtaposing the metaphors, imagery, and practices through which each is personified and personally enacted? We hope that future research will advance these and other lines of inquiry explored by the panel "Being Like a State," and that this contribution to Emergent Conversations will be just that.

Panelists’ Abstracts

Dramas of Statehood: Protocol, Cynicism, and Bureaucratic Intimacy at Human Rights Trainings in Turkey

Elif M. Babül

This paper looks at performances of statehood at human rights training programs for state officials in Turkey, which are undertaken in line with Turkey’s pending accession to the European Union (EU). Similar to other “contact zones” (Pratt 1991) that make up the EU accession process in Turkey, human rights training programs enable performative interactions between foreign trainers/advisors and Turkish state officials participating in human rights training programs. These programs contain both formal and informal venues of performance, ranging from inauguration events and final award ceremonies to role-plays and group presentations employed in the classroom.

While formal venues, such as press conferences, provide the representatives of Turkey and the EU with a platform to perform the protocol of transnational bureaucratic encounters, everyday interactions between Turkish state officials and foreign experts in human rights training programs present training audiences with the opportunity to act like the state. The audiences of human rights trainings employ various strategies to turn translation instances, classroom discussions and group exercises into performances, through which they speak back to the foreign parties in the training. Furthermore, these situations are also employed by various functionaries as a way to mark their position and status among their peers, and to enact a condition of common sociality that defines the world of state officials in Turkey.

The “State Is One”: Performing Statehood for UN Human Rights Monitoring Bodies
Miia Halme-Tuomisaari

The never-ending cycles formed by international human rights monitoring practices culminate around particular moments of genuine engagement and spontaneity instead of the usual detached predictability characteristic of human rights bureaucracies. Or this, at least, is the significance given to the “Constructive Dialogue” that takes place in between states and UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies as a part of the latters’ mandate to monitor compliance with international human rights covenants. These moments, commonly taking place at the conference room of the Palais Wilson in Geneva, home of the UN Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights, form a distinct performative genre where individual civil servants from different government offices come in front of “the international community” to “be like states.”

Above all, these performances are characterized by a sense of “oneness”: whereas the work of civil servants may “at home” be embedded in internal disputes over policy renewals or division of revenues, in front of UN bodies their performance represents internal unity and harmony. What kind of personal tensions and contradictions does this performance mask? What does it feel like to be a state in such moments? This paper explores these questions through the “Constructive Dialogue” on Finland’s 6th Period Report on the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR) at the UN Human Rights Committee in July 2013. The paper builds on an ethnographic inquiry of human rights documentary cycles commenced in 2009.

How Deep the “Internalization” of International Human Rights Commitments? State Policies,

Practices, and Persons
Joshua Clark

In 2005, Kofi Annan observed that international human rights had entered a “new era” in which the focus had shifted from articulating and codifying norms to implementing them. This shift has made clear that realizing rights requires states to do far more than abstain from overt violations. Human rights must not only be protected, but actively fulfilled by the concerted efforts of “vigorous, effective and accountable” states (van Boven 2002).

This paper explores how the work of forging such a state is experienced by actors who recognize themselves as part of the state, and “the state” as part of their selves. It is based on 10 months of participant observation with a group of Costa Rican government personnel charged with developing a “national action plan” for implementing international norms against racial discrimination. I track these mid-level officials as they grapple with how to translate the state’s commitments to combat racism, ethnocentrism, and inequality into concrete practices. I begin with the question of which “actions” to include in the plan, but evolves into a broader self-critical, self-reflexive exploration of how to make the drafting process an “equal partnership” with indigenous and African-descent peoples, and ultimately, how state actors should embody the Costa Rican state’s anti-discrimination commitments in their everyday professional and personal lives. I highlight in particular debates about whether the goal of “internally transforming the state” means altering state actors’ consciousness and subjectivities versus creating the right institutions, protocols, and policies for “impersonally” fulfilling human rights.

“We Are People; We Are Parents; We Have Values”: Law, Ethics, Trafficking, and an Undercover Police Surveillance Team

Greg Feldman

When investigating cases of human trafficking, border police teams must gather evidence against suspected criminals. However, the legal means of obtaining that evidence are often restrictive. This places a police team in an ethical quandary. It must decide if and how to break the law in order to uphold it for the sake of trafficking victims. The stakes are high. A decision to do so has them forgo the legal constraints designed to protect a suspect's rights. A decision to stay within the law has them neglect a victim of trafficking who has little, if any, protection in the country.

Based on ethnographic research among an undercover police surveillance team in a southern EU member state, this paper examines the conditions encouraging this team to act illegally in order to act ethically for the victim. These conditions include their highly egalitarian organization, their deep familiarity with each other, their structural position in their larger home bureaucracy, and their capacity to see similarities between themselves and the people they investigate. Their actions in this regard cannot be explained as selfless altruism, but rather as efforts to maintain integrity in work that mostly goes unrecognized by others. To make theoretical sense of this situation, I blend Agamben's familiar notion of the "state of exception" with Arendt's notion, less familiar to anthropologists, of the "space of appearance." These theorists can help explain how people operating in the absence of objective legal constraints can still refrain from acting with self-indulgence, brutality, or neglect.

American Indians and the State
Valerie Lambert

Early-21st-century American Indians practice statecraft as leaders and bureaucrats of their own tribal governments. They also carry out agendas and pursue objectives as leaders and workers of the governments of the United States, Canada, Bolivia, Guatemala, and other countries. With a focus on ideas and actions in governmental spaces and structures within what is now the United

States, this paper explores the opportunities and possibilities American Indian leaders and bureaucrats are helping create, as well as the challenges and constraints they are encountering.

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Notes

Six papers originally comprised the panel. Unfortunately, unforeseeable circumstances prevented one scheduled panelist, Niels Nagelhus Schia, from traveling to the AAA meetings.

The State Against the State

Tessa Diphoorn
June, 2015

On April 2nd 2015, the bloody attack on Garissa University College captured and dominated news headlines worldwide. The attack was claimed by Al-Shabaab, a Somali-based militant group labeled by many as a "terrorist organization" due to its linkages with Al-Qaeda, that has been responsible for many attacks across Kenya over the past few years. The attack in Garissa involved gunmen who stormed the college and held more than 700 students hostage during a daylong siege that ended when the four attackers were killed, resulting at least 147 innocent civilians' dead and 79 or more injured.[1] The Garissa attack is the deadliest attack in Kenya since the 1998 bombings of the USA embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.[2] This attack has become a national tragedy and has sparked off an intense debate on security and policing in Kenya, particularly the role and efficiency of the state armed forces.

That same day, President Uhuru Kenyatta made the following public statement on television: "I also further direct the Inspector General of Police to take urgent steps and ensure that the 10,000 recruits whose enrollment is pending promptly report for training at the Kenya Police College in Kiganjo. I take full responsibility for this directive; we as a country have suffered unnecessarily due to shortage of security personnel – Kenya badly needs additional officers and I will not keep the nation waiting".[3] The Inspector-General of Police, Joseph Boinnet, supported this announcement by instructing those 10,000 recruits to report for training on

April 12th from 7 am onwards.[4]

This act, in which the President urged police recruits to report for police training, may initially seem like part of an ongoing process to boost manpower amidst a national crisis. Such a call would seem logical to many: in a country such as Kenya, where the state police is often criticized for being under-resourced and undermanned, additional recruitment is essential.

> *Yet this statement, and thus Presidential order, is much more complicated, has far-reaching consequences, and touches upon an ongoing case since the summer of 2014 that provides tremendous insight into issues of state-making in Kenya.*

In this essay, we will very briefly summarize this case and analyze what we think this means for state-making in Kenya.

Police recruitment

Largely as a result of the post-election violence that tainted Kenyan society in 2007-2008, the then new Constitution was established in Kenya in 2010. Although widely encompassing, this Constitution included several changes. To begin with, national security was redefined to include protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of people, which was unheard of before. Second, national security organs, including the police, were to be accountable to civilian authorities. Thirdly, new principles of policing that were based on human right standards were introduced, including the creation of new accountability mechanisms through Article 244. This Article is the genesis of the Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) of Kenya.

IPOA is a civilian oversight body that was established by Act Number 35 of November 2011 to 'oversee' the work of the National Police Service. Broadly speaking, IPOA exists to: a) hold the police accountable to the public in the performance of their functions; b) give effect to the provisions of Article 244 of

the Constitution which requires the Police to strive for professionalism and discipline, and to promote and practice transparency and accountability; and c), ensure independent oversight of the handling of complaints by the National Police Service.[5]

In July 2014, the police underwent recruitment of 10,000 police officers – claimed to be the highest amount in Kenya's history and a serious step towards changing the police to population to the UN- recommended 1:400.

> *Yet IPOA had recommended that this national recruitment exercise of future police officers be annulled and repeated countrywide on the basis that their recruitment had massive irregularities, including outright bribery, nepotism, favoritism and further, was unlawful to the extent of contravening the Constitution of Kenya, and other national laws.*

IPOA had collected numerous complaints from the public, analyzed the same and provided an annex of these complaints that formed the basis or evidence for the petition.

In its constitutive Act, Section 29 of the IPOA Act stipulates that recommendations made on behalf of IPOA should be implemented, and if not, IPOA can seek the Court's intervention to implement the recommendation. The National Police Service Commission (NPSC) ignored this recommendation regarding police recruitment, and did not rescind the recruitment, and so did the Executive arm of government. In the fall of 2014, the High Court of Kenya sided with IPOA that the recruitment exercise was unconstitutional and unlawful, and hence be annulled and recruitment be done afresh in the entire country.[6] However, after the judgment of the Court, the NPSC appealed the case and a verdict was scheduled for Friday May 8th.

Therefore, statement made by the Kenyan President in early April thus bypassed the court ruling, and was unconstitutional, in the eyes of many.IPOA claimed to cite the Inspector-General of Police for contempt of court, and the Attorney

General, Githu Muigai, also publicly denounced the statement, arguing that the law cannot be broken, even if it has the aim of addressing security issues.[7] The counter argument of the President was of course that new recruits were needed because of high levels of insecurity, as the Garissa attack clearly demonstrated.

> *These two opposing claims were also echoed among the Kenyan public, who fiercely debated this issue. Some expressed support for the President's Order, including the would-be recruits and their families, similarly claiming that extraordinary measures needed to be taken to deal with the growing threat of terrorism, while others argued that the law had to be upheld, no matter what.*

Yet there were also many Kenyan citizens that were unaware of what exactly was going on and did not, until the Presidential order, know about the irregularities of police recruitment. This was either because the case was still in court and hence not discussed in public, or simply because it is an ingrained culture of the public that to get a job in the public sector, one most likely must part with a bribe.

Due to numerous sources of pressure, President Uhuru eventually bowed down, yet instead, called upon those interested in joining the police service to turn up for new recruitment on Monday April 20th. This angered many of the old recruits from 2014, who had already prepared themselves for training, and several newspaper reports contain personal stories of those who had travelled long distances and invested financially in order to reach their new training sessions. So the stakes were on high on Monday April 20th, when recruiting took place all over the country. The recruitment was important because it was undertaken against the backdrop of not only a pending Court of Appeal decision, but also because there were many expectationsthat the July 2014 recruitment was controversial, illegal and unconstitutional. Tensions were thus rather high and many were in anticipation of the decision that would be made on May 8th.

On Friday May 8th, the Court of Appeal made a judgment affirming that the High

Court decision was to be upheld: the police recruitment of July 2014 was riddled with numerous irregularities, such as corruption, and thus violated the Constitution, and was nullified. This decision affected all the 10,000 recruits.[8]

> *Furthermore, the judges involved in this decision also stated that the irregularities of the recruitment commenced when sub-county commissioners were given the authority to conduct the recruitment, a delegation that was void to begin with.*

Sub-county commissioners are civil servants who represent the National Government at the level of the counties. They are former district commissioners appointed directly by the presidency. The court of appeal also noted that the NPSC did not delegate in writing to the Inspector General of National Police Service. The Court was short of stating that the NPSC abdicated its responsibility.

State-making in Kenya

As an anthropologist researching security and policing in Kenya and a board member of IPOA, we, as authors, have both been following this case study with immense interest, and we are pleased with the Court's decision. For us it is a slight victory and a next step in the long process of constitutional and police reform in Kenya.

> *Yet, although IPOA may seem to be the "winner" of this case, this entire process, particularly the actions of the President and Inspector General of the Police, highlight that constitutional and police reform is a cumbersome process that has a long way to go in Kenya.*

This case study is an example of how a state body can provide oversight of another agency (the police), without strictly overseeing another independent constitutional organ, but nonetheless quash the activities of that state body. Yet the actions undertaken by the President and other figures of authority, also point

towards an understanding that these decisions, and thus the actions of particular state bodies, can be disregarded and overruled. All of this highlights that state making is an ongoing process in Kenya and this raises several questions for anthropologists that are interested in processes of and questions surrounding statehood.

The main questions forces us to go to the start of this entire case study, namely the problem of police recruitment in Kenya that is apparently tainted by numerous irregularities, such as corruption. Corruption is notably rife in Kenya, and on the global Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of 2014, Kenya is ranked 25, on a scale of zero to 100, where zero is "highly corrupt" and 100 is "very clean". Not only is this a two point drop from the previous year, it also places Kenya at number 145 out of 174 countries. These figures, pointing towards high levels of corruption in Kenya, are supported by Afrobarometer's recent report of April 2015, wherein 75 per cent of respondents stated that "most" or "all" of the police are corrupt in Kenya.

This case study highlights that corruption is deeply ingrained within the police force and starts at the very beginning, namely at the point of recruitment and this surely demands a great deal of reform. It is impossible to have integrity at work, once employed through processes that lack integrity. Therefore, although the recommendation made by IPOA has been vindicated, up to the Court of Appeal, this does not mean that such irregularities will simply vanish. In fact, it probably points towards a need for oversight by IPOA in all future recruitments.

A second important question concerns a need to further focus on the interactions and connections between different state institutions to further uncover issues of hierarchy, authority, and the rule of law. Anthropologists are increasingly concerned with studying "the state" and the state police has certainly been a key study of interest. The remarkable findings of anthropologists such as Didier Fassin (2013), Julia Hornberger (2011), Sinan Çankaya (2011), Mirco Göpfert (2012), Jan Beek (2012), Olly Owen (2013), and Beatrice Jauregui (2010) – to name a few – have highlighted the tremendous insight anthropologists can

provide into policing cultures and the daily practices of one of the most publicly-contested state bodies.

Although varied in their focus of region and approach, these studies have outlined the numerous ways in which police officers struggle to meet various needs in their daily practices.

> *So how come policing civilian oversight bodies have rarely caught the analytical attention of anthropologists, and have primarily been the focus of research for criminologists and political scientists? Case studies, such as this one of police recruitment in Kenya, force us to analyze and question the dynamics of intra-state interactions.*

How do different state bodies interrelate with each other and how do oversight bodies work in shaping the actions of others? How are issues of hierarchy and authority exerted between different state bodies and their representatives? And how do issues of national security, such as terrorist attacks, influence these mechanisms and interactions?

We do not have answers to these questions, but have been prompted by this case of police recruitment to ask them. We also believe that ethnographic research on such institutions can provide immense insight into intra-state authority and legitimacy, further unraveling the various layers of the Kenyan state, and statehood in general.

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Footnotes

[1] Website, accessed Wednesday June 3, 2015: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garissa_University_College_attack

[2] Thebombings occurred on 7th August 1998, in which 224 people were killed in explosions at theUnited States Embassies in Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania, and in Nairobi, Kenya. Information from website, accessed Wednesday June 3, 2015: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1998_United_States_embassy_bombings.

[3] The President addressed the nation through a public statement at State House, Nairobi. See video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=liCr1B0m2sY, April 2, 2015 – Uploaded by Nation Television, Kenya, accessed Wednesday, June 03, 2015.

[4] *The Standard* Newspaper, April 06, 2015. See story on 'IG Joseph Boinnet orders court-frozen police recruits to report to Police College'.

[5] Section 5 of the Independent Policing Oversight Authority Act, No. 35 of 2011. http://www.ipoa.go.ke/images/downloads/Independent_Policing_Oversight_Authority_Act__No._35_of_2011.pdf, accessed Wednesday, June 03, 2015

[6] Kenya Law Reports, *Independent Policing Oversight Authority & another v Attorney General & 660 others [2014] eKLR*, Petition No. 390 of 2014, http://kenyalaw.org/caselaw/cases/view/103031/ accessed Wednesday, June 03, 2015

[7] Press Release by IPOA, April 07, 2015. http://www.ipoa.go.ke/images/press/IPOA-GARISSA-ATTACK.pdf, accessed Wednesday, June 03, 2015

[8] See 'Court Upholds Decision to Nullify Police Recruitment' http://nairobinews.co.ke/court-upholds-decision-to-nullify-police-recruitment/. Accessed Wednesday, June 03, 2015

#REVIEW: One Hour in Paris: A True Story of Rape and Recovery, Part 2 of 2

Maureen Pritchard
June, 2015

This post marks the second part of our special review section on *One Hour in Paris: A True Story of Rape and Recovery.* Check out the first part here.

Karyn L. Freedman's book *One Hour in Paris: A True Story of Rape and Recovery* presents the autobiography of a woman whose past, present and future is altered by the experience of rape. Sharpened by pain and terror, the single hour that comprises this experience is eternally elongated through the ongoing resurgence of memory, affect and sensation.

> *Freedman successfully documents "the enduring emotional, cognitive and psychological consequences of trauma" (p. vii), offering a model for phenomenological research on experience, memory, pain and transformation.*

Freedman's work is comprised of a prologue and five chapters. The tone of the work is set by the prologue. Just as Elie Wiesel's narrative offers testimony of the Holocaust, the rape of Karyn Freedman serves to make the stories behind the numbers in an ongoing "war against women" (p. 115). Making every effort to be an honest witness, Freedman meditates upon the nature of truth and fact, and their complex relationship to memory, especially the memory of trauma.

The five chapters that follow detail the life of the author through an array of overlapping chronologies defined by temporal flow, a passage from ignorance to understanding and a movement from silent suffering to active testimony. If the first chapter recounts the experience of rape in graphic detail, chapters two and three offer an equally visceral account of the resurgence of this experience through panic attacks triggered by evidence, trial, blood tests and intimacy. Therapy provides a catalyst for the third chapter's realisation that the private pain of sexual violence must be made public. This realisation ultimately leads the author to Botswana, where, in the fourth chapter, she spends three weeks working with the staff members and affiliates of an NGO that supports wartime victims of sexual violence. Freedman's story closes with a decision to publish an account of her experience and the coincidental transformation of the anniversary of her rape to the anniversary of buying a house with a trusted life partner.

From a youthful interest in Holocaust literature to the acquisition of a PhD in philosophy, Freedman claims to have used abstractions and intellectualisations to disassociate. Perhaps, as a result, her work remains decidedly untheorised.

> *Whereas the absence of theory or analysis prevents the reader from escaping the immediacy of Freedman's experience, it also disables productive links and denies more nuanced discussions of pain, trauma or sexual violence.*

For example, in finding solidarity with the women and children of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Freedman sees rape as systemic of the larger structural violence enshrouding women. Dismissal of male victims denies the use of sexual humiliation and violence as a means of torture enacted upon either gender and

severs the reader's ability to perceive anxiety, insecurity, shame and sensory overload that define Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as belonging as much to the perpetrator of violence as to their victims.

Arthur Kleinman (2006) cautions that the diagnosis category of PTSD may enable therapist and patient to ignore the ethical resonance of events. Indeed, Kleinman's attention to unsettled and dislocated moral frames could illuminate Freedman's observation that traumatic events "can also change the way we see ourselves, and our place in the world, by calling into question some of our core assumptions about our fellow human beings" (p. 109). Likewise Veena Das' (2007) exploration of the ways two Indian women struggle to resume ordinary life after the experience of extraordinary violence could strengthen Freedman's assertion that " in order to break free from the hold of the memory of a traumatic experience you have to first live in it" (p. 95). Finally, while marvelling at the resilience of Congolese women who have no recourse to formal western-style therapy, Freedman makes no attempt to explore the resources that these women do have available at the interface of biology and culture, exemplified in the edited volume *Pain and its Transformations* (2007).

Having taken the position of witness and advocate, Freedman raises important questions regarding the definition of rape and concerns surrounding the structural inequalities in which sexual violence is embedded. Despite its shortcomings, Karyn L. Freedman's *One Hour in Paris: A True Story of Rape and Recovery* remains a powerful narrative.

> *In recreating experience, it offers understanding, insight and courage for those women who, like Freedman, have been traumatised by sexual violence and who seek the alleviation of pain. One Hour in Paris also offers a primary source for researchers seeking to understand the experience of pain from a subjective position.*

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Future Suspended #AnthroState

Allegra
June, 2015

https://vimeo.com/86682631

This week at ALLEGRA's TV we share an intriguing documentary on the current Greek crisis. *Future Suspended* by Ross Domoney poses numerous compelling, yet inconvenient questions: what happens to democracy in a state of crisis? Why and how do devaluation, violence and estrangement become the replacement of democratic values?

> *Through its cinematic traversal of today's Athens, this 35′ film traces the rise of the authoritarian-financial complex and shows how this shrinks public space in the city, fuelling social despair and anger in return.*

Future Suspended is divided in three sections: "Privatised" explores the legacy of

mass privatisation projects that preceded the 2004 Olympics, placing them in the context of present day privatisation schemes. “Devalued” gazes at the ever-shrinking spaces of migrants in the city and the subsequent devaluation of their lives. “Militarised” illustrates how, in face of the crisis, this devaluation translates into a generalised condition.

Future Suspended is part of the ESRC-funded project Crisis-scape: the city at the time of crisis. Dimitris Dalakoglou, one of the venture’s participants, describes the documentary and its background as follows:

“In *Future Suspended* we decided to narrate three stories about the city of Athens and crisis. We talked about new infrastructure built in between the mid-1990s and the mid-2000s and the consequent transfer of material and real-estate capital to private contractors. The results of these large infrastructural projects tranformed urban materialities, as well as values.

Yet these changes – both of real estate values and social values – were founded on a decade of economic growth that preceded the current crises. New forms of structural and physical violence were part of the new Athenian landscape, new spatial tactics and strategies emerged within new networks.

These transformations were, furthermore, accompanied by others. These included radically altered qualities, direction and speed of flows within the urban complex, all of which changed the city and the daily urban experience in profound ways. The new airport, new metro, new express-ways paved the way for the crisis, not only financially but also socially – Athens’ soul was simply no longer the same.

Thus rather than being merely the result of the immediate crisis – the ‘Crisis-scape’ already began two decades before the ‘systemic crisis’ of 2010 which seemingly started everything. Thus, what we saw during the crises of post-2010 was an intense and expanded form of a state of exception that had already been formed and rehearsed on the marginalised groups of the city.”

See also the Crisis-scapes: Athens and Beyond and the Crisis before the Crisis

The film is part of the research project at crisis-scape.net. The research team consists of Christos Filippidis, Antonis Vradis, Dimitris Dalakoglou, Ross Domoney and Jaya Klara Brekke. All music for *Future Suspended* was composed by Giorgos Triantafyllou.

"Unknown evil-doers perturbing the peace": Mass fainting and the reproduction of hegemony in Luanda, Angola

Jon Schubert
June, 2015

Gina lay on a mattress in her room, the drip stuck in her hand, feeling “very feeble”. The sister of one of my key informants, she was but one of the many victims of the ‘fainting wave’ that swept through middle schools in Angola from April to September 2011. The *desmaios* (faintings) started in two polytechnic schools in the capital, Luanda, where I was carrying out my fieldwork, but then quickly spread through the entire city and eventually to other provinces of the country. It affected scores of teenage girls in middle and high schools — usually 20 to 100 ‘victims’ per episode — but also, in a few cases some male students and teachers. Victims, like Gina, typically reported a “horrible smell”, a feeling of cold, an unexplained mist in the corridors of their respective schools, shortness of breath, and loss of consciousness.

Following the statements of the first ‘victims’ at the technical middle school in

Nova Vida, which reported they had smelled a gas, the authorities and the media propagated the idea of an unknown gas, and blamed the events on unknown evildoers. Something of an overreaction ensued: 'victims' were carted off in ambulances to isolation wards, with blood tests taken, though ultimately only saline drips were administered. The police laboratory was ordered to do forensic tests for the gas, while the criminal investigation police searched for the 'evildoers'. Entry checks with armed police units and canine brigades were set up at most middle schools in Luanda, with students searched, and any items of cosmetics confiscated.

The 'evildoer' theory was then appropriated and instrumentalised by chief ideologues of the ruling MPLA party, such as Bento Bento, first party secretary of Luanda, who deplored in the state media the 'general climate of instability', and demanded 'vigilance' from all citizens to denounce and 'unmask the evil-minded individuals (*indivíduos malfeitores*) at the service of crime and interests alien to the Angolan people'. He then added that he had no doubts that the same people – which 'mobilise the youth to realise acts that are punishable by the penal code in force in the country, such as demonstrations of public disorder (*arruaça*), intrigue, and offence to [government] entities' – were also practicing those criminal acts in the schools. The fainting wave was thus immediately connected to other current events, such as anti-government youth demonstrations that had recently started in Luanda.

The popular reception followed the theory of the 'unknown gas', and also ascribed a 'technical' cause and *political* intentionality to the events — but it questioned the official reading of the story. As Gina's sister, Bela, said, "this will only get worse ahead of the elections". Indeed, such went the reasoning of many, if Angola had one of the most efficient internal security services in the world — the former DISA/*Segurança*, trained by Soviet and East German instructors in the 1980s, rebranded as SINFO and equipped with Israeli technology today — how come the authors of the crime had not been apprehended yet? Furthermore, who could import such a gas? Surely only the Ministry of Interior! In fact, thus claimed another explanation, 'they' were testing a crowd control gas on children ahead of

the elections.

> *There is someone who is doing this. OK, there are things that just happen, but this? It has to be a person. We don't believe that it could be the students who are taking [the gas to school] — they [the authorities] say it's the kids. Now it is not even permitted to take lipstick, perfume, cream inside. So this person jumped the wall, put on the bata [school uniform coat] like the others. It is not possible that it is a student who is doing this. It can only be a [malevolent] person who is behind this. There is no other reason, no other justification for this. No one knows, even the segurança do not know. (Gina, Bairro Nocal, 02.08.2011)*

Cases of collective fainting have been documented widely across various cultural contexts and diagnosed by psychologists as 'mass hysteria'; they are also a popular topic of fiction and media reporting. The symptoms presented by the 'victims' of the fainting in Angola, as well as the fact that it affected predominantly teenage girls, are absolutely conform to that biomedical/psychological explanation.

Anthropologists tend to interpret certain social phenomena as metaphors for something else: vampire rumours in Puerto Rico are, in this logic, 'a popular commentary on modernity and its risks as they are perceived' (Derby, 2008: 292); a Satanism scare in 1980s South Africa is a moral panic that gripped white South Africa as 'a response to social change, a consequence of the fear of apartheid's end' (Falkof, 2012: 6). Similarly, the epiphenomenon of mass fainting, collective hysteria, etc. has been diagnosed as the 'somatisation of a pathology in the body politic' (Kroeger, 2003: 234, 254; see also Green, 1994: 248).

My first, instinctive reaction to the events, too, was to interpret it in James Scott's analytic as an act of resistance (Scott, 1990), of 'speaking the unspeakable' — especially because there is often in Angola a perceived 'impossibility' to talk

about politics and the ‘dark deeds’ of the government during the civil war. However, as Sanders justly points out, this line of interpretation has somewhat become ‘anthropological orthodoxy’ because it conforms, in its ‘intuitive plausibility, seductiveness and persuasiveness’, with ‘broader anthropological sensibilities’, i.e. our innate sympathies for the powerless (Sanders, 2008: 108–09).

> *Much as the literature on moral panics is inspiring, it does require somewhat of an analytical leap to make authoritative statements about the ‘real’ underlying causes of a social phenomenon. I, for one, feel ill at ease claiming the interpretative authority to explain its cause as ‘somatisation’ of an earlier trauma. However, what I think we can do, backed by solid ethnographic research, is to make statements about the reactions to such an event, and how these are informed by larger socio-political dynamics at play.*

In the Angolan case, the reception of the crisis is indicative of the imaginaries of the state that circulate, and that ultimately reproduce hegemony, while the handling of the crisis tells us about the capacities of the state, thereby helping us disaggregate the monolithic ‘state’.

First, the *political intentionality* behind the events was rarely doubted: be it ‘enemies of peace and stability’ or the government itself that was using the gas, there had to be someone with sinister motives behind it. The official discourse that instrumentalised the case to call for ‘vigilance’, reinforced the dominant narrative of peace and stability (Schubert, forthcoming). However, the seemingly ‘subversive’ interpretation of the government’s ill intentions did not undermine, but in fact reinforce ‘the omnipotent presence of the ruling party elite, and its ability to deploy devastating “state power” at will’ (Fontein, 2009: 388). Popular theories about the *malfeitores* as agents of the state security service thus acted as a critique that ‘questions, yet paradoxically at the same time legitimates, state power’, indicating the ‘inherent dialectical structure of hegemonic processes, blurring any clear demarcation between “state” and “challenger” and calling into

question approaches to popular discourse as "resistance"' (Silverstein, 2002: 646).

Second, the belief in an evil intentionality is indicative of the *paranoid disposition* (Fassin, 2008) of Angolan politics in general. However, rather than just reiterating the often-heard trope that "Angolans are a coward people" because "the Angolan, already in his mother's belly, is fed this fear" — regularly given as the reason why there's little expression of political dissent — the paranoia transcended the boundaries we commonly draw between 'the people' and 'the state', further pointing to the dynamic, dialectic nature of a lived hegemony. I interviewed Dr André Soma (13.09.2011), the provincial director of education about this matter, and asked him whether he thought it could be a case of mass hysteria, perhaps inspired by television. He said for other panics this may be the case, but "the *desmaios* are a reality whose objective could be political, could be social, or who knows, could also be economic".

> *Actors normally seen as 'agents of the state' such as the provincial director of education himself were anxiously waiting for the verdict of the "competent authorities".*

Thus, as a third point, the handling of the events allows us to say something about the *capacities* of the state. Contrary both to popular perception and — at least some — scholarly analyses of 'neo-authoritarian regimes' that perceive a regime like Angola's as monolithic, a variety of state actors haphazardly responded to the crisis, thereby forcing us to question the unity of form and purpose we often ascribe to 'the state' (cf. Krohn-Hansen, 2008). Indeed, while the Ministry of Health doggedly pursued the theory of an unknown toxic gas that caused the teenage students to faint, the fainting wave ultimately only ebbed down when a psychiatric task force headed by Dr Rui Pires — one of the only three trained clinical psychiatrists in Angola at the end of the war — imposed a media blackout and put a stop to the entry checks by armed police at the schools. Nonetheless, the common invocation of "orientations from above" (*orientações superiores*) also

eloquently speaks to the power and persistence of the fiction of the state among its very diverse actors.

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#Review: One Hour in Paris. A True Story of Rape and Recovery, Part 1 of 2

Tamar McKee
June, 2015

One Hour in Paris: A True Story of Rape and Recovery is one part personal memoir, one part intellectual exploration into one woman's highly traumatic experience of rape and her ongoing, life-long endeavor to heal – as much as one can – from it. In an era where we have seen many women step up and speak out against sexual perpetrators that happen to be famous and powerful men – such as Jian Ghomeshi, former host of the popular Canadian radio show, "The Q," and American comedian and former television star, Bill Cosby – Freedman's book is a timely read not only because it deals with the issue of (heterosexual) rape and sexual violence, but because it reminds us that behind these women's stances against Ghomeshi and Cosby, and all the public support and vitriol they inspire, "there can be tremendous cost to individuals who bury their experience and carry it as a secret. This can accentuate the shame they struggle against and open a chasm between their private selves; their emotional, physiological, and psychological realities; and their public personas – between who we are and how others see us" (p.78).

Now a professor of philosophy at the University of Guelph, Freedman is writing as an established academic and this positionality comes through in her desire and ability to contexualise her story according to the research literature on sexual violence, trauma studies, PTSD, legal repercussions, and women's movements – particularly in North America and central Africa. Powering this contextualisation is Freedman's oftentimes vulnerable and candid storytelling voice, as though the young woman who first experienced the trauma of rape cannot help but finally speak up about what happened to her on 1st August 1990 in an apartment at 142 boulevard Massena in Paris, France: "If it is anyone's story to tell it is that young woman's, who had her playfulness stolen from her later that night, and here I was, getting ready to expose her again" (p.164). Freedman, however, does not expose this young woman's story in vain, for the end result is a transformational read where one is equally impressed by the content and structure of the book as by the bravery it took to write it.

> *One Hour in Paris was written 20 years after Freedman was raped and thus 20 years into her continuous recovery from the trauma of that experience.*

While she acknowledges that psychological trauma can vary historically and culturally (something that anthropological readers might find a little bit effaced throughout this book – more on that to come), Freedman is interested in how the emotional, cognitive, and physiological impacts of trauma might be something that all survivors of sexual violence can relate to. Yet how universal is the experience of, and suffering from, trauma (p.vii)?

The premise to such a question is that if there are widely-recognisable and generalisable outcomes from traumatic experience (especially in terms of somatic responses and neurobiological plasticity), than there might be widely-applicable therapies and roads to healing, like the ones that Freedman eventually found after years of struggling with panic attacks, PTSD, addiction, and sexual fear: "With enough time and effort, survivors have a chance of moving through the memory of their experience and making it a place of transformational and emotional growth"

(p.viii). In addition to "moving through memory," sharing stories and breaking the public silence on rape are also means of survivor solidarity that Freedman emphasises in this book: "Sometime ago I made a commitment to myself to tell my story, in part because I am persuaded by the notion that there are some phenomena, some of life's events, that can be best accessed from the inside…My hope that through focusing intimately inward I am able to relate to something that others can connect with" (p.ix).

The motivation to share her story also comes as retaliation against the "social and cultural pressure on women to keep their stories private" which for "for many [serves as] an insurmountable hurdle" (ibid). *One Hour in Paris* thus aims to be a scream in the midst of that silence. For North American readers, this intervention is heard loud and clear.

> *Yet for readers looking for more cultural and historical nuance beyond North America, particularly when Freedman goes on to volunteer for WAR (Women Against Rape) in Botswana, they might find themselves straining to hear the voices of the woman and girls Freedman encounters there.*

Thus, if there is one critique of the book to anticipate, it lies in Chapter 4, *Africa: 2008*, if only because Freedman previously (and subsequently) does such a remarkable job weaving together her personal story with the research literature on rape, trauma, and recovery that one wishes to see a little more attention paid to the complexities and intimacies of living as a rape survivor in Botswana. There is additionally a small feeling of let down because she provides solid context for how she personally became interested in Africa as "ground zero in the war against women" in terms of the inordinate prevalence of rape and HIV/AIDS amongst women and girls (p.115-119). This does not come off as a recapitulation of the "dark Africa" trope, but rather as one rape survivor's empathetic curiosity and desire to connect across nation-state and socio-cultural borders in order to expose the myriad "problems associated with patriarchy" (p.116). Thus, Freedman is further pulled to Africa because she sees a "counterattack"

happening as women refuse to stay silent about being raped and, for many of them, becoming afflicted with HIV/AIDS (p.121).

At this point, she provides an anthropological caveat, noting there is "cross-cultural variation in the ways that women process and express their experiences of trauma" especially in terms of not always needing to verbalise these experiences: "we can also communicate through our actions and the choices we make in our lives each day" (ibid). That being said, once Freedman does make it to Africa – Maun, Botswana in particular –the reader is given an introduction to the country and its structure of patriarchy (p.133-139). Split between common (state) and customary (tribes and communities) law, women and girls in Botswana are more susceptible to sexual violence and HIV/AIDS as customary law essentially sees them as the property of men (p.136) and lacking "authority to negotiate appropriate sexual relations" (p.138). To explain this system, Freedman simply states that such "structural inequalities" are "rooted in cultural stereotypes" (ibid). It is at this point, given Freedman's previously elegant, well-researched and written intertwining of research literature and personal journey, that one would expect an illustration of what those "cultural stereotypes" might consist of; instead, the explanation is left at that, and we enter into an all-too-brief and nigh-cliché recounting of her time (a little over two weeks) volunteering with WAR.

Perhaps one of the most-missed opportunities comes after Freedman tells her rape story during a group session. After first receiving only silence once she finished speaking (*"Had I broken some cultural norm in telling my story in all its graphic depiction?"* [p.145]), the women began "peppering me with questions", like "Did my rapist use a condom?" and comments to the effect that they "had no idea that people in countries like Canada were subject to rape" (ibid). After this verbal exchange, Freeman and the women "finished the session by drawing a picture of an imaginary garden, our own make-believe sanctuary" that even two young girls, also victims of rape, joined in to make (ibid). Freedman then concludes by noting "we shared our pictures of our safe havens and our hopes for a nonviolent future", but shares nothing of the details from her drawing or the

others' (p.146).

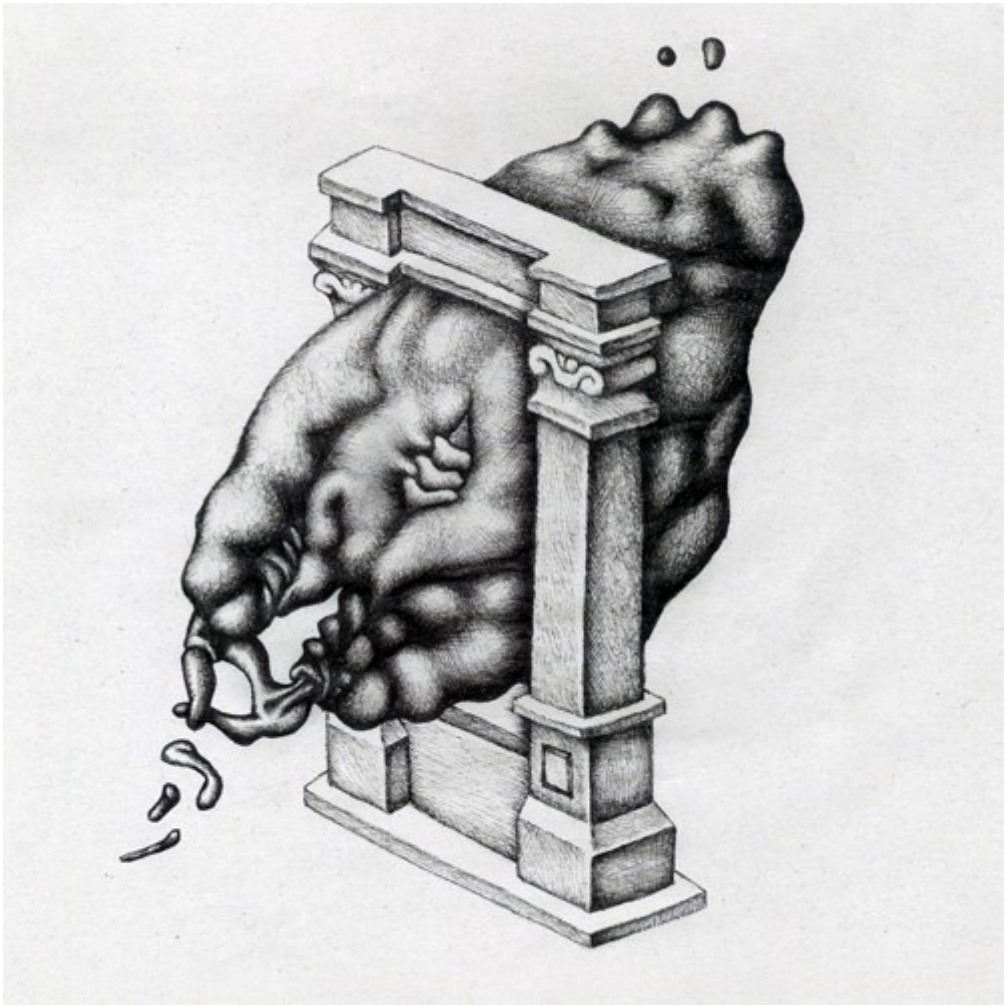
> *This would have been a perfect opportunity to show, through the nonverbal medium of art and aesthetics (albeit a textual description of them), exactly what safety and nonviolence look like shared between rape trauma survivors.*

Though readers might be left wanting a more detailed, informative picture on how women and girls in Botswana and other parts of Africa live through rape and find healing, in the end Freedman brings us full circle – or as much as one can given the contingency of personal memory – through her story of rape and recovery (p.172). About a year after volunteering with WAR, she returns to Paris in 2009 where at last, "the emotional hold that boulevard Massena had has over me for close to two decades had been deflated" (p.160). Though she was still triggered in the aftermath of revisiting this place, and even in the writing of this book, Freedman recognises that empowerment has happened. In sharing her life story, Freedman contributes her own unique counterattack – that of a philosopher, academic, and rape survivor – to the silencing of sexual assault and living with trauma. A reader is thus left wondering: what other testimonies will now come forward, and communities of support will emerge, because of books like *One Hour in Paris*?

Freedman, Karyn L. 2014. *One Hour in Paris. A True Story of Rape and Recovery*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 208 pp. Hb: $20.00. ISBN: 9780226073705.

Facades and Facelesness

Umut Yildirim
June, 2015



"We will continuously say how rooted we are in this county like a plane tree embracing the soil with its roots. They might prune our branches, but they won't be able to reach the roots of our old tree."

(Embros, 15 September 1955, in Agos 6 September 2013)

"You know that the future means nothing other than the shitting of the past; whatever we do, we will not be able to change this fact, unless a miracle happens." *(Heba,* Hasan Ali Toptas.)

A rusted projector reflects a film on the big screen between worn-out velvet curtains some American movie, in the dusty, damp-smelling, high-ceilinged auditorium —an old ice-skating rink, on the old Grand Rue de Pera, in a complex of buildings called Serkildoryan (*Cercle d'Orient* in French), commissioned by an Armenian banker close to the Ottoman palace, and designed by a Levantine architect in the late nineteenth century. Under the celestial ceiling decorated with withered and faded engravings bathed in dirt and rust, on one of the broken velvet chairs, a woman with a hardly discernible face sings uncannily. I move to the sound, towards her, to see her face; it has no surface.

> *Her voice is reminiscent of Rosa Eskinazi, an Istanbulite Jewish-Greek singer, who passed away in forced exile in Athens in the mid-20th century.*

Chagrined and in discomfort, Roza the ghoul laments an epoch long gone. Moved, I move out of the movie theatre through a corridor of broken stained glass and mirrors. I look at one of the broken mirrors to catch a glimpse of my shaken self only to hesitate at the sight of my reflection: my face does not lend itself to reflection. Haunted, I rush out of the theatre to be met by the ear-trenching noise of jackhammers and construction machinery, disemboweling the old building under a barricade of hardblock covering the carvings and ornaments of its hundred and twenty years old facade —a ghoulish remnant dating back from the forced property transfer of the Wealth Tax in 1942[1] and the pogrom of 6-7 September in 1955.[2]

Here, Taussigian defacement (1999) has appendages. The old facade, no longer discernible, discharges the ghoulish surplus of the melancholic energy of the displacement and plunder resulting from the Wealth Tax and the 1955 pogrom. These events served the reproduction of Turkified citizens who "know what not to know," thereby instituting a public secret concealing the violent uprooting of the city's non-Muslim and non-Turkish citizens, together with the plunder and

transfer of their properties to the newly fabricated Muslim-Turkish bourgeoisie. The surgical particle-board bandage over the facade of Cercle D'Orient reveals a new form and reality of desecration, by exhibiting a surface affect of cleanliness and capitalist progress, while once more despoiling an already plundered building before turning it into a shopping mall.[3]

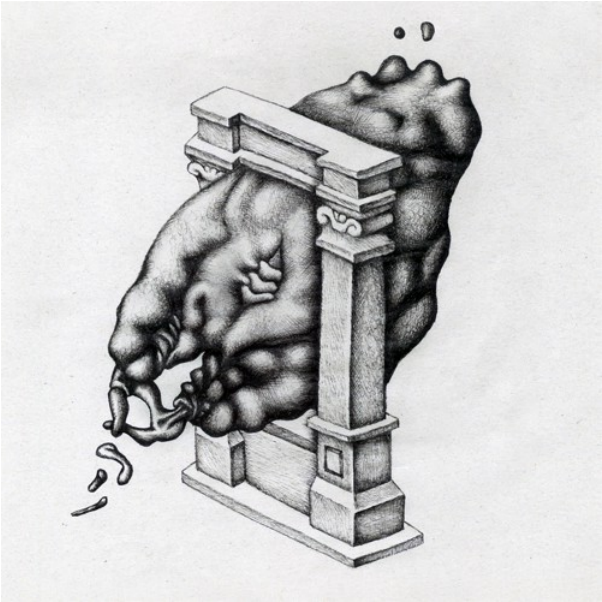
> *If evacuating those buildings and evicting and uprooting their inhabitants constituted the separatist logic of the Republic, these sites are marked as ghoulish left-overs of a non-Turkish and non-Muslim urban presence: disemboweling Jewish, Armenian, and Greek building remnants behind flat, expressionless board fences reveals the current practice of plunder and displacement, which seemingly aims to uproot anyone and anything that does not conform to the current government's pseudo-Dubai-style aesthetics.*[4]

It is no coincidence then, when, on 7 December 2012, police forcibly evacuated another shop in the Cercle d'Orient, the 68-year-old Inci Patisserie. The Turkish owner of the patisserie -the apprentice of Lukas Zigoriadis who had endured the 1955 pogrom – provided cauldrons of soup for protestors camping on one of the side streets of the building, thereby resisting the new wave of forced displacement, plunder, and property transfer. Then, on March 31st, around 300 protestors, most of them members of an anti-gentrification coalition, which had been working against the demolition of the historical Emek theater located in Cercle D'Orient, occupied the building against riot cops who were hunting for them. On April 7th, 2013, just a month and a half before the Gezi Uprising, police attacked with water cannons and tear gas to disperse a group of thousands, including Greek-French director Costa Gavras and many actors who protested the demolition of the movie theatre, with drunkards and homeless of downtown Istanbul joining them.

> *On April 7th, teargas and a barricade made of large flower pots marked the new boundaries of the entertainment centre of the city.*

Imagine a curiously diverse group of people made of clochards, vagabonds, glue sniffers, drunkards, passersby, students, teachers, writers, journalists, artists, actors, directors, cinema lovers, architects, musicians, and activists, choking and chanting against the tear gas, all in nervous pulse, trepidation, and uproar. It was as if parts of the life experience of those people choking in tear gas and chanting slogans against riot cops had been the accumulative acquisition of an uncanny familiarity with the melancholic facade of Cercle D'Orient, which was forcibly squeezed behind and erased by a hoarding. Had those people not spent some time acquiring that haptic experience, then they would perhaps not feel the building and see nothing extraordinary about jackhammer cracks deforming its historical carvings.

> *How Cercle D'Orient impresses me will depend on what I deliver to it as affective fragments —my countless strolls and visits to the building, flashback memories, erratic images of defacement that the building calls to mind, the piquant shock of the teargas, affective thoughts I have harvested from books and discussions with friends; in short, my visceral experiences.*



Cercle D'Orient's façade here, like the face of Deleuze and Guattari (2008), is this intertwined operation of defacement and vacuuming: The hoarding covering the old facade is nothing but a flattened out (post-Ottoman white, bio-male, heterosexual, raced, classed, and tyrannical) screen of consumerism, which sterilizes suggestions that there might be something behind it discharging expression. Behind the board fence, there exists an affective reservoir of knowledge —a tormented ghoul signaling an ineffable and injurious secret of defacement to be transmitted from one generation to the other (Abraham 1994 [1975]: 176); that something has been

going terribly wrong here; that that there is “something-to-be-done” and this involves a “futurity” (Gordon 1997).

Some of the slogans and graffiti of the Gezi Uprising —such as “Oppression started in 1453,” “Who is living in Dimitri’s house?” and “Turk, Rum, Armenian, Jew, long live the brotherhood of the people” —must be understood in this context of historical defacement in downtown Istanbul. If the series of events and protests that culminated in the Gezi Uprising have been suggestive of a chaotic and deranged landscape, then I understand Gezi as the type of miracle described by Toptas in *Heba* —a miracle that has incited a violent crack in the unfolding of history, and created a moment of resonance by challenging the Turkish subject’s nearly psychotic insistence on not feeling for his surroundings and not accounting for its specters.

In other words, if the death of affect (Ballard 1974) signifies the lack of care for and understanding of one’s immediate surroundings, then the uprising has brought forth a ghoulish sense of solidarity: Here some urban dwellers resist AKP style of defacement, and attempt to reconnect by seeing through wounds, cracks, scars, fissures, vomits, bile, blisters and the like…

> *Like its predecessors, the current government portrays non-Muslim non-Turks and their pillaged properties as an “outside,” associating them with debris, and turning them into scapegoats (Benlisoy 2013).*

Yet, with Gezi, the hoarding has become suggestive of the one dimensional face of the current government or even its facelessness, as it displays its impulsive urge to erase alterity, memory, and ethics to replace them with blood and profit. Gezi has momentarily exposed the epistemic murk produced by a war-monger regime that attempts to conceal its hereditary thirst for plunder, its lust and greed for capital, and its urge to kill life and memory behind hard block covers. Unlike Levinisian ethics (1985) -which idealizes face-to-face encounters as sites of sterling and uncontaminated relatedness by locking the self and the undeniable yet sentimentalized Other into a relationship of debt while excluding the sensory

experience of buildings- with Gezi, the facade of the historical building resists becoming a static and finite product that pseudo-Dubai capitalism enacts.

Here, faces and facades are accumulative, cut, putrescent, squeezed, vomiting, and therefore suggestive and dynamically turned in anxiety and anticipation towards something-to-be-done; waiting not only for the teargas and the plastic bullets, for further plunder and displacement, but also for miracles like Gezi.

To Pera kids

Inspired by strolls with Ceren Oykut, Defne Sandalci, Jesse Gagliardi, Nilgun, Uber Lazy, Yael Navaro-Yashin and Yasemin Nur Erkalir.

Art Work by *Bora Başkan*

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Footnotes

[1] The extraordinary law called Wealth (Capital) Tax (*Varlık Vergisi*in Turkish), which was executed by the National Assembly in the Single Party era in 1942 eradicated, in its implementation, the pioneering role that Armenians, Greek Orthodox, and Jews had had in the economy. “An economic genocide” for non-Muslim non-Turkish minorities, as well as a project of Turkification that created economic and political opportunities of re-emplacement for the muslim Turkish bourgeoisie (Aktar 2006: 15). The tax was sometimes so excessive that it was even impossible for the non- Muslim non-Turks to pay it even if they sold all of their possessions. The punishments were levy, confiscation, the mandatory labor

camps, and forced exile. Following the Wealth Tax, the Cercle d'Orient complex was bought by the municipality.

[2] The 6-7 September Pogrom (*Septemvriana* in Greek) was a government-instigated series of plundering and looting acts against the Greek minority of Istanbul in September 1955. Greek, Armenian and Jewish residents of Istanbul were targeted. People organized in coordinated gangs committed acts of violence in neighborhoods and districts where non-Muslim non-Turkish populations were mostly concentrated. Residences and shops were mined and pillaged; their contents wrecked, thrown into the streets, trailed behind vehicles and churches; community schools and cemeteries were vandalized. The material damage was considerable, with damage to 5317 properties, almost all Greek-owned, and among these were 4214 homes, 1004 businesses, 73 churches, 2 monasteries, 1 synagogue, and 26 schools (Guven 2005). The death toll was dozens of people.

[3]The Cercle d'Orient complex, transferred to the municipality following the Wealth Tax and bought by the Pension Fund following the Istanbul Pogrom, is now owned by the Social Security Administration (*Sosyal Guvenlik Kurumu*, SSK), and thus constitutes public property. The building was leased to a private developer who plans to demolish it from within in order to turn it into an entertainment and shopping complex. Demolition work started in 2013. In January 2015 the 9th Istanbul Administrative Court rejected the request to stop demolition and reconstruction, and the Regional Administrative Court reversed the decision. The decision stated that the previous legal proceedings were not in compliance with the law. The reconstruction continues despite the decision.

[4] A political economy of moral and social engineering, dressed in the paradoxical language of Islamic grandeur and vulnerability, compartmentalizes the city into classed yet detached hubs of profit havens via urban corridors and transportation infrastructures that will facilitate the flow of capital, goods, and humans (Adanali 2011).

Fantastic States!

Allegra
June, 2015

This thematic week is the continuation of a discussion on the state we, at Allegra, started in november last year. This previous thread explored ethnographically the state's construction in international relations, law, and diplomacy. This time, we focus on works that are suggestive of new ethnographic strategies for accessing the constitutive fabrics of the state. In order to deepen our ethnographic engagement with 'the state' and its margins, we present short ethnographic

pieces that illustrate the emergence of ‘the state’ across a wide range of places, things, persons, and the multiplex social, cognitive, and affective relations between them.

The posts we collected for you problematize the idea of “the” state as a coherent unit, clearly differentiated from society. Instead they approach the state as a product of practices, in particular representational practices.

Following the work of anthropologists who have attempted to theorize the state as a fantasy (Navaro-Yashin 2002), as a fetish (Taussig 1992b), as an idea (Mitchell 1991), or as a fiction (Aretxaga 2003), this thematic week underlines the elusive, porous, and mobile boundaries of the state in various contexts where the ‘state’ is considered as ‘weak’ or ‘failed’ or when it attempts to assert its authoritarian power.

We start with an excerpt from Yael Navaro-Yashin by now classic ‘The Make Believe Space’, in which she explores Northern Cyprus as a space carved out as distinct and defined as separate after the Turkish invasion of 1974.

We continue with a text written by Umut Yildirm and illustrated by artist Bora Baskan, describing the gentrification wave in central Istanbul in relation to the plundering of old non-muslim Armenian buildings. This ethnographic piece is a meditation on façades that bear the traces of various state attempts at erasing the non-Turkish and non-Muslim elements of society.

On friday, Jon Schubert investigates a ‘fainting wave’ that swept through Angolan middle schools in 2011. Instead of interpreting the phenomenon in terms of ‘somatisation’, Schubert reveals a pattern that is indicative of popular imaginaries of statehood in authoritarian regimes.

We conclude the week with a post by Kareem Rabie reflecting on the construction of the idea of the state in a place where state-building is constantly postponed; namely Palestine. Rabie takes the construction of Rawabi, a massive new planned town located 9 km north of Ramallah, and mostly funded by Qatar, to demonstrate

how the Palestinian state is conceived by NGOs, donors, Palestinian capitalists and the Palestinian Authority primarily as a stable and profitable entity.

On Monday 8th, we reconvene with a post written by Tessa Diphoorn and Tom Kagwe which presents a case adjudicated upon by Kenya's Court of Appeal on May, 8th, on a recommendation made by the Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) of Kenya which 'oversees' the work of the National Police Service. The case illustrates how various state bodies compete against each other, thus providing insight into the heterogenic forms of statehood that characterises the Kenyan polity.

Finally, Allie's review team put together a list of recent publications on the anthropology of the state: keep your eyes open for books that you may want to review for us!

Enjoy!

References:

Navaro-Yashin, Yael. 2002. *Faces of the State: Secularism and Public Life in Turkey*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Taussig, Michael. 1992. "The Magic of the State." *Public Culture* 5 (1) (September 21): 63–66.

Mitchell, Timothy. 1991. "The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics." *The American Political Science Review* 85 (1) (March): 77.

Aretxaga, Begona. 2003. "Maddening States." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 32 (January 1): 393–410.

#EVENTS: The stage is yours!

Allegra
June, 2015

The events season is in full bloom with many exciting happenings forthcoming soon! Allegra has, once again, curated a carefully selected list of conferences, workshops (and more) that await your participation, either as a presenter or a listener.

The early birds among you shouldn’t miss the opportunity to register for the Atmospheres conference (1-2 July 2015, The University of Manchester) at a

discounted rate until 31 May 2015. Or how about getting a ticket to Beyond Perception 15 (1-4 September 2015, Aberdeen), a symposium addressing Tim Ingold's work over the last fifteen years since the publication of his seminal book *The Perception of the Environment* in 2000 (Early bird fees until 1 July 2015). The possibilities are endless!

And don't forget to contact Andrea @ andreak@allegralaboratory.net if you would like your event to be featured on our monthly list or simply to appear on our home page calendar. Short reports on symposiums, workshops, panels and conferences are also warmly welcome!

International Workshop: Beauty and the norm: debating standardization in bodily appearance

6 – 8 April 2016, Iwalewahaus & University of Bayreuth, Germany

This workshop aims at bringing together ethnographic and conceptual approaches to the study of beauty and the norm from social anthropology, queer studies, gender studies and disability studies in order to debate standardization in bodily appearance. The conveners invite contributions that engage with ethnographic methods in their research in a variety of geographical locations, addressing one or more of the following questions:

- What is the relation between beauty practices and the norm?
- Are there ethnographic indications for rising standards of bodily appearance and in what ways are these related to ideologies of race,
- class, age and gender?
- What happens with people whose bodies defy or are found lacking in

reference to what is considered an ordinary appearance?
- What does the increasing consumption of aesthetic body modifications mean for the particularities of our bodies, our everyday lives as well as
- for the ways we determine what is good, beautiful, healthy and "normal"? [more]

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 5 June 2015

Conference: Creative Labour(er). Anthropological Perspectives on the *Work* of Art

8 June 2015, King's College, University of Cambridge, UK

Keynote: Georgina Born (Music/Anthropology, Oxford)

This one-day international conference interrogates the relation between contemporary artistic production and postfordist labour relations. How do artists work today? As an Anthropologies of Art (A/A) Network research event, the conference also seeks to map out a range of contemporary approaches to a wider set of questions:

- What can anthropological analysis contribute to understanding the changing nature of labour, flexibilisation, and the entrepreneurial subject?
- In what ways do freelance artists reflect or perpetuate flexible working

conditions?
- What are the distinctions between artistic self-making and artistic self-marketing?

Contributors from France, The Netherlands, Germany, and the UK will be discussing case studies addressing artistic production in music, law, film, theatre, and visual art.

Please contact Jonas Tinius (Anthropology, Cambridge) to register at jlt46@cam.ac.uk

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British Association for the Study of Religion

Annual Conference (#BASR2015):

Religion in the Local and Global: Interdisciplinary Perspectives and Challenges

7 – 9 September 2015, University of Kent, UK

In an age of global interconnection what counts as religion is being redefined and is under increasing scrutiny. It is now impossible to conceive of the global-political without attention to the religious-secular, the increasing tension between

the local and trans-national and new modes of community and religiosity. Cultural habits, individual identity, social structures, philosophical categories and economic exchanges are all being transformed by a new sense of time, space and interconnection.

The conference will explore the theme of Religion in the Local and Global across a range of disciplinary perspectives, including religion, politics, anthropology, sociology, psychology and philosophy. The aim is to bring together a range of disciplinary perspectives on the study of religion to explore the local/global challenge to conventional assumptions about religion, both in empirical and theoretical perspectives. Each perspective seeks to set up a challenge to how different ways of thinking about religion are determined by interlocking global and local issues, concerns and social realities. [more]

Deadline for submission of papers and panel proposals: 15 June 2015

Training Course: Digital Video Production for Anthropologists and Social Researchers

Next course: 20 – 21 June 2015, London, UK (more dates available)

The course strives to provide all participants with a solid foundation of practical knowledge and a working understanding of digital cameras, sound recording, interview techniques, filming on location and industry language.

The conveners aim to instil participants with the confidence to use a wide range of equipment and we teach “future proof” principles of filmmaking which remain constant despite changes in technology and formats. [more]

Please complete the Booking Form to reserve a place on this workshop.

Queer Devices: A European Network for Queer Anthropology Workshop

11 – 13 September 2015, Central European University, Budapest

The European Network for Queer Anthropology (ENQA) is pleased to announce its first workshop. The aim is to offer a space for participants to present and explore work foregrounded in anthropological epistemologies and ethnographic methodologies, and which has sexual and gender diversity and difference, broadly conceived, as a central theme. In so doing the workshop will open up a discursive and reflexive space in which to critically engage with and further debates, especially by providing an argument for (1) the importance of both ethnographically grounded and post-ethnographic, theoretically inflected approaches in queer studies, and (2) of relativizing ‘Western’ paradigmatic knowledge regimes in the study of gender and sexual diversity. [more]

Deadline for submission of papers: 29 June 2015

SYLFF workshop: People, Spaces, and Identities in Movement

25 August 2015, University of Helsinki, Finland

This multidisciplinary workshop discusses and examines changes and movements in space (understood in both physical and conceptual terms). In particular, it is interested in concept of “movement” – including the ability to move and not to move – and its application to different research topics, such as changing identities in a society, or the actual movement of people and/or ideas from one place to another. The conveners welcome papers that not only address the modern world from the perspective of the social sciences, but also literature studies, historical studies and linguistic studies are also welcome. The presentation of work in progress is also encouraged. [more]

Deadline for submission of papers: 30 June 2015

Conference: Corpses, Burials and Infection

4 – 5 December 2015, CRASSH, Cambridge, UK

It has become a truism to state that in times of epidemic infection, the bodies of the dead become morally, ontologically, and infrastructurally problematic. Nowhere has this been better demonstrated than in the recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa, when burials and the handling of corpses became arenas of contestation through which both local and scientific 'cultures' were placed on trial.

Historically, burials and the treatment of human corpses in the time of epidemics have become sites of obvious and apparent contestation. Examples include issues of profanity during the "Plague of Athens" (430BC); allegations of the catapulting of infected corpses in the Middle Ages; Defoe's descriptions of the breakdown of burial norms during the London Plague of 1665; colonial concerns over "body dumping" in the streets of fin de siècle Hong Kong, and the Pasteurian problematisation of Malagasy reburial rites as a mode of spreading plague in modern Madagascar. Furthermore, burial grounds and plague pits serve not only as condensed spaces of cultural heritage, but are increasingly approached as biological archives (aDNA).

This conference will expand the discursive space that such narratives have created, by asking; how can we problematize the perception and treatment of corpses in situations of infectious disease outbreaks? How can we denaturalize burial as an obvious space of political and ethical contestation? [more]

Deadline for submission of papers: 1 July 2015

Conference: Responsibility and Scholarship in the Current Political Moment

25 – 26 September 2015, University of Colorado, Boulder, USA

Anthropology is in a moment of creative rupture, redefinition, and profound possibility, and it is the task of the next generation of cultural anthropologists – particularly graduate students – to rethink the potentials of our work. While contemporary anthropologists engage with a multiplicity of theoretical perspectives and paradigms, there is still coalescence around a common commitment to ethnography.

In this conference, the conveners aim to conceptualize the current political moment and possibilities for an engaged anthropology by bringing together graduate students thinking through the disciplinary potentials in their own research projects. Now is a time that can be variously characterized by social unrest, insecurity, and inequality across the globe, but also by possibility, connection, and social change. What responsibilities do we as anthropologists have to people engaged in struggles for justice? How can our deep ethnographic knowledge about complex social issues speak to the public and respond to current issues in a timely way? How do the politics of our situated locations as graduate students inform ethical commitments and obligations to the people with whom we work? If ethnography remains our central commitment as a discipline, how can

we tell stories that are compelling and at the same time make sophisticated intellectual claims that do justice to the complexity of people's social worlds? [more]

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 1 July 2015