CROSS-FERTILISING

ROOTS AND ROUTES

Cover 36/1, Design: Debra Livingston – University of the Sunshine Coast.

For this special issue of 'Cross-Fertilising Roots and Routes' the contributors explore the issues of ethnicity, socio-cultural regeneration and planetary realisations. Given that there is a strong Indian context for these articles the managing editor for this issue, Marcus Bussey, asked that the cover reflect a traditional Indian indigenous or folk tribal art style. After exploring the rich variety of images I found that Indian art making has a long cultural heritage. For example, the 'Madhubani' style from the Mithila region of Northern Bihar is one of the most popular styles of Indian folk art, passed down for generations from mother to daughter, and 'is an exclusively feminine school of folk painting' (Das 2013). The Madhubani style mainly encompasses mythological stories and uses floral, animal, bird motifs and line patterns that fill the canvas. For example, peacocks and fish often feature in Madhubani art and are used as:

> … an emblematic expression of day-to-day experiences and beliefs. As such, symbolism, simplicity and beauty hold them together in a single school of traditional art. The symbols that these Maithili painters use have their specific meanings as, for instance, fish symbolise fertility, procreation and good luck, peacocks are associated with romantic love and religion … (Das 2013).

Although there are many specific indigenous folk styles from the various regions of India, for the cover design I chose the Madhubani motifs, particularly to follow the tradition as a 'feminine craft', and to express the various 'routes' the articles in this special issue explore. The design was first drafted using an iPad Pro and then printed on 300gsm water colour paper. The outlines of the motifs and decorative lines were then hand-drawn and coloured, photographed with a high-end camera and the final cover completed using computer software.

References:
Das N. 2013 'Madhubani Paintings: its existence and possibility', *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 3: 2, http://www.ijsrp.org/research-paper-0213/ijsrp-p1428.pdf (accessed 15th June 2017).

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• abstract should be a maximum of 150 words
• three - five keywords.

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THEME FOR THIS ISSUE: Cross-Fertilising Roots and Routes

Introduction to the Symposia 'Cross-Fertilising Roots and Routes', edited by Ananta Kumar Giri

MARCUS BUSSEY

Traditionally, symposia followed a banquet so I must apologise for not providing a sumptuous meal with this special issue. However, this issue's exploration of Roots and Routes holds true to the initial idea of the symposium as a discussion amongst friends/colleagues of some weighty matter. In this case we come together at the invitation of Professor Ananta Kumar Giri from the Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai, India to explore issues pertaining to ethnicity, socio-cultural regeneration and planetary realisations. It was Professor Giri who coordinated these special symposium contributions. The format presented here is one occasionally practised by various disciplines where a leading scholar in the field sets out a range of issues in a 'poser' and invites trusted colleagues to engage with their ideas. So this is not so much a dialogue in the sense of an interactive or combative engagement but a series of scholarly reflections provoked by Giri's poser.

The immediate context for Giri is his native India where there are ongoing issues of marginalisation and resistance, both political and violent, afflicting India's many indigenous tribal communities and indeed many other parts of the world. Giri offers a critique of the dominant trend to essentialise ethnicity to block identities that have arisen in attempts at resistance and self-definition in the face of an uncomprehending nationalist agenda. For Giri, the issue hinges on the pluralisation of identity which can resist essentialist discourse. For him, ethnicity is not a simple category but an invitation to explore our identities as both local and global sojourners. He sees such explorations as creative and generative of multiple trajectories and accompanying narratives in which identity is enacted, as verbal processes of being and becoming. This reframing is what the respondents in this special issue all tackle from various perspectives.

The short reflections that follow Giri's opening paper range in formality and temper from the free flowing of ideas as in the three opening responses by Fred Dallmayr, Piet Strydom and Ivan Marquez to structured and formal papers such as those offered by Zazie Bowen and John Clammer. Somewhere in between these two poles my paper considers the question of rootedness and our many routes through the lens of cosmopoesis whilst Meera Chakravorty approaches Giri's work through the lens of mystical and indigenous poetry drawn from her deep knowledge of Baul, Sufi and tribal oral traditions. It goes without saying that much ground is covered as a result of the range of perspectives brought together. What is important is that each paper brings with it a freshness and openness to the *thinking* required to go beyond traditional engagements with questions of power and marginality.

Certainly, the encounters between intellectual, cultural and scholarly traditions, what Giri refers to as transmodernity, sit at the heart of the planetary conversations he has in mind. Routes are not simply those taken when we migrate, mix and merge but they stand for intellectual and cultural encounters that stretch our epistemic realities and challenge our ontological anchors. Indeed, the whole question of roots in the twenty-first century is being challenged as our consciousness of belonging is shifting between the local-locale of rootedness to the global-flow of routes. I am reminded of the wonder to be found in such transitions and of the work of walking, narrating, reflecting, critiquing, dancing and singing we must all undertake, and to which these papers in this symposium point, as we move over the horizon of the known into new landscapes of thought and identity.

Such a move is captured beautifully in the work between the white Australian Margaret Somerville and her indigenous Australian interlocutor Tony Perkins when they explore place, identity and deep memory in the lives of aboriginal Gumbaynggirr peoples of northern coastal New South Wales. At the end of this journey of roots and routes Somerville reflects:

> We move between our intimate knowledge of these places, the infinite detail of the prints in the sand, the crunch of shells in the midden and the vast lines and shapes of connection (Somerville and Perkins 2010: 224).

Perhaps, in dipping into this symposium on Roots and Routes you, the reader, may find a similar sense of expansive possibility. That is our hope as we gather to discuss things in the manner of Plato who declared, in the guise of Eryximachus:

> So if you on your part approve, we might pass the time well enough in discourses; for my opinion is that we ought each of us to make a speech in turn… (Plato 1909: 177D)

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Marcus has co-authored with Professor Richard Slaughter *Futures Thinking for Social Foresight* (2005). He has also co-edited two books with Sohail Inayatullah and Ivana Milojević – *Neohumanist Educational Futures* (2006) and *Alternative Educational Futures* (2008). In addition he has edited *Tantric Women Tell their Stories* (2007) and published a book of poetry *Clare and Francis* (2012). Marcus has held fellowships at Nanyang Technical University, Singapore and Tamkang University, Taiwan. He is currently Discipline Head of History and Program Leader in Futures Studies at his university. Marcus is on the editorial boards for the *Journal of Futures Studies*, *Foresight, On the Horizon* and *Social Alternatives.*

'As we realise the deeper spiritual meaning and challenge of existing categories coming from our culture and religions, we also need to create new categories of reality, living and realisation'.

Ananta Kumar Giri

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about Doukas

we stared at the photo of the bullet

"this is the actual bullet

and is in my possession"

said my friend

delivering his lecture

on Alekos Doukas

Greek Australian poet

wounded with that bullet

that passed through his jaw

during The Catastrophe in 1922

idealist living on a farm in Greece

a farm with a forest on it

at one time

so green

but not so much an idealist

at that time

as the other conscripts

railing against the army

against nationhood

and patriotism

Anna Couani,
Sydney, NSW

Cross-Fertilising Roots and Routes: Ethnicity, socio-cultural regeneration and planetary realisations

ANANTA KUMAR GIRI

Roots and routes are perennial aspects of human condition but we do not always look at them in dynamic interaction. We usually look at ethnicity as linked to our roots but we do not relate to routes of various kinds in histories and societies. This essay explores the dynamic cross-fertilisation of roots and routes in the working of ethnicity. It also strives to rethink ethnicity as not only a space of political mobilisation but also as a space of socio-cultural regeneration, regenerating for example local memories and ecologies of knowledges. It then tries to rethink ethnicity, state and the world from the perspective of planetary realisations where we realise that we are children of Mother Earth as we belong to these categories of state, society and ethnicity.

The Asian maritime networks of the pre-colonial era … involved a wide variety of merchant communities at different points who did not speak the same languages or trade in the same currencies … In many ways, contemporary Asian regional interdependence resembles the maritime Asian trade networks, because of the separation of political, economic and military levels and power … Although the actual products flowing through the Asian maritime networks were miniscule compared to today's figures, the cultural flows they enabled – packaged in Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Islam – were nothing short of world-transforming … Nonetheless, the older Asian models of cultural circulation without state domination of identity presents us with a historical resource to explore new possibilities.

Prasenjit Duara (2015: 277).

Herkunft aber bleibt stets Zukunft

But origin always meets us from the future.

Martin Heidegger (1971: 10)

Introduction and Invitation

'We are now living through the undermining of national communities and strengthening of ethnic communities' writes Alain Touraine (2007: 145) in his *A New Paradigm for Understanding Today's World*. This process is a multi-dimensional process of resistance, struggle, creativity, destruction and transformation which calls for deeper probing of, and meditative co-walking with, our existing conceptual categories and modes of engagement. As ethnicity cannot be understood either as a static category or in isolation from other categories and realities such as nationality and citizenship, as T.K. Oommen (1997) argues, we also need to understand the limits of these categories themselves as well as the inner and mutual transformations that these are going through both internally as well as in their inter-relationship.

All these categories and life-worlds have a complex relationship to tradition, modernity, postmodernity and an emergent modernity called transmodernity where, as Enrique Dussel (2017: 226-227) argues, 'unsuspected cultural richness' rises up like the flame of fire of those fathoms buried under the sea of ashes from hundreds of years of colonialism. Transmodernity refers to 'a process of rebirth, searching for new paths for future development'. If the reality and production of ethnicity are linked to both modernity and colonialism, leading to what Oommen (1997) calls *ethnification*, transmodernity challenges us to understand both historical and contemporaneous processes of deconstruction and reconstruction, resistance and creativity anew.

While *ethnification* is a process of marginalisation, ethnicity is not just produced at the disjuncture of home and the world as Oommen argues. Contra Oommen, we do not become an *ethnie* when we leave our home and come to a foreign land. Ethnicity is an aspect of both home and the world, and understanding it as a dynamic process as well as the related categories and histories of nationality and citizenship, challenges us to understand ethnicity as well as nationality and 'citizenship not only as nouns but also as verbs' (Giri 2012, 2013). As verbs

they embody multiple and multi-dimensional processes of genesis, ongoing dynamics and reconstitution. Oommen's phrase *ethnification* points to this verbal dimension of the category of ethnicity. At the same time, to these categories of nation, ethnicity and citizenship we need to add the category of soul – self, social as well as cultural – as well as creativity. We need to bring to our existing discursive and practical landscape the dynamics of generativity and regeneration of soul, culture and society.

Ethnicity is linked to mobilisation of many kinds and ethnic mobilisations are engaged in struggle for power, identity and resources with other ethnic groups and the nation-states. But ethnic mobilisations are not only confined to socio-political and socio-economic struggles for power and resources where they are fighting against both the dominant logic of state and market in favour of more autonomy, control over local resources and sometimes creation of new states. They are also engaged in processes of socio-cultural regeneration trying to regenerate cultural resources for creative engagement with the contemporary and to revitalise local knowledge. But unfortunately in the dominant manifestation of the ethnic mobilisations in our present-day world it is the socio-political and socio-economic struggle for power and resources which predominate suppressing the dimension of socio-cultural regeneration in their works. In the dominant socio-political mobilisation of ethnicity, there is not only a mimetic reproduction of state violence in ethnic mobilisation, but also slowly violent ethnic mobilisations are being forced to realise and learn, as René Girard tells us, that 'the sacrificial system [of violence] is virtually worn out' (cited in Flemming 2004: 111). We need "to realise the limits of violence and absolutism and [begin] the difficult journey of non-violent resistance and transformation in a world where violence presents itself as the tempting 'easy option' for both the state as well as non-state actors" (Bass 2013; Daniels 1996; Volkam 2006).

Ethnicity, Cultural Rights and Cultural Regeneration: In between root and routes

Ethnicity is linked to both territory and culture. The struggle for ethnicity in the modern and contemporary world is a struggle for plural, economic and cultural regeneration, and transformation. Ethnicity, as it emerges in between culture and location, is linked to our need for roots which are invariably multiple. What Simone Weil writes in her *Need for Roots* deserves our careful consideration:

> To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognised need of the human soul. It is one of the hardest to define. A human being has roots by virtue of his real, active and natural participation in the life of a community which preserves in living shape certain particular measures of the past and certain particular expectations for the future. This participation is a natural one, in the sense that it is automatically brought about by place, conditions of birth, profession and social surrounding. Every human being needs to have multiple roots ... (1952: 99).

In order to appreciate our need for roots we can here think together with both Mahatma Gandhi and Wangai Maathai. As Margaret Chatterjee interprets Gandhi's path:

> The world was interested in the fruits, not the root. For the tree itself, however, the chief concern should be not the fruit, but the root. It was in the depth of one's being that the individual had to concentrate. He had to nurse it with the water of his labour and suffering. The root was his chief concern (2005: 98).

In a related way, Maathai points to the significance of roots in the dynamics of nature as well as for the preservation and efflorescence of both biodiversity and cultural diversity. Maathai tells us that while she was growing up, her mother told her never to cut the fig tree. Later on when she studied biology, she realised that:

> ... there was a connection between the fig tree's root system and the underground water reservoirs. The roots burrowed deep into the ground, breaking through the surface soil and diving into the underground water table. The water traveled up along the routes until it hit a depression or weak place in the ground and gushed out as a spring. Indeed, wherever these trees stood, there were likely to be streams (2008: 46).

But colonial rule struck at the root of this ecosystem. Maathai describes how the colonial government in Kenya 'decided to encroach into the forest and establish commercial plantation of the non-native trees ... The eliminated local plants and animals, destroying the natural ecosystem that helped gather and retain rainwater' (ibid: 39). But Mathai also tells us how colonisation of Kenya and the wider Africa not only struck at the roots of the natural ecosystem, it also struck at the roots of cultural vitality and dignity of people as it also destroyed the roots of mother languages of peoples. It is in this context that the recovery of our roots is a challenge but ironically our need for roots many a time leads to ethnocentric and exclusionary localism and patriotism. Weil calls this self-idolatry. Today both ethnic and national patriotism, in their dominant formation, reproduce a logic of self-idolatry.

But overcoming this self-idolatry challenges us to realise that there are routes in all our roots. However, being

with routes does not necessarily produce rootless histories and modernities. Here our locations are not only bounded locales but are also translocal. Our locations are 'an itinerary rather than a bounded site – a series of encounters and translations,' as anthropologist James Clifford tells us in his important work *Routes* (1997: 11). Clifford here brings our attention to the fieldwork of anthropologist and novelist Amitava Ghosh in Egypt where fieldwork for Clifford 'is less a matter of localised dwelling and more a series of travel encounters. Everyone's on the move, and has been for centuries, dwelling-in-travel... Moreover, when travel...becomes the kind of norm, dwelling demands explication. Why with what degree of freedom do people stay at home' (ibid: 2-5).

Understanding self, ethnicity and nation emerging at the cross-roads of roots and routes calls for new modes of engagement and understanding, a border-crossing between philosophy and anthropology. Both philosophy and anthropology are even now deeply parochial disciplines and are still Eurocentric in their methods and worldviews. But here anthropologists not only need to embody deep philosophical reflection but also footwork. Both philosopher and anthropologist need to embody a creative trigonometry of philosophical, historical and footwork engagement (cf. Giri 2012). As J. N. Mohanty would challenge us, engagement with both footwork and histories would help us realise how our life worlds, including ethnic life worlds, are not only closed within themselves but are in communication with each other. But this history of communication can be more creatively cultivated with what Mohanty, building on Husserl, calls 'apperceptive attribution' and 'analogising apperception'. Thus he notes, 'The gap between the far and the near is closed by analogising apperception of the far, as if it were near ... The relativity of the lifeworld is to be overcome by making what it is strange, foreign, unfamiliar gradually familiar' (2001: 92).

What is to be noted is that this process of communication, cross-cultural and inter-ethnic, is not only a matter of state and social system but more crucially of actors. For both Alain Touraine (2007) and Jürgen Habermas (2006), such processes call for communicative transformations from all concerned, including the so-called marginalised ethnicities and cultural groups in which creative selves and actors play an important role. As Habermas tells us, 'Yet cultural rights do not just mean more "difference", and more independence for cultural groups and their leaders ...They cannot benefit from a morality of equal inclusion without themselves making this morality their own' (2006: 205). At the same time, there is a lingering universalism in Touraine and Habermas which can be creatively transformed into transmodern and transversal processes.

When we are talking about ethnicity and culture, we need to be on guard against what James Clifford identifies as the propensity of culture to assert 'holism and aesthetic form, its tendency to privilege value, hierarchy and historical continuity in notions of "common life"' (1988: 2). It is in this context that Trouillot (2004) challenges us to say goodbye to culture and to accept the new duty that arises out of it. This duty calls us to look at culture as a dynamic border-crossing of roots and routes and not to look at it as a holistic prison of roots nor to look at it as only rootless passages in space and time.

Beyond Culturalist Holism and Ethnic Absolutism

In his work on the Gorkhaland movement, Swatahsiddha Sarkar (2013) offers us a critical contemporary example of the limits of singular and holistic ethnic representation. As Sarkar writes, 'Peace initiatives framed by the state with the vision of homogenising the actually existing differences between the "us" and "them" run the risk of submerging the rebel voice and reinstate the same hegemonic structure which in fact breed the problem ... An alternative thus could be suggested following a policy that recognises the different stake holders of ethnic cause' (2013: 135). Even in the case of United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), Nani Mahanta tells us:

> Organisations like ULFA never bothered to look into the issues of governance and day-to-day problems that the people of the state used to confront on a daily basis. Struggle for land, forest and water have acquired a new dimension after the emergence of a peasant-based movement known as Krushak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) in 2005 under the leadership of RTI activist Akhil Gogoi ... Movements centering on people's issues have become more popular and sustainable in comparison to the armed groups who have perennially neglected these issues for a dream of independent sovereign homeland (2013: xx).

At the same time, Mahanta makes a startling observation:

> At a time when other organisations have taken a bold stand against the immigrants, ULFA has tried to broaden the Assamese nationality by incorporating the immigrants from Bangladesh into the framework of the people of Assam (2013: xvii).

Both these works on ethnic mobilisations point to the limits of looking at them solely in terms of fixed roots and struggle for power and point to the need for ethnic mobilisations to be open to others in a spirit of hospitality and care.

Creating Cultures, Spaces and Politics of Hospitality

As ULFA realised, the need to incorporate the immigrants from Bangladesh into the framework of Assam, in Assam itself, even in small areas such as Bodoland, ethnic groups are at each other's throats. The whole North-East of India has become a cauldron of ethnic violence and annihilation and the State is not the only agent of killing here. This highlights the need to create a culture, space and politics of dignity and respect – one of hospitality. Here we need to realise that we are not helplessly caught between the binary choice of citizenship and total non-existence as an immigrant. Here Seyla Benhabib (2004) argues that nation-states can offer a variety of creative policies and opportunities to the immigrant. They may not be given full citizenship for political and other constraints but they can be given other rights such as the right to vote in local elections. Similarly, ethnic groups can also provide different ranges of rights and hospitality to members of other ethnic groups instead of subjecting them to torture, torment or death. To date, both the nation-state and ethnic groups are used to a politics of taking hostage and now they need to practise a politics and spirituality of hospitality (Derrida 2006).

As our political imagination and practice has a deeper religious and theological root, as the complex trajectory of political theology tells us, we need here alternative political theologies and spiritualities which can transform our politics of hostage taking into a politics and spirituality of hospitality. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, the parable of the Good Samaritan and the command to love one's neighbour as oneself needs to be practised creatively (cf: Vattimo 1999; Ricouer 2000). The Bhagavad Gita talks about *swadharma* (*dharma* of the self) and the need to protect one's *swadharma* from *paradharma* (*dharma* of others). But what is *swadharma*, what is *paradharma*? So far, in conventional religion, politics and interpretative exercises, these have been given a literal and group-linked categorical meaning. But *swadharma* is not only one's socially-given religious identity, it is the *dharma* of one's being, the path of unfoldment, and the duty that one seeks and needs to follow. One needs to nurture and protect one's unique *dharma* and mode of self-realisation from those forces which are not intrinsically significant for one's self-realisation. So for the Hindu, *swadharma* is not simply Hinduism with Islam as *paradharma*. This is a very superficial rendering of *swadharma* and *paradharma* at the level of caste, religion and gender.

As we realise the deeper spiritual meaning and challenge of existing categories coming from our culture and religions, we also need to create new categories of reality, living and realisation. In the case of the existing discourse of self and other, *swadharma* and *paradharma*, which has been used in antagonistic battles, we need to create a new category of *saha* (together) and *sahadharma* (*dharma* of togetherness). *Sahadharma* emerges from what Martin Heidegger calls 'midpoint of relationships' (cf Dallmayr 1995). This is suggested in the concluding lines of Rigveda where there is a call for *Samagahadhwa, Sambadadhwam*. For Daya Krishna, this path of togetherness is the call of the future and the God to come is a God of togetherness. In his words:

> *Rta* and *Satya* provide the cosmic foundation of the universe and may be apprehended by *tapasa* or disciplined "seeking" or *sadhana* and realised through them. The *Sukta* 10.191, the last *Sukta* of the *Rgveda*, suggests that this is not, and cannot be, something on the part of an individual alone, but is rather the 'collective' enterprise of all 'humankind' and names the 'god' of this *Sukta* 'Somjnanam' emphasising the 'Togetherness' of all 'Being' and spelling it out as *Sam Gachhadhwam, Sam Vadadyam, Sambho Manasi Jayatam, Deva Bhagam Jathapurve Sanjanatam Upasate* (2006: 8).

We need a new culture, political theology and spiritual ecology which nurtures spaces of togetherness. Language and common natural resources constitute our arenas of *sahadharma*, which include both conflict and cooperation, and it calls for a new politics and spirituality of *sadhana* and struggle, compassion and confrontation. In the field of languages, today there is a deathlike move towards monolingualism. But our mother languages, be it Tamil or Odia, nurture the soul, imagination and dignity. Today, as our mother languages are being marginalised all of us have a duty, a *dharma*, to nurture and protect this space of *sahadharma*. Here Hindus, Muslims and Christians and fellow speakers from all religious and non-religious backgrounds can all strive together. Similarly, as our living environment is being destroyed and our natural resources are becoming depleted, protecting and cultivating this is a matter of a new *sahadharma*. This act of protection, conservation and renewal of our living environment is related to protecting and recovering our commons which also calls for a new mode of being with self, other and the world (Taylor and Reid 2010). Recovering our commons in turn calls for a new politics, ethics and epistemology of conviviality and cross-fertilisation where we take pleasure in each other's presence rather than withdrawing ourselves, feeling threatened and threatening others (cf: Appadurai 2006).

Practice of and meditation with *sahadharma* and the recovery of the commons is linked to processes of regeneration of self, culture and society and it creates movements for bottom-up processes of self and cultural awakening and challenges top-down processes of one-sided modernisation and currently globalisation.

Cultural Regeneration and Planetary Realisations

The dynamics of top-down and unilateral globalisation puts cultures under threat and as a response, they are engaged in varieties of movements of cultural regeneration. One important aspect of this cultural regeneration is regeneration of knowledge – one's knowledge tradition (de Sousa Santos 2014). Modernity has led to the killing of different knowledge traditions in what de Sousa Santos calls epistemicide. But we see a slow movement of regeneration of knowledges of our soil and soul in varieties of indigenous movements. In the North-East of India, where tribal groups were converted to Christianity, there is a movement for indigenisation of Christianity into one's soil (Frynkenberg 2010). Similarly, religious and spiritual movements such as Donyi Polo in Arunachala Pradesh create new spaces of cultural regeneration from one's soil.

Ethnic groups are not only bounded socio-cultural groups, as the classic work of Frederik Barth (1998) tells us, the space of ethnicity is also a space of knowledge about local community, geography, and biodiversity. Ethnic politics, unfortunately, is confined mostly to socio-political issues of struggle for, and distribution of, power, but it now needs to be part of a new politics of preservation of knowledge such as biodiversity. In many parts of the world, ethnic knowledge and language are being used in education. For example, in Odisha in the Srujan program, knowledge of the local community on various important issues is being used, and as Mahendra Kumar Mishra (2015) tells us, this has made a difference to the lives of tribals. Similarly, in the Chiapas region of Mexico, both the Zapatista movement as well as initiatives such as University de Tierra (University of the Earth) use local language and knowledge in education. As part of cultural regeneration, now there is a movement for regeneration of local history and local museums. Local histories are sometimes used to fight against each other, settling scores with each other, but now we need a creative engagement with histories and ethnic life worlds where our languages, myths, values, concepts and preoccupations can become nomadic and bridges of translation, and not just remain fixed and fixated (Das 2007, 2011).

Such dynamics of cultural creativity and regeneration take us back to our roots, but also bring our roots to dance with routes in history and the contemporary world. Such cross-fertilisation of roots and routes create an alternative globalisation, what philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy calls mondialisation. For Nancy, while globalisation is 'uniformity produced by a global economic and technological logic … leading toward the opposite of an inhabitable world, to the un-world' (2007: 1), mondialisation involves authentic world-forming, what Nancy calls 'creation of the world'. Cultural creativity and regeneration lie at the heart of such alternative creations of the world.

Planetary realisation refers to such processes of realisation as the potentiality of self, culture and society. For Chitta Ranjan Das (2008), it also involves the generation of a people's power in place of the power of the state and to which we can also add the power of the market. We see glimpses of cultural regeneration and planetary realisations in movements such as Ekta Parishad, a Gandhian movement in contemporary India which is also transnational as it nurtures, and is supported by, many activists and volunteers from Europe and other parts of the world. Ekta Parishad brings together people from different ethnic groups in their struggle over land, water and forest, However, it is also a dreaming and fighting for a new world – an attempt to create the world as a family as suggested in this primordial aspiration from India, *vasaudheiva kutumbakam* (let the whole world become a family).

By the Way of Conclusion

Ethnicity is a multi-dimensional reality, challenge and possibility of self, culture, society, state and the world. It is not confined only to socio-political and socio-economic struggles for power and resources but involves multi-dimensional processes of self-awakening, cultural regeneration and recovery of local knowledges of global significance. It involves regeneration of self and social creativity and is part of a process of a cross-fertilisation of roots and routes which involves re-migration, rethinking, reconstitution and transformation of both roots and routes. It points to the need for going beyond an either/or logic of localisation and globalisation to the cultivation of planetary conversations across routes and borders. Ethnic mobilisation as related mobilisations of self, society, culture and the world is confronted with the challenge of creativity and planetary realisations where we realise that we are children of Mother Earth.

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Ananta Kumar Giri is a Professor at the Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai, India. He has taught and done research in many universities in India and abroad, including Aalborg University (Denmark), *Maison des sciences de l'homme*, Paris (France), the University of Kentucky (USA), University of Freiburg & Humboldt University (Germany), Jagiellonian University (Poland) and Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He has an abiding interest in social movements and cultural change, criticism, creativity and contemporary dialectics of transformation, theories of self, culture and society, and creative streams in education, philosophy and literature.

Dr. Giri has written and edited around two dozen books in Odia and English, including *Global Transformations: Postmodernity and Beyond* (1998); *Sameekhya o Purodrusti* (Criticism and Vision of the Future, 1999); Patha Prantara Nrutattwa (Anthropology of the Street Corner, 2000); *Conversations and Transformations: Toward a New Ethics of Self and Society* (2002); *Self-Development and Social Transformations? The Vision and Practice of Self-Study Mobilization of Swadhyaya* (2008); *Mochi o Darshanika* (The Cobbler and the Philosopher, 2009); *Sociology and Beyond: Windows and Horizons* (2012), *Knowledge and Human Liberation: Towards Planetary Realizations* (2013); *Philosophy and Anthropology: Border-Crossing and Transformations* (co-edited with John Clammer, 2013); and *New Horizons of Human Development* (editor, 2015).

Before Bosch's Haywain

I stand in the shoes of a master,
    just where he stood
    brush in hand, focused.
Connected through the work.
The vision's shadow all power and mystery,
    a mantra transporting the man
    across the ages to greet me,
    Soul to Soul in fellowship.

Though flesh may be as grass,
    Spirit's grace is ageless
    and Time, timeless

MARCUS BUSSEY,
SUNSHINE COAST, QLD

Earth and World – Roots and Routes

FRED DALLMAYR

As has often been noted, things are falling apart in our time. This applies to the rupture of family relations, the gulf between the rich and the poor, and the rift between nation states and between the global 'West' and the 'rest'. All these forms of division are pregnant with the possibility of violence and destruction. This prospect is intensified by another rift which, in a way, underpins all others: the rift in the experience of temporality, more precisely, in the experience of past and future. Seen as a mode of permanent revolution, (Western) modernity has unleashed a process of relentless innovation, while sidelining or even obliterating traditional ways of life. In response to this process, modernity has also triggered a longing for locally grounded stability and for the retrieval of past memories. Thus, in both the West and much of the 'rest', modern human life is caught in the pull of seemingly infinite strivings and the counter-pull of finite backgrounds and historically nurtured origins. In a concise manner, Indian anthropologist and social theorist Ananta Kumar Giri has captured the gist of this counterpoint in the formula 'roots and routes' which he develops in his opening essay to this special issue (Giri 2017).

As Giri points out, modernity involves a process of steady innovation, a searching for 'new paths of future development' (ibid: 5). At the same time, we witness also a process that T.K. Oommen (1997) has called 'ethnification' and Alain Touraine a 'strengthening of ethnic communities' (2007). What is significant and path-breaking in Giri's approach is his unwillingness to allow the counterpoint of orientations to decay into dualism or antithesis. This effort is evident already in his title 'Cross-Fertilising Roots and Routes'. Regarding the meaning of 'roots', Giri invokes the beautiful comments of Simone Weil (1952: 99) in her book *Need for Roots*:

> To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul … A human being has roots by virtue of his/her real, active and natural participation in the life of a community which preserves in living shape certain particular measures of the past and certain expectations for the future.

As he makes clear right away (entirely in Weil's spirit), rootedness has nothing in common with ethnocentrism, exclusionary patriotism, and (what Weil herself called) 'self-idolatry'. Unfortunately, he complains, too often ethnic and national patriotism reproduces today 'a logic of self-idolatry' (Giri, 2017).

To prevent rootedness from lapsing into self-enclosure, recourse must be taken to the counter pull of openness and innovation—a counter pull which, however, should not be equated with a leap into a vacuous no-man's land or abstract universalism. Rather, what openness means is the willingness to undergo a journey or learning experience, that is, to venture into exploratory 'routes'. Following anthropologist James Clifford, Giri describes 'routes' as translocal itineraries involving a 'series of encounters and translations' bypassing the lure of 'rootless histories and modernities' (Giri 2017: 7). Capturing the central aspect of counterpoint, he speaks sensibly of 'the cross-roads of roots and routes', a cross-roads bringing into view 'new modes of engagement and understanding' or, in Enrique Dussel's words, a 'transmodernity' pregnant with 'unsuspected cultural richness' (2017: 226-227). As Giri recognises, the itineraries demanded in our time are difficult, challenging and full of risks because violent derailments are nearly overwhelming. Drawing in part on Valentine Daniels's book *Charred Lullabies* (1996), subtitled *Chapters in an Anthropology of Violence*, he speaks of 'the difficult journey of non-violent resistance and transformation in a world where violence presents itself as the tempting easy option for both the State as well as non-state actors' (Giri 2017).

The danger of violence – of tensional relations derailing into violent ruptures – is present everywhere in the world today: from tribal conflicts in Africa to Sunni-Shia rifts in the Muslim world, to hostilities between populations in Western and Eastern Ukraine. Giri (2017) refers to the dismal conditions in Assam, especially in Bodoland, where 'ethnic groups are at each other's throat'. In fact, beyond Assam, the whole North-East of India (he says) has become a 'cauldron of ethnic violence and annihilation and the State is not the only agent of killing there'. The solution is not the forced imposition of unity and homogeneity by the State on heterogeneous groups or populations. On the contrary: homogenising peace initiatives framed by the State to integrate differences risk precisely to 'reinstate the hegemonic structure' which is breeding the problem.

Hence, the importance of 'cross-roads', of attempts at 'cross-fertilising' roots and routes. In Giri's words: 'The widespread experience of violence highlights the need "to create a culture, space and politics of dignity and respect – one of hospitality" ' (Giri 2017: 8). This need must be learned by both State and non-state actors because both can be, and have been, agents of 'terror': 'So far nation-states and ethnical groups are used to a politics of taking hostage, and now they need to practice a politics and spirituality of hospitality' (ibid).

One of the most unusual and admirable qualities of Giri's writings is his ability to draw lessons and inspiration from both non-Western and Western texts or traditions and from the 'border-crossing' between philosophy and anthropology. Referring to phenomenologist J.N. Mohanty (2001), he notes that our life worlds (including ethnic life worlds) are 'not closed within themselves but are in communication with each other' (Giri 2017) – an aspect which can be illuminated by the notion of 'analogizing apperception' developed by Mohanty's mentor Edmund Husserl: 'The gap between the far and the near is closed by analogizing apperception of the far as if it were near … [Thus] the relativity of the lifeworld is to be overcome by making what is strange, foreign, unfamiliar gradually familiar' (cited in Mohanty 1997: 186). Another way of elucidating the bridging of the 'gap' (in recent Western philosophy) can be found in Jean-Luc Nancy's (2007) notion of 'mondialisation'. In opposition to the 'uniformity' produced by a globalising economic and technological logic, Nancy sees 'mondialisation' as an authentic process of world-formation respecting both cultural diversity and the 'cross-fertilisation' of differences.

As an aside, Giri in this context also refers briefly to Martin Heidegger's search for a 'midpoint of relationships' (cf: Dallmayr 1995). Actually, this search can be seen as a central feature of Heidegger's entire work. It certainly undergirds his discussion of the relation between 'earth' and 'world' – which can be seen as an analogue to the interplay between 'roots' and 'routes'. In Heidegger's preservation, the terms 'world' and 'earth' refer basically to the difference between openness and sheltering, between revealment and concealment, between the disclosure of future possibilities of life and the reticence of finite origins. As in Giri's case, what is important to note, however, is that difference is not equivalent to dualism or antithesis, but rather serves as a synonym for counterpoint or differential entwinement. In Heidegger's words, difference here establishes a counterpoint which is a kind of 'midpoint' between world and earth, but not in the sense of a stark antagonism. Hence, 'world' is not simply openness and 'earth' not simply closure; rather, there is mutual conditioning and interpenetration: 'World provides the clearing for the paths of the guiding directions of life'; but these directions rely on 'something not mastered,

concealed and sheltered.' Similarly, earth is not simply closed but 'opens itself up in and through self-sheltering' (Heidegger 1993: 176-177). It is in the interplay of earth and world that, for Heidegger, the pathways of human life – Giri's 'itineraries' – are to be found. A similar thought is also at work in his discussion of temporality and history – where past and future are not split asunder into the 'dead hand' of a mummified tradition, on the one hand, and radical futuristic 'projects', on the other, but remain linked in a differential entwinement following the logic of Heidegger, quoted at the opening of Giri's poser: *Herkunft aber bleibt stets Zukunft* 'But origin always meets us from the future'.

As helpful as these forays into Western philosophy may be, the most illuminating and inspiring insights in Giri's writings derive from Indian or South Asian spirituality. An important source – perhaps *the* key source – in this respect is the Bhagavad Gita with its emphasis on *dharma* seen as the proper, ethical path of human life. As he points out, an important distinction here is between *svadharma* (*dharma* or normative code of self) and *paradharma* (code of others). Literally construed, *svadharma* means a '*dharma* of one's being, the path of one's unfolding and the duty one seeks and needs to follow'. Thus, in India, *svadharma* would be a code for Hindus and *paradharma* a code for Muslims. This, however, would be a 'superficial rendering' because in their nature *dharmas* are also relational. To make this point clear, and to prevent merely antagonistic construal, Giri observes, 'we need to create a new category of *sahadharma* (*dharma* of togetherness)' (Giri 2017: 12). In fact, we need 'a new culture, political theology and spiritual ecology which nurtures spaces of togetherness' (ibid). In this space of *sahadharma*, all religious, cultural and ethnic groups would be able to travel and 'strive together'. This space is similar to what Betsy Taylor and Herbert Reid have called a new or 'recovered commons' which brings together self, other, and the world (2010). In contemporary India, Giri finds an adumbration of such a commons in a movement called Ekta Parishad which, uniting people from different backgrounds, is striving to create the world as a large family, in accordance with the classical Indian motto 'vasaudheva kutumbakam' (let the world become a family). This is certainly a teaching for all times, but especially and most urgently for our time.

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Epilogue

Then you stopped waiting.

beneath the inertia of distance

terminal burning of memory,

and your leaving.

the loneliness you longed for and grasped.

directionless thought like sleep

you now possess exclusively.

your eyes closed as hands

around time.

I love you less than I fear you —

or the winter you crossed beyond this

surrounding my body for indefinable time.

some distant waking voice

through trembling flesh

that night you walked beside me

through the paddocks of my family's farm

that you now leave forever altered

where the anaemic trees have turned from you —

each morning since numbered,

as if by breath you refused.

you are a rift between my breath

and the life that resumed.

a darkness I cannot hold

and a darkness that holds you.

Robbie Coburn,
Melbourne, VIC

First and Second Nature

PIET STRYDOM

I

The figure of thought Ananta Kumar Giri introduces in his poser, namely 'roots and routes', is thought-provoking. His interpretation of it is apparent from conceptual pairs such as 'tradition and modernity', 'home and world', 'near and far' and 'closed and open'. The dialectic these formulas capture allows him to offer a penetrating diagnosis of the currently fraught situation, particularly in parts of India, and to suggest ways of interpreting and ameliorating it. The key component of his proposal turns on a single vital idea expressed in a variety of ways: 'dynamic process', 'cross-fertilisation', 'border-crossing', 'bridging', 'translation' and 'communication'.

Formally, fault cannot be found with Giri's argument and much of the substance is convincing, but there is nonetheless something striking about his development of his figure of thought: the confinement of the argument to socio-cultural parameters and, hence, the corresponding lack of attention to nature. The rootedness of the socio-cultural world in nature and the consequences thereof are not contemplated. In response, therefore, I propose to introduce yet another figure which assumes the same meta-problematic but embeds it considerably deeper: first and second nature.

This conceptual pair invokes the relation between nature and the socio-cultural world which can no longer be ignored, given our appreciation today that the human form of life is part of nature. Awareness has to be maintained of our acute ecological consciousness, but even more important is that the evolutionary descent of anatomically modern humans, the natural roots of their form of life and their cognitively fluid species mind be considered. To compensate for any vestiges of sociologism, culturalism or idealism, I thus introduce a weak-naturalistic cognitive perspective to offer suggestions as to the relation in question. Since Giri (2017: 5) aims to improve our ability 'to understand … multiple and multi-dimensional processes of genesis, on-going dynamics and reconstitution', I simultaneously suggest strengthening social science's formal grasp of its object and of its methodology which could enhance its critical capacity and practical efficacy.

An elucidation of roots in the case of humans and their form of life is inadequate as long as it remains confined to ethnicity, community or the sociocultural world to the neglect of the natural historical processes which spawned them in the first instance. Humans and their characteristic mind are products of nature, as is also their unique form of life which itself presupposes the workings of both nature and the mind. After 5.6 million years, the process of hominisation 400,000 years ago gave rise to archaic *Homo sapiens* who were superseded by anatomically modern humans, *Homo sapiens sapiens,* with a brain size of 1200-1700cc. Between 60,000-30,000 years ago, however, the mind enabled by this neurological infrastructure was remarkably enhanced by the acquisition of a meta-level capacity.

Two aspects of human evolution are crucial for an adequate grasp of their roots and routes. One is the very core of the microbiological form of the human species, the other the form of the human mind.

First, having inherited the life-giving, oxygen-processing mechanism in our cells which is passed on to their offspring only by women, all the humans alive today are descendants of the formally identified, closest direct ancestor in the female line. However pronounced ethnic, communal and socio-cultural differences may be, it has thus been demonstrated that all of us have one and the same arch-mother, in biology known as 'Mitochondrial Eve'. This evolutionary fact reveals a much deeper dimension that sheds light on the roots of humans and their form of life which are in need of being made explicit and appropriated generally.

The second fact is equally important but has a bearing on the variety of routes taken by humans and, hence, the diverse forms of life they create. For long, the human brain had been accompanied by a mind consisting of a number of distinct, unconnected, cognitive domains (social, physical, biological, technical and incipient musical-linguistic), but the development of language and linguistic communication contributed to the emergence

of an overarching meta-level module which enabled a reflexive capacity. The outcome was *Homo sapiens sapiens*' cognitively fluid mind which is characterised by the flexible inter-relation of once sharply separated intelligences. Since this remarkable spurt, we humans are able to see virtually all connections, the whole context as it were, and increasingly to sense the transcendental or conceptual-logical structure that allows us to create a human world and repair whatever breaks down in it. On the basis of this enhancement, art, religion and deliberate technological innovation originally emerged some 40,000 years ago – what is called 'the cultural explosion'. Today, consequently, we are in principle able to appreciate the whole of diversity rather than short-sightedly fixing on the differences composing the diversity. Despite this significant capacity, however, contemporary humanity nevertheless seems unequal to the task of imagining the whole of diversity and of working toward realising a world fitting to it.

II

We humans belong to both nature and the socio-cultural world. An explanation for the conspicuous contradiction between the phylogenetic capacity and the socio-cultural incapacity of contemporary humanity has to be sought, therefore, in the relation between first and second nature. This weak-naturalistic proposal accepts that there is continuity between nature and the socio-cultural world, but simultaneously insists that the latter together with its conceptual-logical structure must be acknowledged in its own right. Ontological primacy is ascribed to nature, yet for everyday action and social science the socio-cultural dimension serves as the priority epistemological perspective.

To grasp first nature, one has to appreciate with Darwin that nature is not just a force but also a law. Not only does it lie behind the spontaneous springing forth of things, including humans, but it is also an inheritance by giving its offspring a general resemblance of itself, affording them a variety of opportunities while simultaneously imposing limitations and restrictions. Hominisation is thus complemented by different natural processes that generally shape and give form to the socio-cultural world. There are ecological as well as coordination processes – the former including group membership, alliance formation, cooperation, competition, rivalry, dominance, subordination and conflict, and the latter attending, comparing, relating, combining, ordering, interacting, evaluating and judging. As with our *Homo* ancestors and contemporary primates, these processes provide humans and their form of life with elementary social and practical forms which are categorially graspable – for primates pre-verbally and for humans linguistically. Humans therefore possess the means to extrapolate these elementary forms

by both inferring their conceptual-logical structure and constructing corresponding sociocultural forms which – in felicitous cases – become emancipated from and surpass nature. Concepts such as truth, justice and authenticity stand for the structure, while forms such as scientific practice, human rights and democratic practices and, finally, responsive and responsible selfhood practices are in the best case scenario free from the limitations and restrictions of nature.

Second nature refers to the socio-cultural world as a quasi-reality that arises from first nature, builds on it and potentially stretches beyond the limitations and restrictions given with its handed-down resemblance. The concept has a protracted, albeit submerged, history in Critical Theory where it pinpoints the inherently ambivalent and even contradictory nature of society and culture. This feature becomes more intelligible still with reference to the elementary social forms that ontologically and cognitively secure continuity between first and second nature. For example, group membership is a natural property shared by primates and different evolutionary representatives of the human species, but in the case of *Homo sapiens sapiens* in-group and inter-group cooperation is a socio-culturally learned achievement going beyond the basic form provided by natural mechanisms and intuitive experiential cognition. In reality, however, *Homo sapiens sapiens'* second nature, despite its characteristic form-giving conceptual-logical structure and openness to the cognitively fluid mind, is often marred and distorted by the intrusion and even dominance of natural mechanisms and intuitive cognition. Instead of arrangements justifiable in conceptual-logical terms, criticisable phenomena such as antagonistic particularisms, murderous identities, humiliating domination, injurious conflict and destructive war come to predominate together with their erosive and disintegrative consequences.

The crucial point is that it is precisely these ambivalent and contradictory forms that represent the proper object of a critical social science able and willing to make a practical contribution by simultaneously extrapolating the opportunities opened by first nature and neutralising the debilitating impediments it harbours. By unearthing, explaining and critiquing the retention in the socio-cultural world of certain drawbacks of appropriated elementary forms, and by disclosing worthwhile routes to explore beyond first nature, such a social science is well placed to help cultivate a general sense of the conceptual-logical structure of the socio-cultural world and the realisability under particular conditions of a justifiable selection of its potentials. In social life, such a sense of structural supports – e.g. ideas such as truth, justice and authenticity, to mention but a few – allows not just a slow process of recursive feedback on the elementary forms. Under crisis conditions, especially ones steeped in communication, it

could also exert a powerful incursive impact. Emancipation from unmodified or hardly modified natural forms retained in some reified version in personality structures, social institutions and cultural models – reified forms generating particularisms, domination, conflict and war – depends on and demands the transformative, counterfactual force of such intervention.

In sum, then, the creation and repair of an adequate human world, Giri's central concern, basically requires two things to which social science can contribute: a general recognition of contemporary humanity's common evolutionary roots, and actualisation of the cognitively fluid mind allowing both a diversity of routes and their productive interrelation.

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The Letter

I never sent the letter I wrote,
    poured my heart out to you.
The ink was weeping though my heart was dry.

Why did you leave so suddenly?
    Did I offend you?

MARCUS BUSSEY,
SUNSHINE COAST, QLD

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from How to Belong

After the exhibition:

Snapshot Photography and Migrant Women,
A Tasmanian Experience.

I
I am the official story
with a barely-mentioned subtext.
Pieces of my jig-saw self are scattered
across a fraught landscape:
mine, yours, theirs.
Lives driven by
politics, poverty, danger, death,
and, for a few, adventure –
across imagination's borders.

II
In my snapshot
a three-year-old girl in a tartan kilt
stands erect, hands on hips
against a backdrop of gum trees.
I am she
the white child
invited to populate
this British land short of people.*

III
How to make a home away from "home"?
How to be a newcomer,
an outsider
how to live your life
in a language not your own?
My mother's accent underlined
the difference
between being an Australian like my father
or not.
What to take,
what to re-place elsewhere?
Bone-handled knives
virginal in their wedding gift-box.
The door-knocker in the shape
of a bag-pipe player.
A claw-foot brooch.
Things that remind us
of who we think we are
in an unknown land
beyond promises,
with its upside-down seasons,
its blinding light
its untold story.

*As stated in the 1950s pamphlet
  from the Office of the Australian High Commission.

ANNE COLLINS

Cosmopoesis: Navigating the strangeness of planetary realisations

MARCUS BUSSEY

The world is becoming strange to itself! This strangeness is the result of 1, the surprise of becoming increasingly self-aware of our human embeddedness in the evolutionary unfolding of the Cosmos and 2, the terror that this new consciousness inspires in many today. Giri's reflections on roots and routes is an important step towards articulating the multiple and rhizomic nature of this strangeness. In the Hebrew story of Adam and Eve and their awakening, they are surprised to find themselves naked. That story points to a similar surprise and terror as Adam and Eve stepped out into a strange world of the 'natural'. To cope with this strangeness and surprise, human beings awoke to culture and so the Western story of the struggle between culture and nature was born.

Separation is a key element in that narrative. Today, however, our surprise and terror is born of the growing awareness of relation. Separation lies at the heart of our old story. It is comfortable and reassuring yet it comes at a heavy cost. Relationship, that sense of being connected to a greater whole, offers us new possibilities for re-enchanting and healing this world. Relational consciousness lies at the heart of Dussel's (2017) reading of the transmodern condition that Giri evokes. This condition of transmodernity is premised, Giri tells us, on 'a process of rebirth, [a] searching for new paths for future development' (Giri 2017:5). Just as Adam and Eve are born into culture, and thus become human, we are experiencing a rebirth into the relational awareness that preceded that awakening. And what do we become? What possible futures lie before us? The array of ethnic, nationalist, and transnationalist violences afflicting the world community today are all attempts to answer these questions. The point is that we are on the cusp of a new human paradigm, or what Thomas Berry (1990) would call a 'new story'.

Taking inspiration from the observation of physicist Michio Kaku that we live in a participatory universe and that 'the universe does have a point: *to produce sentient creatures like us who can observe it so that it exists*' (2005: 351), the approach I take to Giri's (2017) poser is to suggest the concept of cosmopoesis, which is a mimetic extrapolation of Maturana and Varela's (1980) notion of autopoesis. Cosmopoesis refers to the dialogical, reflexive nature, of the unfolding of the cosmos. In this reading, the Cosmos knows itself through its creations. This is a strange idea but it is rich in possibilities. The cosmos is our home, and ultimately the *root of all our roots* and the *setting for all our routes*. The multitude find voice in this cosmic setting and the self-generation – *Cosmopoesis* – that unfolds is a human tale of becoming and awakening in which temporality itself is shaped according to sets of narrative assumptions (Dator 2017). My reflection describes how this evolutionary narrative has been framed by four thinkers, Eric Chaisson, Ray Kurzweil, Henryk Skolimowski and Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar. This is a deliberately macro approach in which the many reside in the one. Evolutionary narratives enable us to think more effectively about the role of the local in the grand processes of the universe.

Macro Perspectives on Strangeness

Modernist ethnic and nationalist self-interest seek to universalise the local; transmodernist interests seek translocal dialogical spaces from which this new, or neo-human paradigm can emerge. Casting this process, as Giri and Dussel do, within the narrative structure of rebirth and anchoring it within the discourse of relational consciousness opens this reflection to a series of co-creative developments that are occurring simultaneously in various fields under the banner of evolutionary models. Strangeness comes when systems face discontinuity. A transformed space emerges when *relational regimes* change. The result is a surprise of some kind. For instance, in the cosmology of Eric Chaisson (2006) (Fig. 1) we find a map of evolution that moves from the physical to the cultural. Each shift in his evolutionary narrative comes as a surprise. The discontinuity, however, is obscured by the elegance of the system he proposes. For Chaisson, each shift involves a new level of complexity preceded by a tipping point that inaugurates a new set of relationships in the ordering and utilisation of energy. His macro-evolutionary narrative captures much that is understood about the world today. Yet it does not really help us to understand how or why each step occurred.
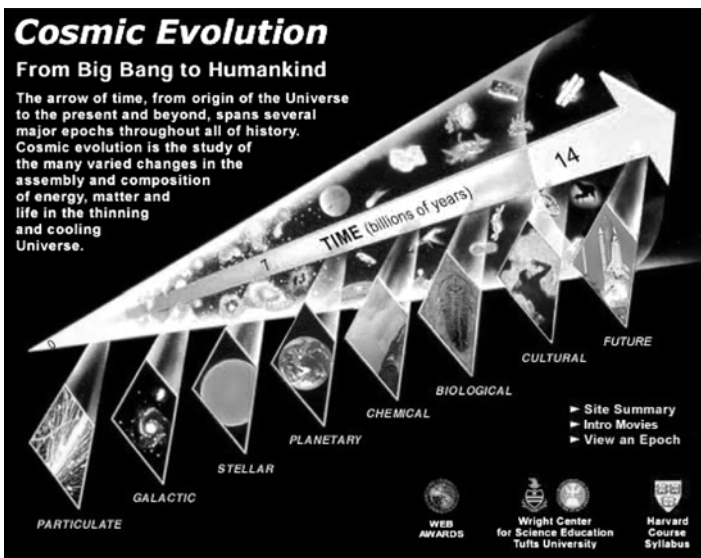
Fig. 1: Chaisson's Cosmic Evolution

Techno philosopher, Artificial Intelligence guru and inventor Ray Kurzweil (2006) (Fig. 2) takes technology as his benchmark for evolution and posits a series of epochs with some similarities to Chaisson's work. He sees systems generating tipping points in which new levels of complexity trigger shifts in consciousness. His focus on technology helps us understand how complexity around capacity leads to these tipping points, but he leaves the question of the inner workings of consciousness untouched. He offers us insights into 'cultures of technology' to understand and anticipate future trajectories. We can see that strangeness here correlates with novel sets of relationship within technological systems. This strangeness spawns creativity and the capacity to think oxymoronically as, for example, in Kurzweil's best seller *The Age of Spiritual Machines.* To understand the conditions around which transformation occurs, Kurzweil talks about the importance of timing. For him, anticipatory consciousness – a future capability – is both empirically and intuitionally informed and timing is
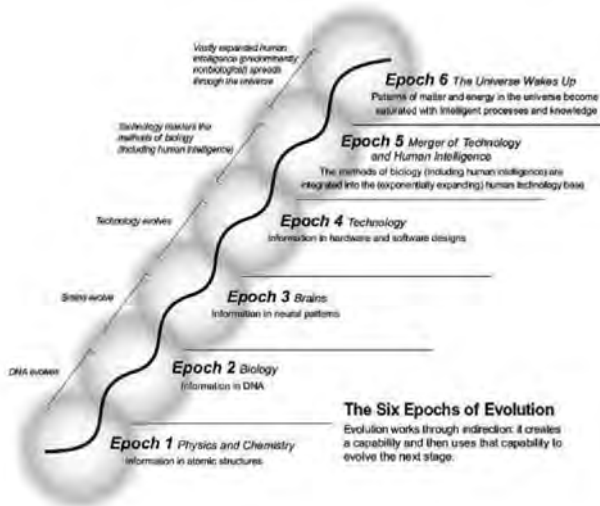
Fig. 2: Kurzweil's Six Epochs

These stages are useful in understanding how the narratives of becoming are being expressed in the domains of cosmology and technology. Strangeness comes as new levels of complexity and reflexivity emerge in the process of Cosmopoesis. The eco-philosopher Henryk Skolimowski (2010: 4-10) however simplifies this narrative into four steps (Fig. 3). In so doing, Skolimowski offers a bridge between Western science and Eastern, particularly Vedic, understandings of reality. Taking Light as his starting point in the Big Bang, he moves through various plays on 'synthesis' in which consciousness is ordered around 1. the synthesis of light (photo-synthesis) in the creation and maintenance of life, 2. The synthesis of words (logo-synthesis) in the creation and maintenance of consciousness, and 3. The synthesis of consciousness as we make our way towards the divinity (theo-synthesis) from which we came. This is a process of 'becoming conscious' in which the co-creativity of the cosmos-human drama is enacted cosmopoetically. For Skolimowski, self-realisation is the driver behind transformation: 'Evolution', he notes, 'made various experiments in order to see which were the best ways leading to more intensive life, more versatile life, to the life of increased self-realisation' (ibid: 6).
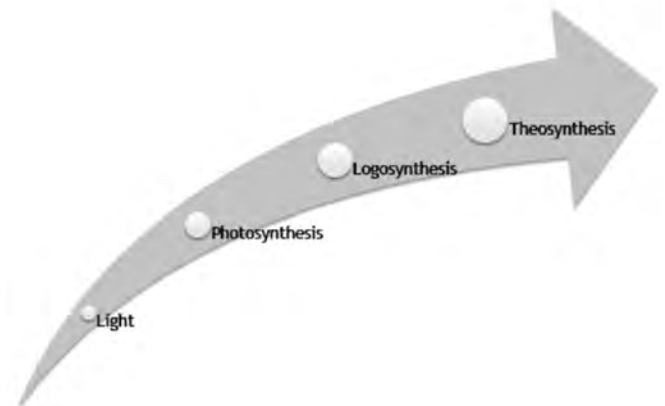
Fig. 3: Skolimowski's Model

To move from this insight, in which consciousness as a self-organising principle of inflected complexity is the driver of transformation, to our final example of evolutionary narrative is a small step. Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar (2006) articulates a Tantric evolutionary approach based on the ancient 'Brahma Chakra' cycle (Fig. 4). For Sarkar the individual and the collective are engaged in a dance of self-realisation. This involves two stages. The first stage, called *saincara* in Sanskrit, witnesses consciousness exploding into form via the material universe. The second stage, called *pratisaincara*, involves the materiality of the physical world becoming increasingly self-aware. Thus we have the physical non-living world creating the context out of which life emerges. Life, then, becomes more complex and ultimately cultural and self-aware in the sense that Skolimowski understands it.
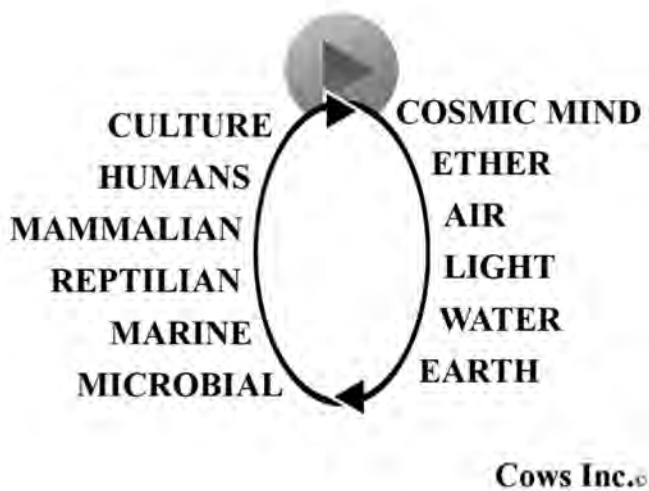
Fig. 4: Sarkar's Brahma Chakra

Ultimately, for Sarkar, this is a co-creative process in which personal self-realisation is dependent on the individual's relationship to the whole (1982). At the social level, self-realisation becomes co-realisation as the individual comes to understand their relationship with both their local and cosmic communities as the basis of their becoming. This awareness demands of them a practice of spiritual pragmatism and critical spirituality (Bussey 2000) in which self and other co-create the quality relationships necessary for long term co-realisations. For both Sarkar and Skolimowski, the transition from stage to stage is built into the ontological nature of their models which are never entirely physical. For both of them, form and consciousness co-evolve. The driver is a longing to know oneself. It is expressed in Sarkar's words as a 'longing for the Great' – the Cosmopoesis of becoming is driven by a spiritual yearning not simply by energy relationships (see Bussey 2016).

Of course, self-awareness is clearly present in both Chaisson's and Kurzweil's work, but it is cultural and cognitive in nature. Absent also from their models is any notion that rebirth might be immanent. Theirs are purely linear models. What is interesting, however, is that Skolimowski's model is implicitly cyclical and Sarkar's model explicitly cyclical rather than linear. The West prefers the linear even when faced with the non-linearity of post-normal science (Ravetz 2011). For both Skolimowski and Sarkar the kind of human being involved in this journey is a physically, socially and spiritually driven entity with new levels of humanity being expressed through increasingly relational consciousness. It is possible within such models to posit rebirth and a new Renaissance in consciousness. For Chaisson, increasing levels of complexity in energy regimes are the driver, whilst Kurzweil is more specific, identifying capability, ultimately expressed via technology, as the key evolutionary principle. Each thinker in these examples

frames evolution according to their epistemological and cultural lens. Each gives us insights into the evolutionary processes Giri is pointing to when he discusses the nature of roots and routes.

Roots and Routes

How to grapple with these two interwoven terms, therefore, depends on where one places oneself in relation to the macro-perspectives offered above. There is not much room in the models of Chaisson and Kurzweil for exploring the nuances that Giri proposes around rebirth, hospitality, dharma and 'a new politics and spirituality of *sadhana* and struggle, compassion and confrontation'. The world historian David Christian (2004), who draws heavily on Chaisson, proposes 'collective learning' as the vehicle by which we come to understand ourselves. Collective learning creates the cultural space for the struggles that Giri is sensitive to. However, it does not carry the energy of a concept such as *dharma*. Dharma pertains, as Giri notes, to one's unique mode of expression (Mukherjee 2014: 72).

This expression is both universal – the dharma or essence of human beings is to become ever more, hence all are filled with an inner calling to express – and also specific, the dharma of a particular human being or group is to realise this universal urge *in the local*. Such consciousness of one's dharma is essential, yet it is not given by a theology, or ideology or even a culture to determine what one's dharma is. *Dharmic awareness* arises out of interaction with one's world and also out of one's inner capacity to reflect and meditate on the nature of *Being*. This is a meditative *sadhana* of co-realisation as Giri acknowledges. Sadhana can simply mean 'meditation' but it really refers to the effort one makes in the world to achieve a sense of unity, balance and excellence. Beyond this effort, we find the neo-humanity under discussion in this symposium. This neo-humanity, explorations of new forms of being human, calls for an awareness of our *cosmic connection*. At the Cosmic level our roots are one and indivisible – as Carl Sagan (2000) notes, we are all recycled star dust. Interestingly, for Skolimowski we are beings of light and for Sarkar we are beings of Cosmic consciousness. Each thinker in their own way points to this underlying unity behind the diversity. But this does not help us in a world where roots are geopolitically and ethnically defined. In such a world, difference is more important than sameness. Sameness, in such a world, is to be read as an attempt to gloss and numb the pain of separation.

The strangeness that comes out of a recognition of Cosmic sameness, and the Cosmopoesis this implies, is too much for many. It challenges fundamental identity parameters. It sponsors the array of ethnic and specist

fundamentalisms tearing at the world today. So challenge them we must. The local identification of self with a language, a culture, an ethnic group allows us to situate ourselves in a way we can manage. It is the comfort of the Mother. Yet, as we grow to adulthood we need to thank our mothers and move on to wider horizons than the lap of the local. This moving on is filled with risk and suspense. It is not a denial of who we are at the local, it is an evolution to ever broader identity horizons which involve, as Giri notes, a search for 'new categories of reality, living and realisation'. In this process the Cosmic rediscovers the local in all its richness and uniqueness.

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Fig. 2: Dawson, R. (n.d.) 'The best visuals to explain the Singularity to senior executives' http://rossdawsonblog.com/weblog/archives/2009/08/finding_good_im.html (accessed 20/04/2017.

Figure 3: Bussey, M. 2017

Figure 4: Bussey, M. 2017

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To Return From the Lost

To fly under the radar
become so visible, so always noticed
you are not truly seen.

To confound the pundits
say one thing and do another,
personify contradiction.

To approach truth
turn your judging eye inwards,
refuse to absolve yourself.

To bury the hatchet
imagine it in the softness of your skin,
in your back, in your skull.

To skin a cat
find another way to skin a cat,
peer at each of nine lives.

To return from the lost
look deeply into your children's eyes,
see who they see, remember yourself.

DAVID ADÈS,
SYDNEY, NSW

Understanding 'Roots and Routes' from a Post-Kantian Tradition of Critique

IVAN MARQUEZ

Introduction

In his poser, 'Cross-Fertilising Roots and Routes: Ethnicity, Socio-Cultural Regeneration and Planetary Realisations,' Ananta Kumar Giri (2017) employs the notions of roots and routes to show possibilities to address problems of politics, culture, and society stemming from nationalist and ethnic self-assertion within a globalised and transmodern world. Specifically, he is interested in avoiding the common pitfalls of violence and absolutism in the processes of political, social and cultural mobilisation predicated upon ideas of ethnicity and nation.

Giri appeals to the notion of roots and routes partly in an attempt to complicate the facile holistic and absolutist conceptions of culture and ethnicity that tend to accompany resistance movements of groups or communities.

At face value, roots and routes appear to be opposite things. On the one hand, the notion of roots suggests dwelling in a particular space and in a particular time, each respectively defined with reference to a specific place and to a specific line of historicity. On the other hand, the notion of routes suggests nomadic movement, transience, and lack of roots, or at least a moving away from roots. Furthermore, while the notion of roots seems to insinuate a grounding in being and belonging, the notion of routes seems to insinuate becoming, communication, and connectivity between ways of being.

One of Giri's main philosophical aims in this essay is to show – *pace* common sense – how roots and routes are interrelated, specifically, 'that there are routes in all our roots'. But being with routes does not necessarily produce rootless histories and modernities and, on this basis, he aims to show furthermore how we can understand 'self, ethnicity and nation at the cross-roads of roots and routes' (Giri 2017).

My goals in this response to Giri's poser are to illustrate how we can understand his notions of roots and routes from a post-Kantian tradition of critique and, while doing this, to further explain them.

Roots and Routes and the Post-Kantian Tradition of Critique

Immanuel Kant's Copernican revolution in philosophy marked the beginning of a new awareness about the relationship between form and content in human understanding. According to Kant, the world did not reveal itself to humans as a given but instead was shaped by the concepts that humans used to give form to the content of their experience. Consequently, the world as we know it is constituted by an act of co-creation between subject and object.

Since Kant's Copernican revolution, we have lived in a post-Kantian era where philosophy's task has shifted from a search for knowledge of absolute, universal Truth based of fixed ideas and sensory givens to a critical task of analysing how we come to know what we know and uncovering the value-laden concepts and regulative ideas behind our pictures of the world and our self-understandings.

The last two hundred years have seen multiple post-Kantian efforts at critique of the world we have created. For instance, Ludwig Feuerbach showed how the Christian notion of God could be seen as a projection of human hopes, wants, fears, and values. Karl Marx showed how capitalism produces and reproduces a world according to its image and that capitalist ideology is a validating reflection of that world. Friedrich Nietzsche showed how knowledge could be seen as a historical human creation advancing particular wilful forces with the help of certain concepts that are nothing but value-carrying metaphors and tropes constituted within a differential binary logic, his more specific critical efforts amounting to a genealogical critique of Socratic, Christian and Modern bourgeois values. Later, Ludwig Wittgenstein showed how language could be seen as a system of conventions – a language game – that creates a framework for human interaction embedded in a form of life. And, finally, Michael Foucault took the critique one step further by showing how knowledge not only is value-laden but corresponds to the working of agonistic networks of power.

Still, the post-Kantian critiques have tended to be Eurocentric in character, telling one univocal narrative about the history of knowledge and the history of being. It is not until the current decolonial moment that Europe has been provincialised, European modernity has been linked to conquest, and Western philosophy has been historicised from a plurality of points of origin. This decolonial moment has brought with it the proliferation of histories, a reaffirmation of local and non-hegemonic histories, and the hybridisation and syncretism of human practices. The local asserts itself against the global, the particular against the universal, and the contingent against the absolute. Notwithstanding, as Giri seems to suggest, in our current world, the local, particular, and contingent tends to assert itself *against* other locales, particulars, and contingencies according to an agonistics that is as totalising, essentialist, and intransigent as the global, universal, and absolute have been.

It is my contention that here is where Giri's interrelated notions of roots and routes come into play as post-Kantian regulative ideas, creating the possibility to understand notions of self, ethnicity, and nation in non-totalising and non-essentialist terms. For Giri, roots and routes are interrelated because roots are always made of multiple strands and these strands connect to routes leading to other roots and so on, ultimately leading to a planetary interconnecting, interrelating, and intercommunicating web. This way to conceive of roots and routes brings to mind Deleuze and Guattari's notions of rhizome and assemblage.

Several things seem to follow from Giri's way of looking at things. First, traditions are not solid and monolithic but instead they are woven together by multiple strands. Second, traditionalism and cosmopolitanism are interdependent. Third, hybridity and syncretism are the norm instead of the exception. Fourth, identity, be it individual or collective, is constituted within a process of constant transaction with the individual or collective Other. Fifth, place and motion are not mutually exclusive as a location can be 'an itinerary rather than a bounded site'. Sixth, roots are not the sole house of being and routes are not the sole path of becoming as one can also be *en route* and become *in situ*.

Roots and Routes in Space-Time: The spatiality of time, the temporality of space, and the dynamics of being-becoming

I think that it is profitable to think of routes and routes as post-Kantian regulative ideas, especially, as transcendental notions that help us organise experience, memory, and identity in space-time. In particular, I suggest that we see them as intentional objects which are real but not physically real, that is, not real like a plant root is real or like a road is real.

Time can be thought of as absolute or relative, as circular/cyclical or linear, and as continuous or progressive. And time is defined relative to change in a defined space. This opens the door to the spatiality of time and to the temporality of space. Out of this comes the conception of a multiplicity of space-time places and, furthermore, of pluriverses and of a multiverse.

Within this schema, roots and routes can be seen as features of these space-time places which can be specified in relation to the spatiality of time and the temporality of space in possible worlds that sometimes interact and sometimes remain separate, thus, allowing us to move away from the simplistic notion of one universe, one time, one space, one history, one globalisation, one mundialisation towards a notion of multiverses, many time-space places, many histories, many globalisations, and many mundialisations. Also, to make it bear on the issue at hand, it allows us to describe self, ethnicity, and nation at the intersection of a multiplicity of these space-time places within these possible worlds.

More specifically, based on this, roots can be primarily related to the spatiality of time and routes can be primarily related to the temporality of space, although strictly speaking both notions are mutually implicated as picking out two aspects of the dynamics of being-becoming at the intentional level. I will briefly illustrate one way to understand this.

Roots and Routes as Relative-Relational Multidimensional Intentional Positions of Being and Becoming, Immanence and Transcendence

According to one common metanarrative, European Modernity is a form of humanism which historicised the Christian notion of transcendence and eschatology by means of an absolutist but progressive notion of linear-historical time, ultimately in the form of a Universal History. The narrative of Universal History imposed a normative account of the historical development of Humankind with one valid root and one valid route of development. From a single space-time and through a single process of becoming, humanity actualises in earthly existence its universal potential essence, achieving its pre-destined state of fullness of being, signalling the End of History.

Giri's understanding of roots and routes presents us with a different scenario. There are multiple roots and multiple routes, multiple space-time places, and an unbounded human potentiality to be actualised by diverse dynamic processes of being-becoming. Sometimes individuals or collectivities will look backwards and sometimes they will look forwards in space and in time to find themselves anew. Sometimes they will walk forwards and sometimes they will walk backwards. Sometimes they will reach outwards and sometimes they will delve inwards. And the planes of immanence and transcendence, as well as the states of being and becoming, will be defined

not in absolute and universal terms but relative to their particular movements in these four dimensions and in the space-time places that they help define within a diversity of possible worlds they inhabit, oftentimes, simultaneously. What look like roots from one intentional position will look like routes from another intentional position and vice versa.

Conclusion

A peaceful globalised and transmodern world will require embracing Giri's conceptions of self, ethnicity, and nation at the intersection of a multiplicity of space-time places within a multiplicity of possible worlds. A different world is indeed possible. However, political, social, economic and cultural movements that resist these philosophical insights will continue to display totalitarian, absolutist, and essentialist tendencies and will have a propensity towards fundamentalism, sectarianism, and violence. Hence, one ignores these insights at one's own peril.

One good measure of the value of a philosophical notion is its richness and fecundity, that is, its power to illuminate many things in interesting ways and to suggest and clarify possibilities previously unseen or only seen through a glass darkly. Given these criteria of value, I believe that the notions of roots and routes as Giri understands them are philosophically valuable and have much potential as regulative ideas. I hope that my kaleidoscopic reflections on Giri's poser has helped to further elucidate what these two notions could mean and how they could be used to address the challenges of our times and to hold the present in thought.

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We need a new culture, political theology and spiritual ecology which nurtures spaces of togetherness.

Ananta Kumar Giri

Scarcity

Mobile phones are mining us to death,
I am told. Water is slipping
into spaces we cannot follow,
while a fog we cannot breathe
has settled overhead.

There's a hole in the sky
and we've settled for not looking up.
Perhaps that's why we're sending drones
instead of bodies, droids instead of animals,
to test what we have not touched.

There's a comical frame to our circus,
mechanical gazelles frolic while their hearts
beat with gutted earth. We'll drink to the cost
one day, beneath the ground. I can't say
that I condemn the process.

Settling debts with other shores, we forget
the elements of debate. Carbon weighing
on factory floors, the lungs of cars,
and the hours off our lives. We'll count the cost
one way or another, no matter the rebates.

An abundance of conversation amongst
a scarcity of action. We're better off looking
for new planets. Mars rovers scout out real estate,
no corner safe from all this progress.
We've buried ourselves indoors.

SIOBHAN HODGE,
PERTH, WA

Conversations Across Borders: Root/routes to human perfectibility

MEERA CHAKRAVORTY

Giri in his poser to 'roots and routes' (2017) makes it a point to emphasise the necessity 'to add the category of soul – self, social as well as cultural – as well as creativity'. Critical to this context of rootedness, I have tried to illustrate how the poets and thinkers of non-textual traditions expressed the journey of soul metaphorically and as a way of life.

The poet-wayfarers of non-English sources like the oral traditions of Vachana literature of Karnataka, the Sufi tradition of mystic poetry and similar other sources from the Baul tradition of Bengal all have their utopias. They have demonstrated time and again that their views did spur major demands for change. Furthermore, these traditions have not yet been those alternatives which have been absorbed by globalising techno-political systems. In fact, it can be argued that failure to respond to such strong, perplexing exemplars in itself should be considered as a sign of a culture in retreat. Having considerable knowledge about this tradition, Rabindranath Tagore, in this context, remarks:

> At last I came to discover that in my conduct I was not strictly loyal to my religion, but only to the religious institution. This latter represented an artificial average, with its standard of truth at its static minimum, jealous of any vital growth that exceed its limits … After a long struggle with the feeling that I was using a mask to hide the living face of truth, I gave up my connection with our church (1931: 68).

The followers of oral traditions, such as the Vachana, the Baul and Sufis, are not only the creators of utopias but also believe that they are duty bound to reject the idiosyncrasy and worldliness of those who build and stick to mundane institutions and, by doing so, speak for the central concerns and assumptions of the nation. The mystics in all these streams hold this in common: that there is an ideal world of peace and joy unlike the mundane one; that neither priests, nor prophets, nor anyone, including the rituals of any organised religion will help an individual to find that ideal state except via his/her own journey. Their core belief is that this effort at resistance has the power to challenge hegemony.

Though it may sound bizarre, these poet-wayfarers of oral traditions think that in a culture saturated by false equivalents, short cuts to knowledge and pseudo-relationships, the truth of a utopian proposal has to derive from the proposal's overt nature, its 'factuality'. Their ideas regarding human perfectibility lie in the restlessness which is, rather, spiritual/mystical in the sense that it wants to infuse the temporal with the eternal, represented symbolically as the avowal of an immaterial presence in a material life. In the Rig Veda, the poet asks eagerly to the heavenly lover with whom s/he falls in love, 'What happened to our old love? Let's fulfil our love that sprouted in the yesteryear' (Anon 2005, 7, 88: 85). The mystic's journey takes her/him from the world of complex materiality to the arena of the transcendental which grows increasingly impenetrable and elusive. While of course this is also a kind of self-mystification in which the seeker chooses to keep at bay the mundane world which refuses to acknowledge transcendence.

Poetry in this tradition is lucid, broad in scope, and subtle in interpretive detail, capturing in words with a remarkable mastery of culture that which goes beyond national identity. How an expression of the Gayatri mantra, in this context, may explain this statement better is reflected by Tagore, when he says how he was overwhelmed by the meaning of this verse: 'Let me contemplate the adorable splendour of Him / who created the earth, the air and the starry spheres, / and sends the power of comprehension/ with our minds' (1931: 91-93). Tagore explains further: 'This produced a sense of serene exaltation in me, the daily meditation upon the infinite being which unites in one stream of creation my mind and the outer world' (ibid). This appears to be an experience which different people with different roots, cutting across the boundary of culture or nationality, can share.

The poets of this subtle tradition inevitably depict a utopian 'Promised Land', reminding people that it is their fate to be on the far side, looking out on this 'root of the land' till they are finally able to inhabit it. This promised land is not necessarily the Earth. The poet-wayfarers of the oral tradition have yet another meaning for this term. Such a promised land is rooted in a transcendental, mystic

space. For this reason, I decided to call my reflection 'Conversations Across Borders' as a counterpoint to Giri's 'Cross-Fertilising Roots and Routes'. Contrary to popular conceptions of these poets as simple devotees begging for their living, scholarship has long recognised that their poetry/songs are in fact a sprawling, disorderly anthology spanning many centuries incorporating views of utopian worlds. In an interesting conversation, a poet from the Indian oral tradition called Kabir, a weaver by profession, asks, 'I am waiting for the ferry/ but where do I go/ is there a heaven at all/ alas, where will I go/ my root is here in you, O beloved/ why do I then take a trip' (pers. trans.).

The map of the traditional territory that most religions recall is the one proposed by ecclesiastical writers, who are responsible for a code of perfection emphasising purity and elaborate ritual distinctions. The codes in this map firmly demarcate the specific borders of the land that an ideal human being is supposed to stay within. The separation of traditional land from the utopian territory by a body of codes goes well with the ritual pre-occupation with purity and concomitant creation of barriers between the sacred and the profane. That is why Kabir says: 'I left all the rituals, holy bath and ringing bells … one who is kind-hearted will be blessed by God' (pers. trans.). The notion of barriers also draws on cosmological ideas to depict how the world comes into being by the drawing of a dividing line between the terrestrial and non-terrestrial. This has a mystical character that enhances its appeal that does not inevitably correspond to fixed topographical features.

Giri's suggestion of the soul's evolutionary path is important here. Giri's poser opens with a quote from Duara (2015: 277) stating that the maritime network, despite its own limitations, 'enabled a cultural flow [that was] nothing short of world-transforming' and helps us 'explore new possibilities'. Quite interestingly, Giri emphasises how ethnicity challenges us to understand identity construction as a dynamic process. He also makes the further pointer, that besides the categories of nation, ethnicity etc. 'we need to add the category of soul-self … to bring the dynamics of generativity and regeneration'. Giri concludes that roots/routes therefore address a 'need of the human soul' (2017: 7).

Bussey's observations on Cosmopoesis (2017) make me think he is a student like me of the Upanishads, that ancient body of writing which enriches our understanding of Cosmos as our root. Both Giri and Bussey are inclined to accept the surprises of 'cosmo-evolutionary maps'. This idea may appear strange since it is different and takes time to register in our minds. However, for argument's sake, one may ask, is it not possible to reflect on relational consciousness only after you reflect on the structure of consciousness which is yet to be explored (Chakravorty

2007)? I would, on the other hand, suggest the idea of 'generative consciousness' to be the journey itself; as it is a continuous journey while gathering fruits on the way. The rewards of following such a route are summed up in the Sanskrit verse: *Charanvai madhu vindati, charaiveti, charaiveti* (keep on the journey, the journey brings fruits). Thus one may find transformation in the journey itself. The term 'fruit' is symbolic here. The structure of consciousness discussed in the Upanishads remains a mystery.

In this context, we may note how the discussion on the relationship between beauty and morality and the sublime in Kant's Critique of Judgment (1987: Section 59) is provocative enough to encourage a whole generation of Romantics to assume a 'beautiful soul'. Critics such as Guyer (1982), however, are of the opinion that Kant really did not mean this. Instead, what he meant was that the 'symbol' of 'beautiful soul' does suggest some unknown (*unbekannte*) connection between the theoretical and the practical spheres of life and that such connection is implicit in the common language. For Kant, there is a realm that is unbounded, but such a realm is also inaccessible to our cognitive power: the realm of the supersensible. In this realm we may not find a territory in which to set up a domain of theoretical cognition, whether for the concepts of understanding or for those of reason (ibid: Section 14), but perhaps poets and mystics may find such a place. The contrast between the world *described* by theoretical reflection and the world *experienced* through the senses generates the essentially split-world embodied in Kant's distinction between noumenon and phenomenon. However, the route to the supersensible becomes experientially possible when the mystic poets take to the alternate mode of spiritual being that frustrates the rational where his/her experience stands revealed to itself, confronted by the absolute otherness of the world. The mystic's journey to the state of the supersensible may be comparable to the position of Ernst Cassirer (1953) who wants to adapt the symbol (in relation to the otherworldly journey) to an epistemology which differs from Kant's standpoint.

In *Language and Myth*, Cassirer mentions that symbols must be understood not in the sense of mere figures, which refer to some given reality by means of suggestion and allegorical renderings, but in the sense of forces, each of which produces and posits a world of its own (Simpson, 2009). Cassirer is interested in clarifying the sense of an unknown but substantial connection that accompanies the symbol. He wants to put some empirical flesh on Kant's subjectivism, transforming Kant's analytical symbol into a tool of understanding. Humanity for Cassirer can realise itself only in the world, a world that is 'pure expression of the human spirit' (ibid), expressing itself in symbolic form. This explains the reference to the unbounded

realm, described above. The space which is unbounded represents symbolically the emancipation, which can be understood both as route and root. Which is why, the Vachana poet says, ' … you are the form of boundless space … ' (pers. trans.).

So, when the practice is a journey, many versions of story catering to the roots of different sub-groups in communities are found. Consequently, many versions of story-telling lead to many narratives of time past and time present. The world of story-telling therefore, is itself a journey regardless of the context in which it is told and these roots, as Giri mentions, do 'not necessarily produce rootless histories' (2017: 7). Whether it is Aesop's fables or stories from the Panchatantra or the Jataka or any other, the routes of these stories have taken many paths from literary heights to the lives of common people. While it may be possible to discern a map of political ontology through these stories which motivated a particular journey, reflecting simultaneously on the ethical, cultural aspects, story-telling itself has become a space for human action.

With piercing boldness the symbol conveys the thought that one must become instantly mindful of the presence of an inquisitive human spirit. This human spirit is the one thing with many subsets whose variance is not absolute but apparent. Ultimately there is a 'totality' holding together the natural and the cultural (see Simpson 2009; see also Strydom 2017). This interconnectedness describes the mystic's rootedness with the spirit or self which ensures that all his/her life, s/he would confess discipleship to the process of exploring self-other-whole through life's journey. The bouncy vitality of the mystic's songs thus brings a sense of interconnected wonder for everything that inspires life and its cosmic journey.

Thus Allamaprabhu's Vachana says:

> Look here / the legs are two wheels / the body is wagon / full of things, / five men drive the wagon / and one is not / like another. / Unless you ride it / in full knowledge of its ways / the axle will break / O lord of caves (pers. trans.).

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Driving Home On the Motorway

Driving home on the motorway,
                                    windscreen wipers on high,

lightning forks crisscrossed the darkening afternoon,

flashed a grey mauve-tinged sky
                                    as if some disgruntled God

flung out an arm, let loose bolts randomly, without design.

I had to admit it was a spectacle worth seeing,
almost worth
                    abandoning the car and stepping into,

yielding to the rage and buffet of nature's howl.

Design is over-rated.

If I didn't lean so hard on plans, fearful of the fall,
                                    I would toss them out
along with every collected weight,
and blindly start again

                    clinging to lightness and folly,

a spring in my step brighter than gold,
and go forth into the world
                                    to make good its every promise.

David Adès,
Sydney, NSW

Transversal Communications and the Boundaries of Identification

Zazie Bowen

Shifting Anthropological Notions of Ethnicity

Frederik Barth challenged anthropology's comparative interest in ethnic groups which, 'rests on the premise that cultural variation is discontinuous: aggregates of people share a common culture and interconnected differences that distinguish each discrete culture from all others' (1998: 9). Rather than the typical anthropological launching point of enquiry – developing taxonomies of cultural/social traits – he focused on the ontology of ethnic boundaries. Barth was interested in a) how ethnic *boundaries* persist despite a flow of persons across them and b) how stable social relations are maintained across such boundaries, often based precisely on the distinctions of dichotomised ethnic status (Barth 1998: 9-10). Barth concluded that ethnicity is a social *process* involving perpetual active work of inclusion and exclusion, establishing self-articulation and identification by interactions with others. The problem focusing Barth's interest in boundaries was, 'why do social interactions that one assumes would foment a homogenized collective identity actually intensify multiple, divided ethnic identities?' (1998: 10).

Wimmer (2008) furthered ideas of ethnicity as boundary-making by constructing a model of the mechanisms involved. Wimmer's model aimed to account for the wide variety of ethnic boundary-making forms and effects, and to transcend debates between primordialists and constructivists over whether ethnicity is *essential* (acquired through birth as a deeply-rooted, subjectively-felt reality) or *situational* (individuals' self-identity with different ethnic categories depending on the logic of a situation and their own calculations of predicted benefits/losses) (Wimmer 2008: 971).

The Problem with Bounded Identity Models: Outlining Giri's approach

This article is a reflective response to Ananta Kumar Giri's provocative poser, 'Cross-Fertilising Roots and Routes: Ethnicity, Socio-Cultural Regeneration and Planetary Realisations' (Giri 2017) – the dialogic pivot for all papers in this volume. Like Wimmer, Giri recognises both the deep-rootedness of human identification with ethnicity, and that ethnicity and nationalism are open-ended constructivist processes. Like Wimmer, Giri redirects anthropological focus to the interactions between social aggregates. However, where Wimmer offers an explanatory model, Giri seeks conceptual solutions to inter-ethnic domination-subjugation paradigms, present alike in models of ethnic diversity and in well-intentioned universalising/homogenising projects that seek to encompass and integrate multiple ethnic identities within a broader identity.

Fojas, for instance, justly contests one such homogenising artefact – 'cosmopolitanism'. Fojas notes how cosmopolitanism is framed by some as:

> an outgrowth of imperialism … which colonized every metropolis around the world and maintained its privilege as the ultimate point of cultural reference … seeing in every horizon of difference, new peripheries of its own centrality (2005: 5).

Cosmopolitanism and other globalising regimes have also frequently been associated with a cognitive disposition of rootlessness, which Giri rightly notes under-estimates the effects of human-spatial elements of identity formation.

In some respects concurring with Cohen (1992) and Tarrow (2005), Giri's notion of rootedness replaces abstract, rootless internationalism with their notion of 'rooted cosmopolitans' who grow out of local settings, draw on domestic resources *and* are actors in transnational domains. Their special characteristics are relational and cognitive links to their own societies, other countries and international institutions and networks (Tarrow 2005: 42). While highlighting rootedness, Giri simultaneously identifies two associated risks or pitfalls of rootedness: a narrowing self-idolatry, and inter-ethnic domination-subjugation.

Giri's corrective entirely rests on *communication transformations* as an alternative to regimes where a dominant rooted identity proliferates in the guise of a *universal* ideal or *universal* social order, submerging marginal 'others' and disciplining or suppressing

dissenting cultural and socio-economic paradigms. The ensuing marginalisation of non-dominant ethnicities inevitably spawns subsequent reactionary ethnic mobilisation for political and social recognition and participation in the utilisation of economic resources – as evident in ethnic struggles the world over. Giri's corrective, involves 1/ studying ethnicity as a history of communication and 2/ popularising the concept of 'transversal' communication. Metaphorically, the first could compare with how a tree's apparently rooted locale and fixed structural phenotype belies its genealogical reliance on movement, such as cross-fertilisations and symbiotic interactions with other mobile macro and micro-organisms over millennia. 'Transversality' is a way of conceptualising this communication process, which attends to the cross-fertilisations of histories, experiences, and perspectives of multiple discrete 'ethnicities' shaping an emergent cultural paradigm – a planetary narrative. Thus Giri contributes to emerging discourses of 'cosmopolitics' (Pheng and Robins 1998), deconstructing old paradigms of liberal 'tolerance', by examining the politics and interplay of dominant and non-dominant cosmologies. Giri also sees transversality as 'closing the gap' between bounded identities by perceiving the unfamiliar "as if" familiar, the distant "as if" near (Giri 2017: 7).

Comparative Perspectives: P.R. Sarkar and Jeremy Rifkin

Giri's approach shares similarities with Sarkar's (1999) project of a critical pedagogy of neohumanism, which in contrast to the notion of the consolidation of a fixed, bounded social-epistemological identity, aims at the perpetual expansion of the circumference of each learner's rational identifications. Sarkar's discourses on neohumanist education provide an outline of such an educational approach which Inayatullah frames as a transformative form of the 'Indian episteme' (Inayatullah 2001). Sarkar contrasts two discrete yet inalienable impetuses driving individual cognition and social/group dynamics: sentiment and rationality. Two primary sentiments that motivate individuals and social aggregates are geo-sentiments and socio-sentiments. Geo-sentiments refer to identification with place constructed through the sedimentation of intimate spatial/ territorial association, such as one's home, nation, or an identified religious holy land. Socio-sentiments too range between contracted and expanded expressions, from a delimited identification with one's individual pleasure/ pain, expanding to encompass sentimental identification with one's close kin group, ethnic group, religious or national group, all the way to empathic identification with everyone who inhabits a human frame i.e. humanism (Sarkar 1999: 5).

Sarkar's 'neohumanism' represents a marriage between rationality and the expansion of empathic feeling or sentiment beyond exclusive sentimental identification with humanism. Sarkar nominates this latter as 'devotional sentiment' – profound subjective identification with not only humankind but with all entities of the biosphere as intercommunicating, interacting and inseparable parts of a unified whole system. For Sarkar, such an expansion of sentiments (socio- and geo-) is not equivalent to developing rootlessness. Rather it implies cognisance of an increasingly intertwined network of relations and apperceptions interrelated with one's deepest roots.

Giri's corrective to domination-subjugation paradigms is *transversal communication*. Giri and Sarkar are in alignment in this regard, especially when one regards such communication processes through the lens of education. Sarkar notes how study provides a vital solution to parochial identifications and colonising economic self-interests. Specifically, this requires an education based on the development of rational thinking inseparable from reverent devotion for the underlying principle of humanity. This underlying principle, which humanists have hitherto upheld as the foundation of all humanitarian ethical ideals, extends in neohumanism to include not only humans but all animate and even inanimate forms of this universe.

Extension to inanimate existence draws on Sarkar's definition of the educational endeavour as both extensive and intensive – moving outward in increasing understanding of vast patterns of inter-relationships, and moving inward from the imperfect world of contemporary humanism, towards an appreciation of the original primordial phase that comprises smaller and still smaller particles that maintain structural unity and movement. Ultimately this takes us to the intra-atomic world of points, whose essence Sarkar nominates as pure consciousness-energy (Sarkar 1987: 50-51; see Bussey 2017). Neohumanism consists of this inalienable link between rationality (as critical deconstruction of intellectual delimitations on apperception – myopic dogmas) and devotional sentiment/deep feeling of empathy extending inclusively beyond human beings to the underlying principle that connects.

Rifkin (2009) concurs with Sarkar's interpretation of human progress as an incremental expansion of sentimental identification, or in Rifkin's terms *'empathy'*. He also corroborates Giri's ideas of the role of communications in transforming the range and breadth of identity boundaries. For Rifkin, empathy as a driver in the fields of economics, education and governance is wrongly underestimated in lopsided favour of theories of competition and self-interest (2009: 1). Referencing neuroscience research on mirror neurons (human soft-wiring to experience another's plight as if we were experiencing it), Rifkin defines empathy as 'the ability to show solidarity with others with whom

we share life and the fragility of demise on this planet' (2009: 14).

He regards civilisational history as a movement from empathy based on blood ties (a function of voice/song/story in hunter-gatherer societies), to empathy based on religious ties (a function of the development of script in hydraulic civilisations), to empathy based on nationhood ties (a function of mass media in fossil-fuelled industrial civilisations). Each energy-communication convergence operates efficiently until an entropy of that mode of energy-resource utilisation begins to occur (Rifkin 2009: 20-26). For Rifkin such entropy compels new energy-communication economies, which dissemble and reorder prior empathic social identifications and subsequent socio-cultural structures. Rifkin notes we are experiencing fossil-fuel entropy drawing us to the cusp of a new energy-communications-social organisation constellation. Energy-resource regimes that fuelled nation-state organisation are breaking up in favour of emerging distributed networks of energy which fuel a new form of empathic social organisation. Rifkin nominates this emerging paradigm as biosphere empathy (2009: 20-26).

Giri, Sarkar and Rifkin each appreciate human-spatial 'rootedness' – 'geo-sentiment' (Sarkar) and socio-sentiment, or empathic group-identifications, as inherent or inevitable forces instantiating and propelling individual and collective existence and movement. As well, all three note the associated hazards of our identity sentiments which underlie inter-ethnic regimes of domination and subordination. For Giri, response to this hazard demands transformed modes of communication (transversalism) which expose the ways all identities utterly rely on a history of cross-fertilising communication amongst close and distant others. Sarkar proposes education which radically challenges and breaks down myopic dogmas, the risky by-product of narrow sentiments, by perpetually enlarging the circumference of sentimental/empathic identification and by intensifying conceptual appreciation of an underlying principle. This involves a rational approach inseparably linked with 'devotional' sentiment, which extends outwards encompassing deeper awareness of all interconnected animate and inanimate aspects of our shared biosphere, and inwards towards reverence for the underlying principle of the assembling particles of existence (Sarkar 1999: 71-77). For Rifkin, changes in the nature of our essential rootedness (sphere of empathic identification) are an inevitable result of the natural entropy of our current energy-communications infrastructures. Further, symptoms of the present change are already evident in increased peer-to-peer energy and communication production-distribution networks, and other transnational phenomena (Rifkin 2009: 26).

None of these propositions contradict the significance of Wimmer (2008) and Barth's (1998) identification of ethnicity as boundary making and boundary preservation processes. Rather they each identify coexisting factors and processes by means of which such inevitable sentiments/identifications, or processes may be (or for Rifkin, are already starting to be) oriented towards a 'transverality' in Giri's terms, in which multiple identifications are neither merely 'tolerated', nor imposed upon by a dominant cosmopolitics, but which recognise essential mutual contributions to and shaping of a shared universality. Undoubtedly each form of analysis will continue to have relevance in understanding angles on, and processes of, ethnicity and geo-bounded-identity for the foreseeable future.

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Performing Ethnicity: Beyond constructivism to social creativity

JOHN CLAMMER

It is widely accepted that the notions of 'race' and 'ethnicity' are socially constructed: they do not refer to any objective underlying genetic or visible phenotypical characteristics, but, like the notion of gender, are rather social extrapolations from those essentially biological factors. This is evidently true up to a point, but it has its serious dangers. It can lead for example to an overly sociological concept of ethnicity, one in which, in the words of the anthropologist Manning Nash:

> Category and name, boundary and survival deal with two-thirds of the true theoretical interest in ethnicity: the last third is the action aspect of ethnic groupings. Do such groups have political, economic, cultural or expansionist or exterminationist agendas? (1989: 15).

Such a construct viewpoint leaves little room for creativity in the formation or modification of identities: it presupposes a more or less fixed category into which one is born and from which there is no escape. This essentially static view of ethnicity leaves no possibility for the processes of transformation, deconstruction and reconstruction, resistance and creativity to which Ananta Kumar Giri (2017) calls our attention and which are in fact major elements in ethnogenesis and the historical and contemporary revisioning of identity that have emerged from many sources including struggles for recognition, debates about multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism. Most recently the phenomenon of young Australians, Europeans and Americans leaving the relatively tranquil and affluent countries of their birth to join violent fundamentalist groups in the Middle East illustrates this phenomenon.

Following Giri's agenda, what alternative resources do we have at our disposal? There are a number, including recent work on the sociology of the body which, rightly flagging ethnicity as one of the most obviously 'embodied' aspects of identity, points to the many ways in which dress, hairstyles, postures, accents, dance forms and other cultural devices are used to draw attention to, modify or deny a particular ascribed ethnicity. Another relatively unexplored avenue is that of religious conversion where it can be shown that shift of religious allegiance is not just or even primarily a change of *beliefs*, but also frequently involves a fundamental revision of identity through changes in diet, dress, bathing behaviour and other highly visible and embodied forms of action and self-presentation. Similarly, Judith Butler (1988) has shown how gender identity is performed and constituted in the process of doing, while also under the constraints of expectations and pre-existing structural factors. The key factor for the purposes of this argument is the concept of performance, applicable in all of the above approaches. Here I want to suggest that an approach through the medium of performance studies is one rich way to reformulate the issues raised by Giri.

It seems clear that ethnicity is an aspect of 'performed' behaviour: it is not simply a given but is reproduced, contested, acted out, and expressed through many cultural devices from clothes, through music to jokes. One of the fastest growing areas of research that straddles the boundaries of sociology, anthropology, theatre studies, dance, ritual studies and religion, and the sociology of the body is the relatively new field of performance studies (for a comprehensive overview see Schechner (2013)). With its roots in theatre studies and ritual, in particular in the pioneering work of Victor Turner who brought those two fields together especially in his later writing (1982), performance studies has been able to create a conversation between quite disparate fields (theatre, ritual, gender, and what as long ago as the 1960s the sociologist Erving Goffman identified as 'interaction rituals' that make up so much of the fabric of everyday life (Goffman 1967). Performance is essentially the creation, presentation, and affirmation of an identity (real, assumed or ascribed) through action. In the words of the Brown University Theatre Department website it is 'an active ingredient in the maintenance, negotiation, or possible change of social and cultural norms' and raises the question of how 'multiple modes of performance and representation travel across borders to be "read" or "experienced" or "felt" in times or places far distant from their initial articulation' (cited in Schechner 2013: 7). Performance studies is then involved both with the ethnographic analysis of a

wide range of social practices and is a methodology for identifying and foregrounding human action patterns that contribute to self-presentation, identity formation and the embodiment of collective memory (or 'culture') in sets of practices that express particular ways of being-in-the-world in constantly dynamic ways.

It is evident then that performance studies can be applied to the kind of fluid and historically based analysis that Giri proposes. It identifies the ways in which ethnicity is 'performed' or expressed through various recognisable behaviours, cultural expressions and forms of bodily presentation, and notes the ways in which such 'identities' (the word itself presupposing a stable state of being) are in fact situational, historically varied and unstable. As the performance scholar Jon McKenzie puts it:

> Like discipline, performance produces a new subject of knowledge, though one quite different from that produced under the realm of panoptic surveillance. Hyphenated identities, transgendered bodies, digital avatars, the Human Genome project – these suggest that the performative subject is constructed as fragmented rather than unified, decentered rather than centered, virtual as well as actual. Similarly, performative objects are unstable rather than fixed, simulated rather than real. They do not occupy a single 'proper' place in knowledge … Instead objects are produced and maintained through a variety of socio-technical systems, overcoded by many discourses, and situated in numerous sites of practice (McKenzie 2001: 18).

Such is the case with ethnicity – an ascribed or invented identity is reproduced perfomatively without the origins of the original 'script' being known or 'distorted by myth and tradition' (Schechner 2013: 34). The boundaries of identity then are not so much blurry as not fully 'known' until performed and abstract or static concepts of ethnicity cannot capture this performative dimension.

To link this directly to Giri's approach: to replace an abstract category with another is not enough; they are, as he suggests, verbs rather than nouns. Rather 'society' (itself an abstract and structural concept now disputed by many scholars) needs to be seen not so much in organisational terms, but itself as the primary site of human creativity. Understood in these terms many of the sociological categories in common usage are revolutionised: they are all states of becoming, not of being. Ethnicity too needs to be seen in the same light, as Giri phrases it as part of 'a struggle for plural, economic and cultural regeneration and transformation' (2017: 6). It is in fact a site of creativity. But whether that creativity points towards greater 'hospitality' as Giri desires (or

perhaps a better word is Ivan Illich's (1973) 'conviviality') or towards conflict and the assertion of differences is open to debate. Certainly, I see in Giri's work a distinctly utopian desire at work: the hope indeed that communities might reconstitute themselves on the basis of ecological knowledge and the embracing of their own bio-regions. Given the severity of our ecological crisis this is a vision to be nurtured: without it the competition for diminishing resources might well become the basis for new and violent ethnic confrontations and identities of exactly the kind that we wish to avoid.

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> *'Yet cultural rights do not just mean more "difference",and more independence for cultural groups and their leaders'*
>
> Jürgen Habermas

Cross-Fertilising Roots and Routes: Towards a new poetics, politics and spirituality of transmutation

ANANTA KUMAR GIRI

It is necessary not to be 'myself', still less to be 'ourselves'. The city gives one the feeling of being at home. We must take the feeling of being at home into exile. We must be rooted in an absence of a place.

Simone Weil

I have always imagined that Paradise will be a kind of library.

Jorge Louis Borges

I have made the world my home and my home the world. I have made "others" my own people, and my own people 'others'.

Chandidas

Roots and routes are multi-dimensional springs of our lives and this symposium has explored its different manifestations in self, culture, societies and histories. I am grateful to Professors Fred Dallmayr, Piet Strydom, Marcus Bussey, Ivan Marquez, Meera Chakravorty, Zazie Bowen and John Clammer for joining us in this conversation and for widening and deepening our multiverse of discourse and practice. They help us realise that our identities, including ethnic identities, are in need of transmutation as they already are transmutational in their constitution and aspiration.

Dallmayr, Strydom and Bussey present us with new paths of imagination in what may be called a poetics and spirituality of transmutation. Dallmayr, building upon Heidegger and his own inspiring journey, tells us about mutual entwinement between earth and world, closure and openness as part of an unfolding and evolving journey of transmutation. Strydom talks about our first and second nature and the evolution of cognitive fluidity which makes interaction and cross-fertilisation between roots and routes possible. Bussey tells us about cosmopoesis as a way to understand/respond to our common evolutionary beginning and emergent relational consciousness. In addition, Strydom and Bussey tell us about our evolutionary histories which have created the cognitive and conscious evolutionary malleability for permeability, overflow and co-learning.

Bussey also talks about cosmopoesis in which roots and routes dance. This poesis can, at the same time, be a regulative idea or horizon, as Ivan Marquez tells us. This regulative idea can create a new normative invitation and challenge for us to work towards a new transmutation of our identities: local, national and transnational. Resonating with all of them, Chakravorty presents us with both poetic and philosophical insights as to how we can move across borders and follow the challenge of utopia presented by poets and spiritual seekers, such as Alamma Prabhu from Karnataka, in our everyday life worlds and social systems.

Chakravorty's reflections not only call for border-crossing transmutation between philosophy and poetry, but also between philosophy and anthropology in our conceptualisation of terms of discourse such as ethnicity and in our performative embodiment of it, as John Clammer argues. Both Bowen and Clammer, two anthropologists in our concert here, invite us to rethink both our anthropology and cosmology through new modalities of conceptualisation and practice. Bowen describes the significance of transversal communication and co-realisation in taking us out of our enclosed and entrenched identities. Clammer, with his characteristic insight and wisdom, urges us to realise how identities, including our ethnic identities, are performative. Performativity is not simply a logic of reproduction, it is primarily a logic of transformative co-realisation as, while 'performing' our identities, we create zones of co-realisation of potential in identities of self, other and the world.

Cross-fertilising roots and routes thus calls for manifold works of transmutation in self, culture, society and histories. This is a perilous process as it works in between logics of closure and openness, entrenchment and transcendence, violence and non-violence. It is a multi-dimensional work and meditation. As we are all in this journey of love and labour, we can perhaps sing together the following poem by the author:

'Roots and Routes: Memory Work, Meditation and Planetary Realisations'

1

Roots and Routes

Routes within Roots

Roots with Routes

Multiple Roots and Multiple Routes

Crisscrossing with Love

Care, Chung[1] and Karuna[2]

Crisscrossing and Cross-firing

2

Root work and Route Work

Footwork and Memory Work

Weaving threads

Amidst threats

Dancing in front of terror

Dancing with terrorists

Meditating with threat

Meditating with threads

Meditating with Roots and Routes

Root Meditation

Route Meditation

Memory Work as Meditating with Earth

Dancing with Soul, Cultures and Cosmos

Author

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End Notes
1. *Chung* in Chinese tradition refers to equilibrium or centrality of mind which is foundation for ho, harmony. I am grateful to Julie M. Geredien for her insight as I build upon her work on transformative harmony here.
2. *Karuna* means compassion.

The Lining of Your Skin

"As if you were on fire from within.

The moon lives in the lining of your skin". — Pablo Neruda

A surge of breath falls back into the wind, your hands poised and preparing dawn,
you release light into the day, the aerial smoke's dissolve all around the body.
the still flow of grasses below the sky's ceiling follows a greying mist on charcoal paddocks.
through it no images enter my eyes but your figure readied in the pull of morning.

when I first met you, my flesh marred by decay and the turmoil you loved,
the strength of your gaze, innocent in its confusion and chaotic law
drove me forward, no emptiness allowing abandonment in a future we felt preparing.
I continued to return to you, finding your hesitation and mine in the danger
of a consuming desire, the panicking wind breaking against your face as memory,
and a lull in a truth we felt tracing our breath.

these ambitious tides submerging in the basin of the dams, your voice
softly rolling along the earth. void of exterior forces, still present in
your wild body, standing in defiance of death;
the unspeakable ache we share, hands we both wished to fend off in our innocence,
fanning the dark night from memory and resting in the finality of your gaze.

The drive of dark rain spirals onto the veranda at this distance,
regret at lacerations marked into my skin.
the pain fleeing from my flesh fractures beneath your action and because of you.
I am still drawn to the glowing landscape of your dream-life, your chaos
vanquishing mine and freeing us both, at last staring across the air
and seeing a future protruding through memory.

we sleep together here, my love of you despite myself, rebirth as
your beauty eases across a scarred mind.
the sudden flight of breath, my devotion prolonged in its urgency,
a collapse of light pours from your eyes, and I want to live.

ROBBIE COBURN,
MELBOURNE, VIC

Political Tragedy and Disillusionment Today

GEOFF DOW

Tragedy is inherent in the very idea of politics – some things that are technically possible will never be effected at all. The 'hollowing out' in contemporary politics though is something different and additional – in large part it's a result of the hegemony and destructiveness of liberalism, rather than a consequence of racism or anti-immigration sentiment.

It's easy to conclude that liberal ideas today have contaminated and debilitated how we think about political possibilities. Policy elites almost everywhere these days are not only susceptible to pessimistic appraisals of what can be done through politics, but actively foment the obstructionism that has been defining political life in wealthy societies for the past 40 years.

First of all though, I think we need to take stock of what has happened since the mid-1970s – because, as critics, we don't always hit the right targets.

What Has Been Achieved?

First, the welfare state has not been wound back: after a century of expansion, social transfers now amount to almost one-quarter of income in the rich countries. Entitlements have expanded greatly, and have created conditions liberals loathe but social democrats celebrate. This growth in public provision has been largely structural, that is, unintended.

Second, the size of the public realm does not seem likely to fall significantly in either taxation-revenue or government-outlay terms. As a proportion of GDP government spending is still above 40 per cent in the OECD, though only 35.5 per cent in Australia – in both cases above levels in 1974. (This nonetheless leaves Australia near the bottom of the ranking table for comparable wealthy economies. Total taxation is commensurately low here, at around 34 per cent of GDP, compared with 38 per cent for the OECD.)

These empirical circumstances mean that the social-democratic project to expand public provision has not been wound back and, even if we would prefer more of it, a significant structural basis for further advance persists.

A tragic aspect of politics today is that our expectations are lower than our accomplishments.

The institutions that were constructed after 1945, giving effect to progressive politicisation – whether under conservative or social democratic auspices – include:

- redistributive tax regimes,
- fiscal subsidies and regional transfers,
- wage-fixing systems,
- toleration of 'bigness' (restraints on competition),
- state enterprises (with distinctive productive criteria),
- ever-stronger extra-market provision,
- prudential regulation of financial sectors,
- limits to globalist licence,
- experiments in corporatist economic management (participation in policy by non-state organisations, mainly those of labour and capital, but often requiring business to treat labour as part of a 'community'), and
- 'policies' for the structural transformation of industry.

These provide an indication of how politics can, and did, attempt to transform the liberal model.

Implied by all these was an amplification of post-war democratisation:

- a more authoritative role for public policy (particularly anti-recessionary policy and incomes policy),
- an emphasis on public as well as private consumption,
- a distrust of monetary policy, and
- the (Keynesian) principle of public investment as an instrument of employment creation (in the context of an economy increasingly disposed to wealth creation rather than to job creation).

In my view the left understands and celebrates these developments far less than it ought.

Where We Have Failed

First, unemployment, unwanted and undesirable structural change, industry decline and under-provision of public infrastructure have all characterised the four decades since the mid-1970s. These have clearly generated considerable disquiet, unrest and popular confusion – the outcomes of which we are yet to fully experience.

Second, inequalities (of wealth and income) have increased significantly – reversing what had seemed to be democratic reforms of the post-1945 period. Thomas Piketty's now famous presentation of the empirical details – though not his explanations – confirm what had been long-standing understandings of this increased inegalitarianism from Keynesian, post-Keynesian and heterodox traditions in political economy, which all argued that recession increases inequalities while sustained stability (especially low unemployment) reduces them. So it's not just inequality, but the loss of the conditions that kept it at bay, that haunts us today. (See chart – the 'Power of policy' – which depicts the phases of policy expansion and policy contraction that governed the fall and rise of inequalities in the twentieth century.)

Third, the market-oriented 'reforms' demanded by policy elites have intentionally reduced state capacities – the most significant of these losses in Australia concerns wage regulation, where once we enjoyed the most developed, effective and potentially egalitarian basis for principled determination of (and contestation over) incomes. This suggests that institutional capacities and the political will to exploit them enable or constrain politics, more than the material reality and technical possibilities within capitalist economies.

In fact, my contention is that attempts by elites to impose unwanted reforms actually worsen, and do not improve, economic conditions (employment levels, productive potentials, living standards). This of course implies that efforts to permanently improve/transform modern economies and efforts to erode liberal market mechanisms in modern economies are the same project. And it goes a long way towards explaining why liberal elites care so little about successful policy interventions.

Fourth, the gravest problem currently facing contemporary capitalism is that economies generate employment at a much slower rate than they generate income and wealth and prosperity (which has been accruing disproportionately to the well-connected few, often those associated with finance districts). This is a more definitive situation than merely recognising that unemployment can be chronic (permanent). It is not immediately clear how this problem can be resolved, though it imparts to rich countries something akin to 'problems of development' and we can be certain the solutions won't be via 'business as usual'. The recurrence in the west of problems that have been known in the poorer parts of the world must count as a distinctive tragedy of its own. But we know key features of what's to be done. At the very least, the wealthy countries need to increase taxes and public spending and to speed up the transition from private to public activity, from individual to collective decision making, from the economy-as-unintended to an economy-as-democratically determined. These shifts have been occurring gradually for a century, not always as a result of conscious politicking by social democrats. As citizenship entitlements expand, the rights attaching to property narrow, in some spheres freedom gives way to authority, flexibility cedes to regulation, the commodification of daily life declines in response to decommodifying tendencies, and people's fragmented calculations and expectations wane as institutional competences and capacities assert themselves. Social-democratic and labour movements have long proposed such transformations, and social-democratic advance demands them.

Fifth, on ecological grounds, progressives tend to argue against economic growth – citing both its negative environmental concomitants and its repugnant social consequences. Arguably, however, critics of growth should be criticising types of economic activity rather than its rate of increase because some types of increase would appear to be environmentally benign – for example, music, dance and many services. What we abhor of course is damaging and wasteful activity (embodied in some present trends in private consumption) whether its occurrence is proliferating or not. Conventional policy makers not only treat economic growth as if it is eternally desirable (and possible) in principle, but as a politics-denying solution to other problems such as unemployment and maldistribution.

Growth is low and will stay low in the rich economies (the OECD figure is currently 1.8 per cent) but we can have affluence with decency at these figures while higher GDP growth guarantees nothing.

An extension of this (fifth) point is that we ought to complain about public debt only if the borrowing funds unproductive/thoughtless projects. As long as unemployment or other instances of unutilised resources exist – currently 6-7 per cent in the OECD – there can be no reasonable objection to borrowing from the future to fund infrastructure for the future (and employment now). It's not only a mistake to think we don't need experimental/unusual policy techniques to generate economic activity, but dishonest to presume full employment can be achieved without unorthodox measures including debt. In modern economies (those typified by uncertainty and fluctuations in private investment), permanent budget deficits and debt may be necessary – to counter the structural tendency in capitalist economies to generate insufficient activity.

Budget deficits are always headline concerns for liberals, but they ought not be. The trend line for the OECD has been between -2 per cent and -4 per cent of GDP for over 40 years now. In Australia it's about -1½ per cent GDP (approximately $25bn); so an extra $2000 tax per taxpayer per year would eliminate it. As another example, the increase in taxation required to bring us up to the OECD average of 4 per cent GDP would be $5400 per taxpayer (raising about $65bn), per year. About half of Australia's 'revenue shortfall' is attributable to the Howard-Costello tax cuts in 2007 and to the policy elites who encouraged them.

Conclusion

Something that unnerves many of us at the moment is that much of what we rail against (uncertainty, dislocation, loss of hope, absence of noble visions) are also things that the Brexit, Trump, Hanson and Le Pen voters and sundry purveyors of hate rail against as well. The lesson may be that, if policy elites continue to ignore popular discontent or to pursue the rationalist strategies they obviously want to embrace, we're in uncharted territory.

What we need to acknowledge, today, is that the Trump phenomenon began 40 years ago. It's defined more by what led to it than by what is attempted from here on. The elite-led dismantling of the mixed economy that social democrats had struggled for – wealth with distributive justice and conscientious institutions able to carry the burdens of new political possibilities – need not be seen as an irrevocable turning point. We don't yet know what Trump or Trump-style politics will actually do, nor how much orthodox resistance will be mounted to their protectionist or neo-mercantilist policy dispositions. We don't know how much, if at all, Trump understands the theoretical basis of his unorthodoxy; but we *do* know that there is a principled position underlying it. It's politics-led development; deliberate employment creation, ongoing shifts from private to public auspices;

sedulous enhancements of public competences; using debt to create assets for the future; and licence for private economic activity to initiate economic activity provided it's adjudged in the public interest (not the licence of markets). It will require a return to some of the discarded realisations of the post-war era: principled incomes policies, controls on finance, preference for public infrastructures and efforts to deal with unwarranted disparagement of politics.

In politics, a gap always exists between potential and actual accomplishments. Machiavelli called for specific political competences [*virtù*] (to overcome the vicissitudes of fortune); Max Weber saw politics as a 'slow boring of hard boards'; even Keynes experienced the ignominy of lost battles (despite his stellar access to elites). Since the second world war, desirable and practical achievements have frequently been rejected for quite ignoble reasons. (The efforts associated with the Bretton Woods conference in 1944 to create mechanisms for full employment globally, and much of the Obama administration's efforts since 2008, are among examples – perhaps some aspects of what occurred in Australia during Julia Gillard's prime ministership provide others. To me, these all seemed tragic at the time.)

Wilful obstructionism seems to be in the ascendancy as a staple of contemporary politics, almost everywhere. This is the current face of political tragedy – politics has been degraded to such an extent that it's become hard to know who our enemies are and who our friends are.

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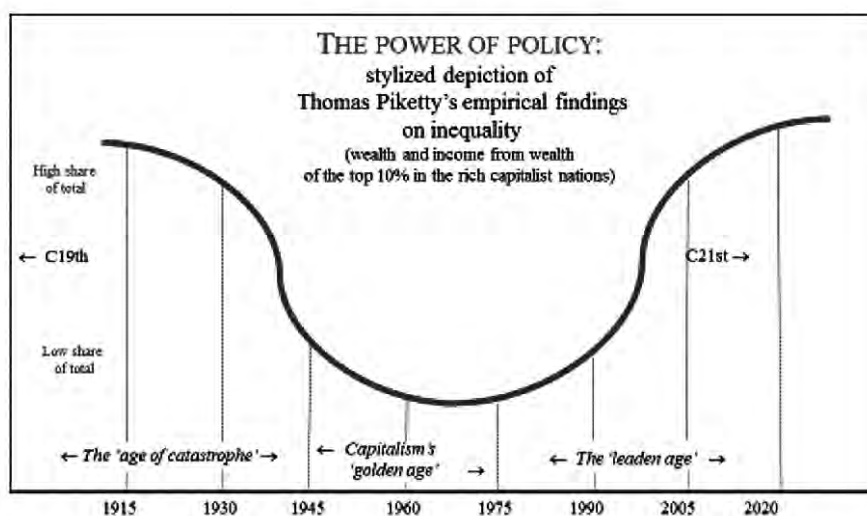
(Data is from OECD Economic Outlook 99, June 2016)

The Connection Between Racist Discourse, Resettlement Policy and Outcomes in Australia

IBOLYA LOSONCZ

The influence of ultranationalist political parties and calls for culturally homogeneous societies are on the rise in Western democracies. This paper examines the connection between rising exclusionary narratives, resettlement policy and practices, and subsequent resettlement outcomes for refugee migrants. Analysis of empirical evidence from a recently released survey of humanitarian migrants demonstrates how Australian social structures and institutional practices thwart the social and economic inclusion of refugee migrants admitted for settlement in Australia. I argue that, despite evidence of these systemic flaws, the Australian Government is unwilling to address these issues and instead scapegoats individuals and minority groups for their asserted inability or unwillingness to adopt Australian values. Such action risks deepening exclusionary spaces among resettled refugee migrants and inciting intolerant public voices.

Increased international migration has changed the ethnic make-up of many developed countries. At the same time, the influence of ultranationalist political parties and their racist discourse is on the rise across a range of countries. Such groups include the Hungarian 'Movement for a Better Hungary'; the German 'Alternative for Germany'; and most recently the revival of the Australian 'One Nation' party. What is more, rather than being perceived as fringe parties with extremist views but little clout, the influence of these political parties on public opinion, politics and government policies is considerable. For example, in Australia, there is growing public hostility towards immigration, especially Muslim immigration. A recent large sample survey found that as many as 49 percent of Australians support putting a ban on Muslim immigration. Five years ago only 25 percent of Australians were in support of the same hypothetical ban (Essential Research 2011, 2016). In the political and policy realm, recent statistical analysis of deportation policies of 25 countries over 10 years, found legislative representation of far right groups to be a more consistently influential predictor of adoption of deportation policies, than other variables typically assumed to be influential, such as unemployment or size of the foreign-born population (Wong 2015:102). In the Australian context, there is an observable trend in the political discourse towards an emphasis on immigrants adopting Australia's cultural goals and values and rapidly contributing to, rather than 'burdening', Australia's economic prosperity (Bourke 2016:14).

It's easy to conclude that liberal ideas today have contaminated and debilitated how we think about political possibilities. Policy elites almost everywhere these days are not only susceptible to pessimistic appraisals of what can be done through politics, but actively foment the obstructionism that has been defining political life in wealthy societies for the past 40 years.

Racism is an 'exclusionary practice and ideology that essentializes and valorizes phenotypical and cultural differences to defend and advance the privileges of its users' (Fox 2013:1872). In the Australian context, it is a cultural, as opposed to a biological, criterion, focused on delineating national identity and separating 'us' from 'them'. While this is a relatively more 'presentable' variant of racism, the deduction of 'otherness' is the same once inability or unwillingness to adopt the dominant culture is asserted on behalf of minority groups (Kyriazi 2016:14). An important inference of attributing 'otherness' to the inability or unwillingness of minority groups to adopt mainstream cultural values is that it places the responsibility to transit between the constructed categories of 'others' and 'us' on the individuals. It is their ability and willingness to activate their agency that are primarily responsible for the cultural cohesiveness of the nation.

The asserted responsibility of the immigrant individual or household for successful integration is clearly reflected in the Australian Government's resettlement policy, which emphasises 'the commitment of those arrivals to establishing a life in Australia' (Department

of Social Services 2015:3). Although the government acknowledges both the role of settlement services and the influence of Australian society's willingness to welcome new arrivals, underpinning this acknowledgement is a belief that existing mechanisms, developed to ensure that institutions provide equal access to all members of Australian society, will also provide equal opportunities to refugee immigrants accepted for resettlement. But this assumption is at odds with the reality for many migrants, especially those from refugee backgrounds, who experience severe social and economic disadvantage.

This paper explores the main reasons for these adverse outcomes, by focusing on Australian resettlement processes, social structures, and institutional practices and their impact on resettlement outcomes. I present empirical analysis of a recently released large sample survey of humanitarian migrants to demonstrate how Australian social structures and institutional practices thwart the social and economic inclusion of refugee migrants admitted for settlement in Australia. Instead of attending to these systemic flaws the government scapegoats individuals and minority groups for their asserted inability or unwillingness to adopt Australian values. Such action, I argue, risks deepening exclusionary spaces among resettled refugee migrants and inciting intolerant public voices.

Refugee Resettlement in Australia

Despite an overall large inward migration, Australia offers protection to far fewer refugees than most countries.[1] Yet, it is an important supporter of the UNHCR resettlement program, ranking third overall behind the United States and Canada (UNHCR 2016:18).

This is consistent with the Australian Government's longstanding position to give resettlement within the UNHCR a high priority. For the last 15 years, Australia has resettled 13,750 humanitarian migrants each year, and has recently announced it will permanently increase its intake to 18,750 a year, in addition to its one-off special intake of 12,000 refugees from the Syrian and Iraq humanitarian crisis (Kenny 2016).

Until now, being the principal supporter of the UNHCR resettlement program has brought considerable reputational benefits internationally to Australia by promoting its image as a good international citizen (Jupp 2007:203). Recently, the Australian Government has also tried to use its key support of the program to justify its inhumane and punitive detention of asylum seekers (Glendenning 2015:27), an act in violation of Australia's human rights treaty obligations (McBeth et al. 2011:516).

In the domestic context, finding approval for Australia's resettlement programs has been more multi-layered. The performative aspects of providing permanent safety and resettlement for some of the most vulnerable refugees[2] appeals to some, but not all, Australians. Instead, the dominant domestic rationale for admitting humanitarian migrants for resettlement is the potential contribution these migrants can make to Australia's workforce and population. In fact, historically, the Australian Government's approach to humanitarian migrants has been part of the broader immigration strategy of supporting population growth and subsequent economic prosperity. While Australia developed a separate refugee policy in the late 1970s, the dominant expectation that all immigrants, including refugees, should benefit Australia economically has not changed (Jupp, 1998:136).

The inappropriateness of this framework and the contradictions inherent in this policy are evident. After all, settlement and integration is a lengthy two-way process (Valtonen 2004:75). It involves societal and institutional adaptations to facilitate the settlement of new arrivals through reducing or eliminating barriers to social and economic participation (Losoncz, 2015:18, Ager and Strang 2008:177), and providing support services to assist the development of social connections and economic independence (Ager and Strang 2008:179, Abur and Spaaij, 2016:123). But the impact of this inappropriate framework and policy contradiction did not surface until recently, prompted by two main changes in Australian refugee resettlement. First, there has been an increase in the proportion of humanitarian migrants from long-term conflict zones and from protracted situations and a subsequent decline in the levels of human capital of humanitarian migrants, especially in the form of formal education and skills. At the same time, there has been a decline in targeted support of the resettlement process for humanitarian migrants. The cumulative effect of these two changes has had a significant impact on the resettlement outcomes of recent refugee migrants.

Theoretical Framing of Resettlement Processes

Political and public discourse on migration and resettlement are not alone in being dominated by a focus on the characteristics of and the values held by immigrants. Research, especially applied research, is dominated by examinations of migrants' characteristics and adaptation styles and the impact of these on integration outcomes. Although the last ten years has seen an increased research focus on the role of host societies, settlement policies and access to housing, employment, education, health care, income support and family reunion (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury 2007, Valtonen 2004, Valenta and Bunar 2010, Stewart 2009), our knowledge of how social structures and mechanisms support or inhibit successful resettlement remains limited, and theoretical frameworks for understanding these mechanisms are under-developed.

However, a notable contribution highlighting the role of social structures and connections for resettlement, is research by Ager and Strang (2008). In their conceptualisation of refugee integration, they identified two main types of processes mediating between foundational principles and integration outcomes: facilitators and social connections. Social connections, such as social bridges, social bonds and social links (Putnam, 2000, Woolcock, 1998) are important at the local level. Facilitators, aimed at providing pathways and removing structural barriers to integration, are often under the control of the state in the form of policy development and application.

One framework to theoretically set apart outcomes from the processes and pathways available for reaching these outcomes is Robert Merton's adaptation theory. The two main elements of the theory are goals—culturally structured normative values, and social structures—pathways in which the capacities of individuals in the social groups are socially structured. Merton argued that valued goals of society, such as economic participation and success, are desired by all, but opportunities to achieve them are not equally distributed, and pathways for some are structurally blocked or restricted (Merton 1968:185). The rest of this paper presents results and critical analysis of the pathways available to resettled refugee migrants in Australia.

Data

The data analysed for this paper was drawn from Wave 1 of the Longitudinal Study of Humanitarian Migrants or 'Building a New Life in Australia' (BNLA) Survey (Marshall 2015). Wave 1 of BNLA was collected in 2014 across Australia. The sample was drawn from a database of resettled refugees, across all states and territories in Australia except the ACT, who have been granted visas through Australia's humanitarian program, and who arrived in Australia 3–6 months prior to the interview.[3] This paper uses data from all 1,798 adult respondents, between the ages of 21 and 55. The mean age of respondents was 36 years, 59 per cent were married, and 43 per cent were female.

Results from 'Building a New Life in Australia' (BNLA)

Sample characteristics indicated a relatively low level of human capital in terms of formal education and spoken English, yet considerable personal resources, among recent humanitarian migrants in Australia. A substantial proportion of respondents (15%) had never been to school and 70 percent reported either not speaking English at all, or not well. A large proportion of survey respondents were born in long-term high conflict zones, such as Iraq (40%) or Afghanistan (25%), which explains, in part, the low level of human capital. Although 33 percent of

respondents reported experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), 89 percent of participants had positive self-efficacy and 93 percent reported positive attitudes toward self.

Despite a strong desire among participants to work and be economically independent, six months after resettlement, only six percent were in paid work.[4] Logistic regression to predict employment found gender, age, time spent in Australia, and English proficiency to be significant predictors. Males were much more likely to be employed than females. Odds of employment increased slightly with age, but decreased as people got older. The odds of being employed also improved with time spent in Australia and with increased English proficiency. But education level and employment prior to coming to Australia were not significant predictors of being currently employed. A considerable proportion of respondents (38%) held post-school qualifications and 58 percent had work experience prior to coming to Australia. Yet, this evidence of capacity did not improve the likelihood of employment, indicating that current hiring practices in Australia undervalue the capabilities of humanitarian migrants. Similarly, while participants reported high self-sufficiency and self-reliance, these personal resources did not translate into improved employment prospects. Interestingly, PTSD did not show a negative impact on gaining employment.

Discussion

Such a low rate of employment among a population with high aspirations and substantial personal resources, as well as capacities in the form of post-school qualifications and overseas work experience, raises questions about socially structured inequalities in Australian settlement policies and discrimination from employers. Indeed, a number of important quantitative Australian studies with large sample sizes have found higher unemployment rates among refugee migrants compared to other migrants even after controlling for differences in education and English proficiency. While refugee migrants' employment outcomes have been found to improve with duration of residence; they continue to lag behind those of other migrants (Vandenheuvel and Wooden, 1999, Cobb-Clark 2006, Thapa and Gorgens 2006). Additionally, employment outcomes did not improve with time for all refugee migrants, and some groups continue to experience higher levels of unemployment, even after a considerable length of residence (Hugo 2011:123). Research by Colic-Peisker and Tilbury found evidence of a segmented labour market in which 'racially and culturally visible migrants are allocated the bottom jobs regardless of their human capital' (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury 2006:203).

Despite this robust empirical evidence, both the Australian Government and employers refuse to acknowledge the

connections between policies and practices and the disproportionate difficulties faced by humanitarian migrant groups in Australia in gaining employment. Instead they attribute this phenomenon to the personal characteristics and skill deficits of these jobseekers. Employers claim that refugees often do not have the 'cultural knowledge' required for a position, or that they would not 'fit in' with other staff. Employers interviewed for the Tilbury and Colic-Peisker's study often called this a 'soft skill' related to 'Australian-ness' (Tilbury and Colic-Peisker 2007:17). In other words, the subjective concept of 'cultural difference' has become an admissible reason, at least in practice, for denying economic participation and inclusion.

In terms of socially structured inequalities, while human capital, especially skill-based resources, is important for obtaining employment, this needs to be supported with appropriate processes. Processes to support human capital include assistance in the development of skills as well as pathways for turning skills and personal resources into economic and social participation. The finding that post-school qualifications and work experience prior to coming to Australia did not improve the odds of employment for BNLA respondents indicates that current pathways are inadequate.

For example, English proficiency is the strongest skill-based predictor for employment. Yet most refugee migrants have low levels of English. While English proficiency is viewed by the Australian Government as one of the most important indicators of integration and resettlement (Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2006), the current provision of English classes does not reflect its importance. The 510 hours English tuition by the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is grossly inadequate. Research shows that the process of acquiring a new language requires 7 to 11 years (Thomas and Collier 2002), and possibly longer for adult migrants. Furthermore, the design and delivery of AMEP courses do not take into account the little or no previous experience in formal education among some adult refugee migrants.

Another area where recognised pathways to employment remain unsupported is fostering work experience opportunities and connections to potential employers, which are both acute needs among refugee migrant jobseekers. Lack of Australian work experience prevents migrant jobseekers from competing with other applicants in the labour market, and connections beyond family and friends provide the capacity to be more successful at searching for and obtaining employment. Previous research (see, for example, Granovetter (1983)) has established that work-related ties are of a distinctive form; although they are weaker than the ties connecting people to friends and family, they connect people to a multitude of outside worlds, providing a bridge to new work-related networks. Bridging types of social capital (Putnam, 2000:10) are particularly vital mediators of gaining employment (Lancee 2010:220, Stone et al., 2003).

Yet, employment agencies – private enterprises founded by the government – fail to assist with the development of these connections. My analysis of the BNLA indicates that employment agencies are largely unresponsive to the needs of refugee migrants. While employment agencies were the second most frequently used method to find employment, participants found them to be the least effective method, with 40 percent reporting them to be not at all helpful, and an additional 25 percent only a little helpful.

There are a number of potential reasons why employment agencies are unresponsive to the needs of refugee migrants. These reasons could include institutional inertia, lack of appropriate skills, and contractual disincentives. Contractual arrangements and remuneration of employment services are built around the number of clients serviced and/or placed in employment. Refugee migrants represent a relatively small proportion of the total client pool of mainstream agencies, yet they have very specific needs which would require employment agencies to go outside of their routine activities. Under the current arrangements, responding to the specific needs of clients from a refugee background does not make good business sense. This points to the need to re-evaluate the use of mainstream employment agencies to assist refugee migrants to find employment.

Of course, labour market discrimination cannot be seen in isolation from government policy, including the lack of government action to address the deficiencies in Australian recruitment processes, which emphasise equal opportunity, but in effect fail to account for the relative disadvantage and marginalisation of refugee migrant groups. Drawing on data from extensive fieldwork with recently settled South Sudanese Australians, I demonstrated (Losoncz 2017) that simplistic application of these mechanisms and protocols is unresponsive to the needs of refugee migrants. Because of their refugee experiences, these migrants are not entering the labour market on equal terms with people who grew up in Australia. By failing to account for the marginalisation of refugee migrant groups, these processes actually block pathways to economic participation of refuge migrants and heighten their socio-economic disadvantage. My analysis of the BNLA found that over 23 percent of recently arrived humanitarian migrants experience more than one type of hardship due to shortage of money, compared to 8 percent of the broader Australian community.

Conclusion

Australia's current resettlement policies and practices are delivering poorly in both the international and the domestic realm. Internationally, the shortcomings of the Australian Government have been noted by the United Nations. In its response to Australia's fifteenth to seventeenth periodic reports to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UN CERD), the Committee drew particular attention to the multiple forms of discrimination experienced by some groups, including African Australians. The Committee recommended that Australia strengthen the race and cultural dimensions of its Social Inclusion Agenda (United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, 2010:3). Domestically, many humanitarian migrants experience severe social and economic disadvantage. While Australia gives legal permission to a limited number of humanitarian migrants to resettle, they are not afforded the same living standards and opportunities enjoyed by those born in Australia. Such economic marginalisation prevents them from fully participating in or belonging to the broader community.[5]

Despite mounting evidence, the systemic exclusion of migrant minorities is not acknowledged by the Australian Government and instead claims are made that particular migrant groups fall short in sharing Australia's cultural values and are prone to adopting non-functional behaviours. However, as argued by Merton, it is not members of particular groups who display dysfunctional behaviour; rather it is elements of institutions which while generally functional for some, are dysfunctional for others.

In the current political context, it is unlikely that the present political leadership will support any strategic investment in the provision of services to ensure accessible pathways for refugee migrants to assist in their economic, social and cultural inclusion. Yet, by not acknowledging the shortfalls of current resettlement policies, but rather reflecting racist sentiments through blaming individuals and minority communities, the Australian Government risks deepening the economic and social divisions in our society and magnifying racism and intolerance.

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End Notes

1. Of the 2.45 million refugees who had their status recognised or were resettled in 2015, just 11,776, or less than 0.5% were assisted by Australia UNHCR (2016) 'Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2015' UNHCR, Geneva. .

2. For example, women admitted under the Woman at Risk Visa sub-category.on.

3. Onshore visa holders had to have received their permanent protection visas in the same period.

4. Results from Wave 2 data of the BNLA indicate that employment rates increased to only 18 percent after 18 months in Australia. The limited number of survey items collected in Wave 2 does not allow the use of this more recent data to identify significant predictors of employment.

5. Information on hardship for the broader Australian community is based on the author's analysis of data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, Wave 13, 2013).

Broken

I find myself broken
spitting blood and lies
dry retching at thoughts
of inhumane error
my chest bone
cracked under a bullet proof vest

I try finding that which we thought lost
the pavement shattered, smeared
with pieces of me
the breath of decay
steeped in panic
and a putrid stench

I still my mind
the taste of blood
and the faint sense
of distance
appearing without warning
quiet and self-assured

ZALEHAH TURNER,
SYDNEY, NSW

Today, family can have many meanings. One need not look far to find diverse representations of family in contemporary media, reflecting to a certain degree the 'non-traditional' ways that family units are constructed. Surrogacy is a poignant example of creating families via non-traditional means. Moreover, it is conceptually powerful through the opportunity it provides for reflecting on meanings of kinship and its (post) modern enactments.

In his study of child surrogacy among gay men in Australia and the USA, Dean Murphy provides a highly detailed exploration of what is new, but also what is familiar about parenthood via surrogacy. By focusing on gay men, this book glimpses the centrality of family mythologies, even how non-traditional families define and construct their lives. These ideas are fertile ground for a sociological exploration and Murphy does not shy away from delving into a host of issues, sometimes at the expense of concision and focus. The result is a thorough, exceedingly well-referenced, and nuanced account of the practices and meanings associated with surrogacy for gay men.

While surrogacy was undoubtedly primary fodder for the conceptual focus of this work, the intersection with sexual orientation was also an important feature. Nowhere is this clearer than in Chapter three, where Murphy presents an analysis of print media relevant to surrogacy in Australia and the USA. The striking differences in language and tone adopted to portray surrogacy for heterosexual versus same sex couples highlights just how deeply rooted social norms around parenthood remain, norms which exclude same sex couples and vilify them in some respects for seeking our families of their own. The suspicion with which surrogacy is viewed—evident in the media analysed for this chapter—is likely tied to presumptions of what is 'natural' and deepened by the association of surrogacy with gay men.

If surrogacy is viewed, then, as less acceptable for same than opposite sex couples, this offers a powerful rationalisation for the lengths to which the men in this study went to normalise and control their experiences. The backbone of this book is a series of interviews with gay men—overwhelmingly couples—who had children through surrogacy. In Chapters four through six, Murphy explores many facets that underpin surrogacy for gay men, including constructions of parenthood and the negotiations of kinship. Kinship as a concept is cast into the limelight by these analyses, which reveal the ways in which surrogacy can offer a direct challenge to dominant models of kinship in Western societies, but also the ways in which people come to reproduce familiar tropes in their search for family. This reproduction, inadvertent or otherwise, is one of the most fascinating outcomes of Murphy's research. Are social constructions of family so engrained that even those who create families in unorthodox ways cannot escape them? Or is it, as Murphy hints, that these constructions are deployed as legitimising strategies for families that fear either internal or external critiques?

It is clear that surrogacy is an expensive and complicated venture. In Chapter six, Murphy delves into the marketplace dynamics of surrogacy, and provides a fascinating account of how money is used to create distance between the parents, surrogates and donors. While some attention is paid to how men rationalised the expense of surrogacy, missing from this book generally was a more critical consideration for the role of class and power in shaping the participants' experiences and perceptions of surrogacy. These men are not 'average'. They are an elite few with the means and ability to travel globally and bear the considerable costs associated with surrogacy arrangements. The conceptual reconfiguration of kinship woven throughout this book is powerful but is, therefore, limited in some respects by a failure to appropriately account for social class. This reality does not diminish Murphy's conclusions, but it does invite their contextualisation in a way not described in the text.

Stylistically, this book suffers at times from a lack of driving narrative, occasionally delving deeply into mundane topics while ignoring other more contentious issues. Overall, however, it offers an important and detailed look at surrogacy among wealthy gay men. The value of Murphy's analyses lies in what they reveal about family and kinship, and as such, this work is an excellent reference point for future research, in what will undoubtedly be a growing area of interest.

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BOOK REVIEW

In *Venice*, the second of Nick Earls' interconnected novellas, sculptor Natalie Landry explains her current project. Demonstrating with her hands the angles at which her family of figures relate to each other, she explores the difference in degrees between intimacy and indifference. 'Aloof' is the word she settles on: '"This one you're paying attention, avidly, to something close by." She lifts her fingers so that they're almost straight again. "Now it's dead to you. It's in the foreground but

not a threat, not interesting. You're all about the horizon, something out there"' (Earls 2015: 36). This theme of family relationships—how we are angled towards or away from the people closest to us, what lies in the foreground of our lives and what is on the horizon—connects all of the stories in *Wisdom Tree* to create a compelling work that is more than the sum of its individual parts.

The format of five separate but linked novellas is as much a publishing experiment as a literary one for Earls, an established author of fiction for adults and children. The series forms part of his PhD at The University of Queensland, and he continues to track sales and the response to the books in print, e-book, and audio formats, with a view to submitting the thesis component later in 2017. Earls argues that the intersection of twenty-first-century reading habits and twenty-first-century reading technologies make novellas the ideal literary form for our age: time-poor readers increasingly view reading for pleasure as a holiday activity rather than an everyday one, and books that can be finished in a short plane flight or a day's commute hold greater appeal for many readers. (Earls 2016) Novellas are also a perfect match for digital formats that have emerged in the last decade, which carry less financial risk for short fiction than print publishing. At promotional events for Wisdom Tree, Earls quips that there is a perception, rightly or wrongly, that 'readers buy books by the kilo' (Earls 2016).

But to consider the practical convenience of the novella as its biggest attraction obviously does a disservice to the literary format itself, which first appeared in the late nineteenth century. In *The New Yorker,* Ian McEwan called it 'the perfect form of prose fiction', suggesting that 'the architecture of the novella is one of its immediate pleasures' (McEwan 2012). Its length—roughly 20,000–40,000 words—allows the audience to remain in the story for the brief time it takes to read, much as one would experience a film or a stage play. This element of performance is lost in a novel, with the addition of more characters and subplots; the novella's economy with language brings a sharper focus to its subject.

For Earls, the question of what makes a novella different from a long short story or a short novel is less about word count than it is about depth (Earls 2016). Like a short story, the scope of a novella is tight: a single plot, and a small cast of characters. But Earls achieves depth in his novellas by taking the seeds of two short stories and weaving them together, creating richness that would not exist if the same ideas had been written separately. Child actors in Hollywood are juxtaposed with a visit to an art gallery for a school assignment in NoHo, and in Juneau, the sudden disappearance of a man more than a century ago overlaps with the story of a family on an Alaskan cruise.

It will be interesting to see Earls' final conclusions on a model for novella publishing once he has finished his doctoral thesis. But if the success of *Wisdom Tree* so far is any indication, we can look forward to more authors exploring the riches of short fiction, no doubt aided by the support for novellas from initiatives such as Griffith

Review's annual Novella Project (in which *Gotham* was first published under the title *Cargoes*). Editor Julianne Schultz maintains that 'the digital age has disrupted publishing in what many consider to be a calamitous way. But ... it may also revive one of the richest and most rewarding literary forms.' (Schultz 2012: 9) Rich and rewarding is an apt description of the novellas comprising *Wisdom Tree*, and these small, bite-sized literary treats have all the hallmarks of a modern Australian classic.

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November Entry

I remember once
you said
you felt your skull caving
beneath the dull mornings
hidden within
the normalcy that always felt so odd to you

yet still for all of your resistance
you were happy.
I could never determine what it was you felt exactly.
startled, when you woke
again and again
with proof that you could not see an escape route

and still, it may have been sleep
that troubled you
ultimately.

perhaps you are better off with only this

and better facing me when you fracture against the weight of your skull

and leave the room forever.

ROBBIE COBURN,
MELBOURNE, VIC

THE DAIRY

ASHLEY SUTHERLAND

They gather in the middle of a field, as far from the eyes of outsiders as is possible. Gentle hands assist the woman and she lies on her back as sunbeams perform a waltz across her pregnant belly.

Those closest to her busy themselves in an effort to comfort her, sweeping her sweat-ridden hair from her face and massaging her blistering, swollen feet. The day she has been taught to fear has arrived. She groans as she experiences another painful contraction. Those on the fringe peer at her, whispering amongst themselves, wondering: "Will it be a son?"

The women are all alike in appearance, with similar colouring and protruding, pregnant bellies of all shapes and sizes. This is not the first time they have congregated here. It seems as though it is almost every week that they witness the creation of new life atop this grassy knoll.

Through clenched teeth, the young woman speaks. "Will it hurt?"

***

She stares down at her newborn son. The innocent brown eyes that they share dart curiously about as she strokes the downy golden hairs that cover his soft, porcelain skin. Her days in the field had left her in a mindless state and for the first time in her life it was as though she had awakened from a dream.

She'd witnessed the birth of many babies. But they had not been her own. She imagines her son as an older child, playing in the adjacent paddock with the other children. He stood on unwavering legs as he reached out across the wire fence to grasp her hand in his.

The baby's agitated cries startle her out of her reverie. Without thinking, she props him up, raises his head to her abundant breast and watches as he suckles. The rumbling sound of an approaching vehicle can be heard in the distance.

Around her, the crowd of pregnant women grow unsettled and begin to disperse. But the woman does not look up. She is enraptured by the living miracle that she nurses at her bosom.

***

Large, monstrous hands snatch her son away from her breast. She screams and launches herself at the men, drawing blood as she digs her fingernails into their alien flesh. They yelp in surprise, quickly kicking her away. "Fuckin' animal," one mutters, "Hurry up and get her in the van!"

Her eyes do not leave her son's as she is scooped up and thrown into the back of a truck, her skull colliding with one of the metal walls that enclose the space. Something hot and wet drips from the fresh wound at the crown of her head. As the heavy doors slam shut, darkness and the roaring of the vehicle's engine consume her. She is suddenly jolted from one side of the dark shipping container to the other. There, she collapses into herself on the cold aluminium floor.

***

The men kick her sides and jab at her with strange prods which omit an electric shock. She cries out in agony, longing for her stolen baby. As she settles into the cement stall, she realises why the other women in the field cry when they feel their bellies grow.

The large figures pin her down and forcefully shove a hard plastic tube down her throat. She gags and attempts to fight them off to no avail. The gluggy liquid that slides down her throat is revolting. She tries to scream but it comes out garbled and the mysterious figures merely laugh.

***

Throughout this past week, she has doubled in size. Painful bedsores have developed where the cold concrete has rubbed her skin raw and flies nest in her eyes and genital orifices. Attempting to roll over to her other side, she finds that her body is too heavy and her mind too lethargic. The floor is now slick with her own faeces. The stench makes her sick.

One of her captors enters the cubicle, brandishing a metal rod. The woman immediately scrambles to her knees and cowers in the corner. Whimpering, she is yanked forward by her foot and made to kneel on all fours. The figure uses the rod to insert an unknown substance into her cervix.

***

When she returns to the field, she rushes to ask the other women if they have seen her son. But they do not remember a baby boy.

***

Her belly is growing. At night, she places her hands on the round surface and smiles as she feels little feet pushing against her touch. As the sun rises, she and the other women are goaded into the cement blocks at the far end of the field. Their captors allow them to sit on cushy chairs as they hook heavy metal contraptions to their breasts.

After a while, the machines begin to whir and the women laugh uneasily because the suction feels strange.

The women are all alike in appearance, with similar festering wounds and bloodshot eyes that appear to have sunk into their skulls. They talk amongst themselves, sharing stories and cracking the occasional joke to lighten the mood. "I think you'll have a girl this time," one of the women proposes.

Author
Ashley Sutherland is a twenty-one-year-old undergraduate student at Flinders University in South Australia. She is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts – Enhanced Program for High Achievers with a double Major in History and Creative Writing. Her research interests include political history and the concept of cultural memory. However, this particular piece was influenced by her interest in animal activism and the controversial issue of dairy production.

Anorexia

The skin can be controlled
as any landscape can be altered.
greed swarming the belly.
 wake. needlessly hungry. fat swelling around the jaw
and expanding the navel. the continuous growth of the mind-
the process of thought that breathes and contorts.
the other side of morning
entrenched in a stark vision of discipline.
 the weight of meals is essential to measure.
the flesh sustained
without unnecessary interference.
the dream of starving.   of disappearing
responding to each movement
overridden by
the drive of ambition
 you stand
lifeless
shrinking in the abandoned daylight.

ROBBIE COBURN,
MELBOURNE, VIC

'WAR ZONE TOURS'
I CAN TELL YOU WHAT IT'S LIKE

I can tell you what it's like ears and eyes out on stalks neck cricking over one shoulder or another heart in a vice of fear rifles at attention on every corner tanks and jeeps changing the colour of your afternoons people you have known running for their lives work mates afraid to sit near you and maybe you them Family men turned guard and vigilante guns in their pockets women doing normal shopping dropped to the ground a bullet in the back people on a harmless night out in pieces across the pavement I can't start to tell you about the children I can tell you what it's like sitting in your mind-your-own-business living room listening to gunshot getting heavier and closer not knowing whether to go or stay if your street will be cordoned off with barbed wire overturned vehicles the men with guns and should you be kept in or better not Taking your name off the front doorbell so you can't be categorised or bombed out sirens on the increase helicopters low in the sorry sky I can tell you what it's like after you leave and you have begun picking up your own pieces and every week you are watching on the news your country burning watching the news for people you know dead injured evacuated and some days you see them I can't start to tell you what that's like Just stay away from the war zone it's not a sideshow alley there is no freak show you have no business there

In response to the article 'Russian travel company wants to sell tours to the front line of Syrian civil war' published at news.com.au January 2016. Online [Accessed January 18, 2016]
URL: http://www.news.com.au/travel/world-travel/middle-east/russian-travel-company-wants-to-sell-tours-to-the-front-line-of-syrian-civil-war/news-story f68110a7e1a10c7e34a5837896afe83e

LIZZ MURPHY,
BINALONG, NSW

ON THE STREETS OF MELBOURNE

ANDREW MORTIMER

The genre of 'street photography' is the art of capturing life, culture, and humanity of people in their everyday activities and is associated with Humanist and Social Photography, Documentary Photography, Candid Photography and Photojournalism.

Andrew Mortimer captures unmediated chance encounters and random occurrences involving people in public places. He cites Henri Cartier-Bresson—a pioneer of street photography—as an inspiration. Like Cartier-Bresson and many others, Mortimer works in black and white and aims to capture what Bresson defined as the decisive moment, the almost instant recognition of the significance of an event combined with an awareness of the perfect way to express it pictorially. Mortimer relishes capturing life, culture and the humanity he sees as people go about their everyday activities. He describes the challenge of street photography as being attuned to see interesting moments as they occur and to work quickly to determine the best way to capture the image before the moment passes.

Things-As-They-Are offer such an abundance of material that a photographer must guard against the temptations of trying to do everything. It is essential to cut from the raw material of life – to cut and cut, but to cut with discrimination.

Henri Cartier-Bresson

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