Power and the Self

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1   Introduction: theorizing power and the self

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Relations of power and the experience of people as subjects were two horizons of cultural theory in the late-twentieth century; they remain so in the twenty-first. But precisely how do these two sides of our human reality touch, mark, even remake one another? Where is the common ground between them? Our intellectual heritage from critical theory, all too often, has led us to focus upon the political structures and the economic circumstances in which people abide while disregarding the motivations, emotions, and meanings that modulate or vitalize these structures and circumstances. Our heritage from psychology and psychological anthropology all too often has led us to mistake the cross-cultural vicissitudes of people's sentiments and behaviors for reflections of a Western form of self. Not only have these two rich traditions frequently ignored each other's province; each has tended to define itself in opposition to the other. Until recently, many critical theorists were apt to denounce the very attempt to craft psychological models as essentializing – especially models emphasizing psychic universals of deep motivation or affect.[1] Meanwhile, many psychological anthropologists were apt to dismiss the study of power as derivative of a moral rather than an intellectual agenda.[2]

It grows ever more obvious that unmasking contemporary power relations and generating truly useful psychological models must lie at the confluence of these two heritages. As Fanon argued long ago (1967), one of the most crushing abilities of political oppression is to effect psychological forms of alienation in which people lose loyalty to themselves – to their profoundest feelings and to their love of self. Political perspectives that do not bring psychological theorizing into their purview must then be incomplete. Conversely, psychological theorizing that ignores power relations is liable to take human oppression for human nature. This liability has been evident since the dawn of modern Western psychological theory in ideas like Freud's "penis envy." It remains equally evident in evolutionary psychologists' recent insistence that natural selection favors females who are "slow to arouse sexually" and who are light-skinned (Ellis and Symons 1997:197–198; van den Berghe and Frost 1986).[3]

Earlier in this century there were noteworthy attempts to mediate this intellectual divide. Herbert Marcuse, a member of the post-Marxist Frankfurt

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School, undertook a critical reading of Freud (1955).[4] For Marcuse, external power relations were internalized as cultural "performance principles," socially prescribed activities that channel human energy, demand renunciations, and universally disguise themselves as necessitated by the specter of scarcity (Marcuse 1955:35–40).[5] The result was "surplus repression" – gratuitous inhibitions that barred the unfolding of truly human capacities for love and for enjoyment.[6]

In anthropology, the culture and personality school took up the issue of power in studies of the psychologically coercive/permissive sides of culture. Their intent was to use ethnography to reformulate theories of the self – thereby broadening psychology's and anthropology's foundations as sciences. Margaret Mead, for example, offered a cultural relativist critique of Freud. Freud leaned towards the idea that conflict between the human body and the body politic was fundamental to the nature of society (1961:141–143). In *Coming of Age in Samoa*, Mead vindicated the utopian potentialities of human society that Freud disparaged. In Freud's vision, much human unhappiness derived from civilization's unrelenting demands upon the energies of the person, demands imprinted in the form of a punitive conscience, internalized through the agency of parental figures, and evident in sexual repression (1961). Mead countered that a culture could be created – in Samoa indeed had been created – which did not exploit but accommodated human needs.[7]

On the one rim of this power/self divide, then, we find continental philosophy on being and action oriented toward uncovering existential verities of the human condition. On the other rim we find American anthropology in the wake of Boas, seeking to use ethnography to gain purchase on Western personality theory. From these extraordinarily different vantage points began to emerge what is at least retrospectively a common ground. Alas, for decades to follow, mainstream psychological anthropologists obdurately insisted on conceptualizing emotional or cognitive schemata in synchronic/static terms – betraying lingering desires to unearth an ostensibly de-historicized and de-politicized human "nature" that was immune to the influences of power. Other anthropologists – in the tradition of Mead, Benedict, and Malinowski – continued to use ethnography to critique Western theory, but frequently abandoned the aims of these (often unacknowledged) predecessors. While earlier anthropologists had used ethnographic critique in the service of developing more comprehensive psychological models, these ethnographic deconstructionists were apt to insist that anthropology could at best aspire to a particularistic cultural relativism (cf. Strauss 2000). In the same spirit, many scholars who authored fashionable and intriguing studies of personhood or subjectivity in various cultures and historical periods seemed unwilling to acknowledge that their work had implications for psychological and anthropological theory.

Running in tandem with these divisive intellectual postures were efforts to develop the fertile space between the intellectual horizons of power and the self.

In this first chapter we begin by mapping this space. We then retrace fruitful twentieth-century efforts to cultivate it, which came from many disciplinary directions and out of which twenty-first century culture theory must grow. We also review the recent groundswell of interest in psychological anthropology in reaping this harvest – those works that are kindred to our own. In short, we aim to give this book, figuratively speaking, its homeland, its ancestors, and its family.

Mapping power and the self

To begin we offer a few words of definition concerning selfhood and power. *Self* we take to be as an encompassing domain term that includes within it virtually all aspects of personhood and subjectivity. The self is constituted by acts of identification with internal elements of experience and with persons, groups, and representations in the cultural world (Mageo 1998:3–36). As such, it is irrevocably implicated in power relations. *Identity* we take to be the sense of self that derives from acts of identification (Mageo 1998:38–39). In other words, one may identify with one's emotions, as women in Western societies were once encouraged to do (Lutz 1990), or with one's problem-solving capacity, as men were encouraged to do (Tannen 1991:49–50, 51–53). Both of these kinds of identification are with facets of the subjective inner self. Alternatively, one can identity with one's family, clan, lineage, or village – as people do in many of those societies anthropologists have traditionally studied. This is to construct identity through the relations of one's social self (e.g. Strathern 1990). In some societies people are encouraged initially to form subjective identifications, in others social identifications, but in the end both are ingredients in identity everywhere (Mageo 1998). Furthermore, while in any given culture certain experiences are likely to be hallmarked as definitive of personhood, the individual's personal identifications tend to shift continually, as in Stuart Hall's notion of "contextual suturing."

Hall (1996:3–6) emphasizes that identities are points of temporary attachment that "suture" an actor to a variety of subject-positions in the divergent social locations of his or her life. These subject-positions and social locations exist only within a specific cultural and historical context, which provokes situational ego-investments and fosters situational strategies. Subject-positions, furthermore, are galvanized by fields of cultural value and power that are embraced or resisted through the work of subjectivity – that is, by bringing one's own feelings and experience to bear on preexistent values and powers. This view is consonant in various ways with those taken by this book's authors.

Power can be conceived as socioeconomic and as entailing physical coercion or, alternatively, as an epistemic constraint of cultural assumption. The idea of power as socioeconomic or physical coercion easily associates with Max Weber's definition of power as individuals' ability to carry out their own will

despite resistance – to exert *agency* over and against the will of others who oppose it (1958). By contrast, Foucauldian perspectives emphasize power as an epistemic function – the constraints of supposition and category that underpin our very form of knowledge and that shape the experience of being a subject. Unlike Weber, Foucault is interested in tracing how knowledge and subjectivity operate as power in an a priori sense – the power of epistemic assumption *within* which action takes place.[8]

Folk conceptions have long blended power-as-episteme and power-as-agency into one another, for example: (1) in the idea of gods and spirits influenced by magic, ritual, prayer, or (2) in notions of charisma or mana. Gods and spirits can be seen as personified versions of epistemic power subjected to human agency by religious practice. Thus ethics are one manifestation of an episteme and may be personified in a god to whom people may pray for justice. Prayer, then, is a method of exerting agency through the evocation of an episteme. Mana and charisma can be seen as epistemic manifestations invested in an individual's personality and body, resulting in enhanced agency. Mana is typically translated as efficacy, although it especially denotes an efficacy manifest in fertility (Firth 1949; Shore 1989:142). Chiefs who have mana are usually taken to personify epistemic values (to be noble, virile, and so forth), but correspondingly their hands and other body parts are believed to have the power to inflict or cure sickness. Obviously our discourse in this volume is intended to be philosophical/scientific rather than religious but, as in these folk models of power, we reject any essentialized dichotomy between social power and agency on the one hand, and epistemic power and experience on the other. Together, these "powers" constitute a continuum in which the poles are always shading into one another. Together they chart the domain of power in relation to self, as well as situating these essays and the theoretical frameworks on which they draw in a common field of inquiry.

Both social and epistemic uses of the word "power" can be found in Marx's nineteenth-century writings, the first well developed and the second incipient. For Marx, social power in the form of capital is dictated by who owns the means of production. But power also takes the form of ideology, the classic example of which is religion – the opium of the people. Twentieth-century critical theory sought to articulate these infrastructural and superstructural forms of power. Fully tracing the development of this twentieth-century problematic is a work that would require volumes, but it will be useful to briefly situate the major critical theorists drawn upon by the authors herein within its scope.

Twentieth-century articulations between power and the self

For contemporary anthropologists, one of the most influential early ideas that articulated agentive and epistemic power was Gramsci's notion of hegemony

([1948–1951]1992). Hegemony is what one might call "a naturalized ideology": that is, an ideology that presents itself not as a philosophy with which one might or might not agree, nor as a moral system that describes how things should be, but rather as the way the world *is*. Gramsci's idea that domination is as much a matter of worldview as it is of capital opened new questions. How did these structures of domination get inside people's heads? How were they natural-ized? Early answers can be found in Vygotsky's activity theory ([1931]1992): interior worlds replay the culturally scripted social relations in which the child develops. Outer speech is interiorized and becomes conversation within the person, which then mediates between desire and the world. We tend to take what originates within us just as we take our bodies – as givens of the natural world.

Over the last several decades Foucault's considerations of how structures of domination are naturalized have pervaded anthropological studies. For Foucault, hegemony is constituted through discourse. Though discourses in the Fou-cauldian model tend to reflect the episteme of a specific historical-cultural world, they are "within" as well as without – a language of the self as well as for it. What enters into this language and what remains unspoken shape human awareness. Three internal agencies that are separate in Freud's model of the self – superego (conscience), ego (conscious awareness), and id (impulse) – are all implicitly constructed through discourse for Foucault. (1) Discourse operates as a form of surveillance, resembling Freud's superego – the internal, repressive presence of "civilization" that spawns "discontents." (2) Foucault's discourse also produces knowledge, resembling Freud's ego. Unlike this Freudian ego, however, discourse generates the very categories of knowledge and forms of facticity. In Victorian discourse, for example, sex became a new subject of knowledge and kind of fact (1990). (3) Discourse itself re-encodes, even recre-ates the domain of impulse. Nineteenth-century Victorian discourse incited a recognition and realization of sexuality in more personalized forms.

If Foucault cast light on the nature of hegemony, agency was bracketed in his work: those with social position and those without it were likewise compelled by discourses and the epistemes that authorized them. The issue of resistance was nonetheless pivotal for Foucault. Resistance was putatively the omnipresent "compatriot of power" (1980:142), but epistemes and resistances alike were ghostly entities – seemingly self-propelled. Indeed, it was unclear who was resisting just as it was irrelevant who was speaking. Here we had power forming the subject, but the subject rarely appeared as an agent.

Raymond Williams's notion of "counterhegemonic" discourse began to fill out the conceptual space highlighted by Foucault's idea of resistance (1977). Following Williams, scholars in Cultural Studies investigated discourses that, while sharing the basic terminology and presuppositions of dominant discour-ses, defined themselves in reaction to hegemony. Cultural theorists also began

drawing heavily on Bakhtin's idea of heteroglossia ([1975]1981) at least in part because it complicated the hegemonic domination depicted so compellingly in Foucault's model of discourse. From a Bakhtinian viewpoint, hegemonies were never in any sense complete: there was always a multitude of discordant, contradictory "voices" within society and within the self. Bakhtin's voices engaged in and enlisted discourses but they were personified and dialogic rather than ghostly. Feminist and postcolonial theorists gave substance to these voices – showing us that they were embodied in people who had a particular social place, who featured certain forms of selfhood, and who were framed by a politics of knowledge.

Bourdieu's praxis theory (1992) also promised to supplement the deficiencies in Foucault's models of power and the self. If one considers "symbolic capital" as a kind of individual or in-group prerogative, *à la* Bourdieu, then epistemic power can be seen as symbolic capital writ large – enlarged in breadth and depth to encompass the very conditions of shared social being. Epistemic power is like a panopticon that oversees the most basic preconditions of subjectivity itself. But symbolic capital can also be seen as Foucauldian epistemes-writ-small, in fields of interaction where people exert social force on one another. Then epistemes become the unconscious orienting practices that play out in daily cultural life. As habitus, epistemes also code strategies for cultural games that can be played to advantage by actual people, especially those who are in privileged positions to begin with, and to a lesser extent those who would resist them (Bourdieu 1992:16–22). Further, in the form of symbolic capital epistemic power reappears as points that can be amassed like money in a game or like money in a fluctuating stock market and that can be drawn upon in future moves. In praxis theory, epistemes, while still tacit, became potential modes of practical domination rather than merely the invisible givens of consciousness and social life.

As resistance was central to conceptualizing power for Foucault, so was embodiment for Bourdieu. Bourdieu explored embodiment through his idea of "hexis," which in some ways seemed the physical instantiation of habitus. Yet it was unclear in his notion of hexis how bodily experience was an agentive mode of personhood. Hexis bore down like an imprinting stamp upon the body – shaping the movement styles, tastes, and bodily mannerisms of cultural groups and of gendered groups within cultures (1992:82, 87, 93–94). While Bourdieu's hexis helped to bridge the conceptual distance between epistemes and embodiment, it left obscure our ability to resist power relations as bodies.

The body is never mere corporeality. Everywhere the body encodes those aspects of the experiencing subject that are hypocognized in cultural ideologies and overlaid by dogma (e.g., Kleinman 1980, 1985; Martin 1987, 1995; Haraway 1993). Aspects of self that are impersonated by the body, figuratively speaking, are also those most likely to be excluded/repressed in epistemes.

As such the body is a likely nexus of personal resistance and of agency. Just as with Foucault's model of resistance, the conceptual space highlighted by Bourdieu's bodily hexis was incompletely filled in. Bourdieu's concept of practice accounted well for the person as exercising self-interested agency but not for the person as experiencing or resistant subject.[9] In this lack of attention to subjectivity, to feeling, to personal meaning, Bourdieu left untheorized our most private struggles, personal conflicts, and the small triumphs that remain so emotionally and intellectually sustaining.

Can psychological anthropology help traverse the conceptual distance between habitus and active agency on the one side, and affect and embodiment on the other? Let us begin our crossing by asking: has there been a model of the body as invested with agency or of the body as resisting power relations? In Freud's work, the id was an unconscious and instinctual dimension of our humanity and was a radical Other within the self. The id was the not-me that resisted civilization and was discontent almost in principle even if it was also, paradoxically, the very root of human happiness. From a more current perspective, the id could be rewritten, not as an inevitably alienated-dissociated part of self, but as a potential mode of affective and embodied agency that can be brought within the compass of conscious identification and intentionality. For decades now, feminists have explored a similar view in their models of emotion (Lutz, chapter 9). The core reactions of the affective/embodied self can become as mad, as hysterical, as destructive as any other part of the us; this potentiality has been documented by Freud, the psychoanalysts who succeeded him, and many others. Nevertheless, these reactions, deep within the self, are a vital source of human resistance to power relations. For present purposes, this affective/embodied form of agency may be roughly termed "psychic power." Psychic power is crucial to what Scheper-Hughes has called a "critical psychological anthropology" (1992a:221).

The implicit tension between epistemic and psychic power, we suspect, is one reason that psychological anthropology has trouble finding a center today amid an emphasis on universal motivations or cognitive structures, on one hand, and critical analyses that consider affect and identity on the other. This academic power struggle, so to speak, is not new but it persists. Like the layer-cake model of action bequeathed to anthropology from Parsons and Kroeber, these disagreements inappropriately stratify social life into discrete realms of the cultural or symbolic, the social or politico-economic, and the psychological.[10] By making the self the focus of analysis, and by considering agency *and* experience as dynamic and relational, the essays in this volume engage rather than undercut our sensitivity to articulations between such levels and to the nuances of psychic motivation. As such they create new ways for theorizing power and the self. In the process this book sheds light on some of the cardinal issues and tensions in contemporary anthropology.

Critical psychological anthropology: twenty-first century directions

Drawing lucid theoretical insights from original empirical research, the authors in this volume offer fresh approaches to opening the territory between the horizons of power and the self. The chapters wed a sweeping knowledge of relevant cultural theory with voices that emerge from case studies – studies that evince deep knowledge of and sympathy with their subjects. Together, we mean to fashion critical perspectives that encompass subjectivity and psychological models that comprehend power relations as an ever-present dimension of human psychology. We build on the existential and critical insights that cultural realities are created and recreated by human choices at the same time that human beings are shaped by political ideologies incorporated as modes of thinking, feeling, relating, performing, and embodiment. In line with the best work of the culture and personality school, and along with others in critical psychological anthropology, we use ethnopsychological studies of folk models to critique Western theory (see particularly Lutz 1988; Lutz and Abu-Lughod 1990; Scheper-Hughes 1992b).

Power and the Self is part of a larger effort in contemporary psychological anthropology to craft new theories by coupling local cognitive structures with broader conceptualizations of motivation, affect, and identity via the operation of epistemic and symbolic power (see for example Lave and Wenger 1991, Quinn and Strauss 1997, Holland *et al.* 1998, Mageo 1998).[11] Conversely, we combine critical theory and an advocacy for our subjects' human interests with theory-making about the self. These chapters trace the experiential journeys through which people achieve embodied, emotive, and strategic forms of agency within fields of social and epistemic power. They illustrate that forms of agency are intimately bound-up with the human capacity to innovate upon if not to reimagine existing schemata; these innovations and reimaginings are integral to the activity of self-making.

Ethnographic revelations emerge from these juxtapositions of power and the self, both in individual cases and in their relationship to each other. Our point is to use ethnography to discover non-essentializing ways of mapping structures and practices of power as they interact with cognitive and emotional schemata and with human experience. Doing so presents inherent problems because power and the self can each produce distortive knowledge about the world. Recent critiques of scientific inquiry expand upon Gramsci's idea of hegemony by demonstrating *à la* Foucault that power relations influence the questions asked, the manner in which questions are posed, and what counts as evidence in answer.[12] Psychological anthropologists have long argued that our sense of self is indelibly colored by the psychological economies in which we develop.[13] Working at objectivity in cultural terrain is like assuming an ongoing counter-transference on the part of the investigator, who must forever

deconstruct the phenomena she observes but also her position as observer, shaded as it inevitably is by power relations and culturally specific psychological orientations.

Part I – Power differentials in the US

Part I begins in the cultural territory from which its authors originate. Here we focus on institutionalized forms of social power in the US, the epistemes that sanction them, and the personal dramas through which people exert agency within the confines of institutions and epistemes. American studies of the self are apt to envision power as at odds with individuals. Indeed, from Emerson's "Self Reliance" to Lucas's "Star Wars," Americans have tended to valorize the individual. In contrast, listen to an early Chinese philosopher of the state, Mo Tzu (479–438 BC).

In the beginning . . . [p]eople existed as individuals. . . . [There were] a thousand concepts of right for a thousand men, and so on until there were a countless number of concepts of right for a countless number of men. All of them considered their own concepts . . . as correct and other people's concepts as wrong. And there was strife among the strong and quarrels among the weak. Thereupon Heaven wished to unify all concepts of right in the world. The worthy was therefore selected and made an emperor (quoted in Chan 1963:230).

Here individuality is a suspect renegade force at odds with heavenly order.[14] When people identify primarily with their groups, individualism is perceived as the source of social discord, as in Mo Tzu's origin story. Alternatively, inasmuch as people identify with individualism they dissociate group needs, which reappear in projected form as autonomous demonized powers: organized crime, communism, big government, and evil empires. This does not negate American studies' view that the state jeopardizes individuals' human needs and legitimate interests. Rather, it is a necessary realization that all vantagepoints, including those in this volume, are culturally positioned. In a Foucauldian sense, the American conceptualization of "the individual versus social power" is a site for the production of knowledge.

Chapter 2, Scheper-Hughes's "The Genocidal Continuum," argues war crimes like genocide dramatically illustrate a failure to regard others as human, but this failure also underlies many peace-time practices. Through their treatment in insane asylums or retirement homes, for example, inmates may be reduced to the status of objects out of place that need to be severed from society like the mad in Foucault's *Madness and Civilization* (1965). Hsu (1961) has argued that Americans take self-reliance as a basic marker of personhood; correspondingly, socially dependent categories of people are in jeopardy of being treated as non-persons. Scheper-Hughes concludes with her own radical version of participant-observation: a visit to her beloved aged parents who are

institutionalized in a state-run "home." There she confronts the questions: what can affective/embodied resistance mean when one must rely on agents of the state to perform even one's most intimate bodily functions? How can we survive in any meaningful sense as human subjects within contracting structures of social and epistemic power?

In Lachicotte's chapter ("Intimate Powers, Public Selves") our focus shifts to the late modern relatives of the inmates of earlier insane asylums – psychiatric outpatients. Here the state-as-institution is a Kafkaesque field in which it is nonetheless possible to exercise a degree of agency. Exploring the case of Roger – who is variously pronounced "obsessive-compulsive," "bipolar," "schizoid," "borderline," and so forth – Lachicotte considers the incipient heteroglossic character of psychiatric discourse. Although constituted to control people like Roger, psychiatric discourse turns out to be a source of symbolic capital that he can appropriate for his own ends. Lachicotte uses Bakhtin's view of the heteroglossic nature of discourses like Roger's to develop the concept of a "space of authoring" within which agency and resistance are possible. Drawing on Vygotsky for perspective on Roger's discursive practice, Lachicotte emphasizes the recursive rather than oppositional relationship between the social as the outward repetition of psychic life, and subjectivity as the interiorization of the social. The kind of psychic distance that Obeyesekere (1981, 1990) previously dichotomized as the difference between private identity symbols and public ones is here made a continuum – or better, it turns dialogic. This dialog crisscrosses the boundary between the ostensible self and the omnipresent social other. As such, social and personal life do not disappear one into the other; rather, as Lachicotte puts it, they subsist as "two mediations of human existence."

To extend this idiom, there are ways that a dialogic notion of identity can be used to comprehend human existence in ever-widening circles that spiral out from what Gilles Deleuze would call "pleats" or "folds" – those changing relationships that constitute membranes between the self and a world of external powers (1993). Analysis can move in widening arcs that touch progressively on interiorized motivational structures as well as the wider social and epistemic forces that interact with them and form their context. Here identity is constituted at the boundary between internalized and externalized forces – operating in that zone of contact between social and epistemic power, and the motivational responses that engage these as either accommodation or resistance. The pleats or folds of the self shift accordingly, sometimes pushing the envelope of subjectivity as resistance against established dogma and sometimes retreating inward in defense.

Part II – Transnational psychologies

Transnationalism is an important late-modern venue for critical theorization of power, yet the psychologies that derive from transnational experience are little

studied. There are two ways one might consider the flows that are constitutive of transnationalism: the flow of global capitalism lubricated by the media, and the flow of people, particularly immigrants, across state boundaries. Part II investigates these flows and their relevance to power and the self through multinational marketing by Japanese manufacturers of children's toys (Chapter 4, Allison's "Playing with Power") and the life-history of a Turkish immigrant making her way in Dutch bourgeois society (Chapter 5, Ewing's "Consciousness of the State and the Experience of Self").

Like fantasy figures of global evil in James Bond or Superman or Batman movies, globalized epistemes in multinational marketing reflect an ominous constellation of power. The culture mixing that is inevitable in transcultural contexts, however, also intensifies heteroglossia in social and personal life. The essays in Part II suggest that this heteroglossia intensifies conflict within the self, even while it expands opportunities to play epistemes against one another and multiplies possibilities for agency. At the same time, larger aspirations for heightened personal success in the spiral of late modernity almost serve as a kind of Bakhtinian "superaddressee," against which alternative values and audiences are ultimately subordinated. The self in transnational perspective, moreover, raises anew questions as to what we share cross-culturally. These commonalities are not imagined as residing in essentialized cultures. Rather in transnational perspective they are discovered in cultural interactions within historical time as shared dimensions of our humanity (and inhumanity) are inflected by power relations. Transnationalism meaningfully re-draws lines of human difference and connection.

Taking us into their subjects' bodies and emotions – Allison, those of her own son, Adam, and Ewing, those of her friend Nergis – these essays depict the relentless presence of epistemic and social power in globalized human life. Bombarded with commercial indoctrination from the beginning of life, it may seem to children, as the Borg declare in *Star Trek*, "Resistance is futile!" In transit from one culture to another, one might think that Nergis has no leverage, no stable cultural standpoint from which to resist. Yet both essays reveal possibilities for embodied, affective *and* strategic agency opened by the complexities of globalization.

Adam and Nergis live betwixt and between cultural worlds; in Adam's case between a local and a global world, in Nergis's case between a Turkish and a Dutch one. Children playing with power in a realm of globalized commercialism and members of migrant groups inhabiting what Anzaldua has eloquently called "borderlands" (1999) are pulled in two (or more) directions at once. They discover and develop themselves from this liminal position. Their condition is postmodern; they live with differences and with attendant ambivalences as cultural givens that cannot be resolved. Previous theorizations of this condition, for example Jameson's (1981), portray the associated psychology as one-dimensional – personal affect flattened and personal narrative broken

into disjunctive fragments lacking a center.[15] Allison's and Ewing's subjects are nothing like this; their reactions are transparently, touchingly human and familiar. But they are also reacting in and to a power milieu that forecloses certain possibilities and opens others; these need to be understood to fathom their distinctive cultural psychologies. Their psychologies may not be those of a "traveling culture" (Clifford 1992), but they are the psychologies of cultures that travel.

Part III – Colonial encounters: power/history/self

In the second half of the twentieth century, colonial studies were central to Marxist and post-Marxist analyses of power relations. An initial tendency in these studies was to see the colonized as socially disempowered – victims of progress with the term progress placed in quotation marks (Bodley 1975). Later works (see for example Taussig 1980; Wolf 1982; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 1992; Obeyesekere 1992) emphasized epistemic aspects of colonialism and resistance to power relations. Part III investigates how indigenous cognitive, emotive, and bodily schemata have been compromised by colonial epistemes but also how people renew themselves in those cultural encounters that punctuate historical experience.

In Chapter 6 ("Spirit, Self, and Power"), Dalton examines the colonial undermining of precolonial discourses and ways of emoting among the Rawa speakers of Papua New Guinea. Dalton argues that this produced two divergent forms of "normative schizophrenia" that resemble two linguistic disorders outlined by Jakobson (1971). Each of these linguistic disorders corresponds to the dropping away of one element of logical thinking, which is then replaced by fantasy processes. Two intriguing case studies illustrate these linguistic disorders – the case of an aspiring but disequilibrated cargo cult leader, Meyango, and that of a raskol gang leader, Tapa.

In chapter 7, "Self Models and Sexual Agency," Mageo traces the colonial decay and postcolonial recreation of Samoan women's traditional modes of discourse and agency. She argues that in nineteenth-century England, moral agency was attributed to women while agency for achievement was attributed to men. Attributions of agency had sexual correlatives; moral sexual agency was exercised by what one did *not* do – for example by not having sex prior to marriage. These gendered attributions traveled to Samoa with the London Missionary Society and gradually compromised Samoan women's sex roles, which Samoan men then took up in parodic and ludic forms of transvestism. In face of a colonial shrinkage of their discourse, sexual agency, and modes of political achievement, some women retreated into a psychic realm of spirit possession. There, women continued to act out the old modes of embodiment and discourse. The case Mageo explores, that of her former Samoan sister-in-law

Easter, shows how one woman retrieves agency from the spirit realm, partially revising colonial epistemes.

Part IV – Reading power against the grain

Part IV is dedicated to the idea that theory-making must always go hand-in-hand with critical reflexivity. It is only by continual efforts to remain critical towards one's own premises that the activity of theory-making can remain an open process. The volume's last two essays return to the reflexive stance of Part I but in a new key. First we ask: to what extent are the questions we pose on power and the self an artifact of our own cultural positioning? After all, concerns with power and the self descend to us from a Western tradition that stretches back at least to Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1973) and Rousseau's *Social Contract* (1923). Second we ask: is our way of conceptualizing selves as exercising meaningful agency *vis-à-vis* social and epistemic power a cultural construction that descends from these same Western sources?

Chapter 8, Whitehead's "Eager Subjects, Reluctant Powers," questions whether power is universally desired or is merely a Western obsession, sister to our obsession with the self – a mania to which the Seltaman of Papua New Guinea have not succumbed. Whitehead argues that in worlds where social power is not consolidated and when people are allowed to cultivate satisfying dependency relations early in life, they may be happiest riding "under the wing of power." Reciprocally, those taking power must be persuaded and cajoled to do so. Acceding to ritual power can be onerous; it imposes difficult, sometimes impossible, responsibilities.

The concluding chapter, Lutz's "Feminist Emotions," considers how a de-preciative psychological designation – "Women are emotional" – became an epistemic ground within late-twentieth-century Western society. The self and power problematic has been fundamental to the history of feminist discourse on emotion and its critical analysis has helped provide a notion of self from which women have begun to renegotiate power relations. In turn, this feminist tradition is singularly weighty for the present volume; it explores what we have called psychic power in its own right – albeit in different terms than have traditionally been considered in psychological anthropology. From the perspective of late-twentieth-century feminist thought on emotion, an understanding of psychic power can help us contend against the social power of others and against the epistemes that would determine our perceptions, cognitions, motivations, and goals. This critical grasp of emotion, furthermore, has been an important arena for reformulating power relations and the self not only in Western societies but more widely.

At the beginning of each chapter we will discuss at greater length how these contributions bear on areas of current anthropological investigation. For the

remainder of chapter 1, we confine ourselves to previewing cross-cutting themes and to a synthetic analysis of problems that recur throughout these chapters – one might call them landmarks that identify that middle ground between power and the self.

Power in experience

The people of whom we write come from extraordinarily different cultures and political circumstances. Nevertheless they have existential problems in common and there are significant commonalities in their efforts to solve these problems. Our ethnographic protagonists push against if not split from the quotidian reality of their social worlds. Lachicotte's protagonist, Roger, slips into a fantasized world of psychiatric esoterica that protects him from the normal demands of social life. Whitehead's Seltaman move off into a world of ritual secrets, whose tortures and shared imaginings cordon cult members off from everyday life and from those (women and children) who inhabit it. Allison's son Adam along with all those children who follow the pied piper's call of commercialized toys-games-films escapes the limited autonomy of childhood and family in the late-modern capitalist world. Ewing's Nergis begins to revise the social power relations in which she lives by splitting with her family, her husband, her culture – reaching the point of transition in her trip to an amusement park, a toyland, which symbolizes fantasy life, just as toys do for Allison's son Adam. It is there that Nergis in her own mind, as well as socially, confronts her demons – in the form of stares by young Turkish men – with impunity. Samoan girls enter a world of spirits in which differences between Western and Samoan values are reconcilable counterpoints. Dalton's cargo cult and raskol gang-leaders likewise retreat from the contradictions that their colonially wracked social world visits upon them to a fantastic realm. There, cultural contradictions do not weigh people down in paralyzing depression so much as stimulate creative if not manic reimaginings of social schemata.

In these chapters one often finds not just individuals but whole groups that split with normal social life, retreating into the fantastic. There people reconnect with their own psychic power – with emotionally incandescent and embodied reactions to the forces that buffet them in daily life. This infusion of psychic power helps people revise epistemic and social relations, suggesting that fantasy can serve as a realm for "thinking through culture," in Shweder's terms, or for the "work of culture" in Obeyesekere's – a creative space in which personal culture can be transformed.[16] In other words psychological departures are a necessary preface to creating a "space of authoring" (Lachicotte, chapter 3).

Creating this "space" not only necessitates a break with the social world but also a breaking down of what Ewing calls the actors' own fragile "illusion of wholeness" (1990). Freud believed that the function of the ego is to mediate

between the libidinous dimension of the self and conscience, which is tanta-
mount to the internalized laws of social worlds (1961). When the ego is inad-
equate to this task, as in mental illness, a symptom replaces the conscious self
in this medial position. Dreams, for Freud, also play this medial role and are in
this sense the universal "symptom" (1955). Rather than consciously integrat-
ing impulses and inhibitions, dreams and symptoms symbolically concatenate
otherwise disjointed territories of the self (Freud 1955; 1966:394, 358–360).
Delusional worlds, even flights of fantasy, serve the same purpose. Freud saw
symptoms, dreams, and delusions as regressive, but he also believed that in cer-
tain cases regression could serve the self. It offered a safe harbor where people
could discover mediations that they had previously failed to find, not just to
ride out the proverbial storm, but to productively change in the process. Indeed
this was the point of psychoanalysis.

It is in the imaginal realm that people regain touch with psychic power and
discover avenues of agency within fields of social and epistemic power. Critical
psychoanalytic anthropology is helpful in analyzing the nature of this process.[17]
Obeyesekere argues that conflicted individuals sometimes orchestrate their most
private experiences in public symbolic idioms provided by culture (1981, 1990).
Doing so enables them to find a meaningful place for their painful, disorienting
personal histories within the social order. For Obeyesekere this orchestration
is the way back from personal alienation and disempowerment to social inte-
gration and empowerment. His Sinhalese female celibate ascetics, for example,
begin as social victims but through fantasy articulate crushing life experiences
with religious symbols. In the process, they exponentially increase their own
symbolic capital and mediate social power as it bears upon their lives. These
ascetics use their "calling" to exert freedoms that other women in their societies
do not share: they exercise a high degree of choice in sexual matters, they have
respected careers and independent incomes. This articulation of psychological
experience and shared idioms carries the weight of being non-normative and
to some extent stigmatized yet empowers its authors in significant respects;
it is also a fertile source of epistemic change (Obeyesekere 1981:169–183;
cf. Knauft 1996:225–230; Mageo 1994:417–427; 1998:164–190, 218–239).[18]

For Obeyesekere, epistemic change originates in the individual and is born of
tragic personal histories. The studies in this volume suggest that the epistemic
revisioning that Obeyesekere calls the work of culture can also be born of shared
social histories, like those of Rawa-speakers, or of Samoan Girls, or of children
coping with global capitalism.[19] But epistemic revisioning is also the work of
subjectivity (to expand Hall's term) and can refract creatively and disruptively
against various dimensions of power. Through the temporal twists of these
two inextricably interwoven projects, the work of culture and of subjectivity,
individuals and their groups along with them can powerfully re-author their
identities in ways that bear upon epistemic and social power.[20]

The question is: how is this possibility for change realized, or how does it fail to be realized? How do groups overwhelmed by the conflict between social or epistemic power and by their own psychic processes, marooned in personal fantasies that break with cultural epistemes and social power relations, effectively re-engage both? How does a generation (Allison's son Adam's generation), or a gendered cultural subgroup (Rawa men or Samoan women) find meaning or, alternatively, how do they fail to do so? How do they reconstitute Ewing's fragile "illusion of wholeness," not only within the self but also social cohesiveness between self and world?

Scheper-Hughes poses this question in her moving personal cry of despair at the end of her essay, which seems to offer no way out of "Happy Valley." This is why Roger is both a heroic and a pathetic figure: like some Alice forever in Wonderland, he cannot find the way out. Lost in fantasy, Roger subverts his own relation to the real, which he nonetheless endlessly seeks through the labyrinthine passageways of psychiatric discourse. He caricatures the discovery of the key, a relation between private experience and shared epistemes, in his attempts at self-analysis. Roger applies terms that would ordinarily place the patient's "delusions" or "neurosis" in relation to socially shared schemata of responsible adulthood, but he uses them to avoid responsibility – avoiding direct confrontations with power in what seems a quasi-conscious form of discursive guerrilla warfare.

Like Roger, Whitehead's Seltaman seem unable to overcome a profound ambivalence about power and about their own (potential) power and so would rather play power games than take real world roles invested with responsibilities. On the one hand, ambivalence results in seeking: young men seek power in fantasies made real by painful initiatory ordeals. On the other hand, ambivalence results in avoiding: mature men prefer to play with power in the imaginal realm, eschewing power roles in social life.

Allison's morphing tales return their hero/ines to everyday life – the seemingly insurmountable daily problems of development with which their stories open magically resolved. But one must ask: to what extent do these stories actually map such returns or merely proffer an empty promise of re-engagement, a promise that is addictive by virtue of the fact that it is never realized. Is it this addictive quality that is exploited to the hilt by manufacturers in multinational corporations? Allison's fantasy-possessed children are undergoing a commercial form of colonization. Like Dalton's colonized Rawa, they seem to be members of a late-modern cargo cult, desiring the latest toy in an action-figure series with the intensity of devotees. Do they, too, like the Rawa, suffer from normative schizophrenia, attempting to appropriate fantasized but non-existent capacities represented by their techo-enhanced heroes? Allison's son's partial deafness is a wonderful metaphor for the poignant and real problems posed by children's sense of limitation in face of the overwhelming social worlds that

humans have created and the alienation that these precipitate, throwing them back on fantasy. How many children who play with action-figures would rather confine themselves to playing power games, as do Roger and the Seltaman; how many children are driven to do so by the toys they buy?

In the West, questions about the relation between public and private symbols, or between social life and fantasy life, are also ones concerning the relation between rationalist discourses and personal-emotional ones. In the writings of Lutz's feminists, emotion appears as a dimension of self that is open to the imagination rather than, as Enlightenment forms of reason, turning upon a disarticulation of logic and fantasy. Emotion is a holistic form of mind, constituted of ideas, feelings, and sensations, and stimulated by external and internal images (see Hillman 1964). The feminists of whom Lutz writes argue that emotion also organizes data as wholes.[21] Does this functional isomorphism mean that emotion is a form of mind linked to the imagination through which new wholes can be created? If so, then emotion has a central place in charting the way back from those splits through which people enter into more agentive relations to power as it is embedded in internalized schemata and in social relations. The volume's chapters thus reveal a temporal dialectic between affective and embodied resistance to power *and* the re-absorption of subjectivity into power-inflected fields.

For Easter, whose spirit experiences are explored in Mageo's chapter, talk about spirits is reminiscent of psychoanalytic "talking cures" that involve emotive work. Easter's narrative is a process of thinking about and through emotions, a process that takes place in fantasy life. Yet her spirit talk articulates new modes of agency that are efficacious in the social world. The potent emotions that animate Easter's story seem to hold the key to culling symbolic capital as well as rewriting epistemes (while at the same time, her emotions towards her father complicate her passage). Perhaps Ewing's Nergis finds the way back most successfully. She temporarily relinquishes her emotional ties – to her unwanted husband certainly, but also to her son and parents – but not to the emotions that anchor these people within her. As in Easter's case, Nergis finds a relation between her dreams and her social realities that appears to turn on a talking cure. This involves reliving the emotional past in imagination with the friends who take her in during her "liminal" period – that period during which she has broken with her natal sociocultural world.

Nergis' ultimate reengagement, furthermore, is coincident with finding ways to exercise social power while sustaining relations with loved others. Nergis evinces a remarkable ability to recapture, in Ewing's terms, an illusion of wholeness, not only wholeness within the self, but a social wholeness in which the self is situated in a shared world. This is how we would define the work of subjectivity but it is also the work of culture. Nergis does not act only for herself; her efforts produce a new way of being-in-culture for younger relatives.

They are allowed, even supported, to continue their education because of Nergis. Identity mediations like that which Nergis achieves may be adopted by ever-widening circles of social others, forming new "membranes" between the self and external powers.

Genders–identities–contexts

Other themes that traverse this book call for at least momentary reflection. Among the most obvious is gender. Studying gender in the context of power and the self highlights its fluid and symbolic character, but also gender's sexual underpinnings that are fed by what we have termed psychic power. In turn, the issue of gender in these chapters makes obvious how social and epistemic power plays a role in self-construction (and its tribulations).

In Allison's chapter, phallized images of what was once male gender become the second skin of superhero/ines of both genders – in Sailor Moon's case, transmuting into a costume of a highly eroticized femininity. In Mageo's chapter, culture history turns upon male role-play with eroticized images of what was once female gender. Mageo considers colonial adulterations of traditional sex roles, which Samoans convert in entertainments into ironic reflections on gender difference. Ewing's Nergis shows how multiple gender models, juxtaposed in time and space by transnational experience, complicate gender as a facet of personal identity but also make it a source of strategic possibilities. Mageo's, Ewing's, and Dalton's chapters highlight the recursive role of gender in self-configuration. Gender is also part of the symbolic capital that Easter, Nergis, and Dalton's cargo cult and raskol gang leaders use to develop a personal sense of self, yet through this development each revises cultural gender models and the epistemes from which they derive. Mageo argues that gendered discourses tend to articulate with cultural domains – most saliently public/private in Anglo-American cultures or hierarchical/peer in Samoan culture – and that shared understandings of these domains shift in parallel with gender models through cultural history.

In Lutz's chapter, gendered models of self become a mode of transit from pejorative characterizations of female inferiority to novel constellations of self-hood, knowledge, and power. Peripheral peoples, especially women, have emotions and selfhoods nested in them that were marginalized by an Enlightenment privileging of reason. Lutz's history shows that latent in marginalized portions of self are critical perspectives on the center that can be enlisted by those who lack symbolic capital and are exiled from social power. In this sense Lutz's chapter raises another issue of supreme salience in the volume – the relation between identity and episteme.

Like Lachicotte, Lutz shows how epistemes provide languages and tropes that can be played back against themselves, constituting what we might call

"counter-identities." Scheper-Hughes' chapter surveys processes of identity erosion within epistemic power, specifically the personal erosion of her father's and her own identity. In Dalton's chapter, colonial epistemes erode indigenous identities and even generate aberrant and culturally dysfunctional identities. Lachicotte's Roger illustrates how the episteme of the sovereign individual can be bent and even cartooned in the process of identity construction. In Whitehead's chapter the episteme-as-religious-ideology is itself colonized for purposes of identity construction and hence fails to serve the purposes of social power. For her Seltaman, social power becomes little more than an identity trapping and an ambiguous trapping at that: those who have social power are suspected of trafficking in sorcery and their reputations are besmirched.

Lastly, many of the volume's chapters reveal how relations between the self and power pivot on the issue of context. In Scheper-Hughes' chapter, epistemes are most constricting when, in institutionalized forms, they freeze the normal flux of contexts. Her parents' retirement home suffers from a uniformity of context that seems to paralyze possibilities for self-construction. One can only die at "Happy Valley"; one can change neither oneself nor social nor epistemic power relations. In Lachicotte's essay, multiple psychiatric discourses and multiple life contexts (with spouse, with doctors, etc.) open the possibility of subverting social and epistemic powers. In Ewing's chapter, cultural contexts juxtaposed by transnational experience open inventive possibilities for self-construction and transform fixed epistemic and social power relations into negotiable realities. In Allison's chapter, morphing is a trope for traveling between contexts, the fantasized and the real, macro and micro, personal and social, as well as the medium of self-construction. Traditional contexts corrupted by colonial experience in Dalton's chapter almost irreparably confuse the activity of self-construction. For Samoans in Mageo's chapter, a colonial corruption of traditional contexts generates a recreative play with identity through which Samoan women in spirit possession negotiate their relation to male social domination and Samoan men in popular entertainments negotiate their relation to Western epistemes.

Much more could be said about these chapters, their contribution to bridging the distance between power and the self in psychological anthropology, in cultural psychology, even more broadly in studies of history/power/culture, and in culture theory. But it is time to let these fine essays speak for themselves.

NOTES

1. Essentialist ideas presuppose that fundamental characteristics are possessed by human beings, that there is a reliably fixed "human nature" beneath cultural and historical variation (Bocock 1986:112–117).
2. See for example the debate on objectivity and militancy in *Current Anthropology* 1995, 36(3):399–440, particularly Crapanzano's commentary (1995:399–408).

3. On these tendencies in evolutionary social science see further Mageo and Stone n.d.

4. Habermas (a student of Gadamer, another member of the Frankfurt School) later investigated the sphere of communicative action, which gave him a deep interest in psychoanalytic concepts of illusion such as projection and rationalization (1972).

5. "Performance principles" are the guises the reality principle assumes in different societies. This is not Freud's reality principle, although Marcuse's concept builds on Freud's. For Freud, the reality principle demands adjustments to *the* real world, with its inevitable limitations and difficulties (1911). For Marcuse, performance principles demand adjustment to *a* historical, sociocultural reality, with its specific demands on human energy. These sociocultural realities often mistake themselves for intrinsic reality, but are in fact arrangements that serve the interests of a privileged class.

6. In Reich's more embodied concept of "character armor," the self is also freighted with gratuitous inhibitions that diminish physical and emotional life (1972).

7. On Mead's critical reading of Freud, see further Mageo 1988:28–37. Unlike Marcuse, Mead feared that when one subtracted discontent from civilization, one also undermined intensity and involvement with life; these were the qualities she found missing in her Samoan model of Pacific harmony (1973:x). In Foucault's terms, Mead realized that when relations of power are moderated, so are forms of resistance.

8. Wolf distinguishes four kinds of power: individual capacity, the ability of one individual to impose his/her will on another, individuals' or groups' ability to control contexts, and structural power (1999:5). The first two of these assimilate to what we call agency, the third is intermediate on our agency/episteme continuum, and the fourth articulates epistemic and politico-economic dimensions.

9. For related critiques see Certeau 1984; Ortner 1984:144–148; and Quinn and Strauss 1997:47.

10. See further the analysis in Knauft 1996:10–13. Which features of each level were considered primary or determinant of those at other levels quickly became a major fault line of theoretical contention. In the wake of these debates, social and cultural theory has found it generally difficult to address actors' psychological plumbing, as Sherry Ortner (1984), among others, has noted. As noted in the text, it was to remedy this difficulty that scholars turned to practice theories in the 1980s and to epistemic notions of power in the 1990s. In psychological anthropology, this move was signaled by Catherine Lutz and Lila Abu-Lughod in the introduction to their important 1990 collection *Language and the Politics of Emotion*. They argue that if emotion is to be considered as a discursive construction, it cannot be divorced from the epistemic field of power within which discourse is located.

11. Although less grounded in psychological anthropology Battaglia 1995; Strathern 1990; Wagner 1991 also deserve mention here.

12. For examples see Laqueur 1990; Martin 1987; Haraway 1993; Scheper-Hughes 1992a; Taussig 1980 and Lutz, Chapter 9.

13. For examples see Benedict 1934; Spiro 1982; Hallowell 1955.

14. D'Andrade raises the question of Good vs. Bad power (1995:407–408). Power tends to culturally perceived as bad when it is at odds with fundamental cultural orientations to personhood and to be perceived as good when it is concordant with these models (Mageo 1998:11–14, 52–68).

15. For a psychological critique of Jameson, see Strauss 1997.