History, Memory and Identity:

A programmatic prolegomenon

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> *Lembrar é viver.* (To remember is to live.) (Brazilian saying)
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> Memory is vicarious experience. (John Dewey)
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> The twilight zone that lies between living memory and written history is one of the favorite breeding places of mythology. (C. Vann Woodward)
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> Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past. (Party slogan in George Orwell's *1984*)

Walter Benjamin (1892–1940) understood the modern experience of history in the context of commodity fetishism and the reification of images to be one of a sense of an enduring and eternal present and sameness, the apparent relentless advance of capitalism's relations of production erasing most, but not all, possibilities for liberation and redemption. The breaking of 'tradition' with its social relations, cultural representations and sense of history did not foreclose the possibility of emancipation, however. And this possibility had for Benjamin everything to do with delving into the past, for the interests of liberation impel a certain kind of understanding of history.[1]

For Benjamin, the possibility of liberation for modernity's downtrodden victims arises through a consideration of the past. An imposed focus on the future at the expense of the past 'made the working class forget both its hatred and spirit of sacrifice, for both are nourished by the image of enslaved ancestors rather than that of liberated grandchildren' (Benjamin, 1968 [1950]: 262). Thus, with respect to relations of domination and subordination, the stakes surrounding the sense of competing parties' places in history and the articulation of the past are high. It is up to a historical materialist[2] approach to sever the continuum of sameness in history and culture wrought by the ruling classes and the commodity form: 'Historicism gives the "eternal" image of the past; historical materialism supplies a unique experience with the past.' (Benjamin, 1968 [1950]: 264) Historicism threatens to preclude redemption and emancipation because it renders to all things historical a false equivalence:

> Historicism rightly culminates in universal history. Materialistic historiography differs from it as to method more clearly than from any other kind. Universal

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> history has no theoretical armature. Its method is additive; it musters a mass of data to fill the homogeneous, empty time. Materialistic historiography, on the other hand, is based on a constructive principle. (Benjamin, 1968 [1950]: 264)

For Benjamin, upon encountering a historical subject as a monad, a historical materialist recognizes 'a revolutionary chance in the fight for the oppressed past' (Benjamin, 1968 [1950]: 265).

Benjamin distinguished between two kind of experience, *Erfahrung*, something integrated as experience, and *Erlebnis*, something merely lived through. It is *Erlebnis* that epitomizes the modern age, whereas *Erfahrung* entails the integration of the individual into a larger social context (Weber, 1972: 263–4). This of course recalls the classic distinctions made in Benjamin's day, between simple, face-to-face, rural societies and complex, impersonal, urban societies such as Tönnies's ideas of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, Durkheim's mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity, Lukács's definition of 'culture', in opposition to 'civilization', as 'the ensemble of valuable products and abilities which are dispensable in relation to the immediate maintenance of life' (Lukács, 1970 [1920]: 21) which is obliterated by capitalist production. Further analogies might even be made regarding anthropological constructs surrounding the supposed capacity for material objects to memorialize (or erase) social relations – once we recognize the distinction between practice and the construction of cognition on the one hand, and ideological structures on the other and the historical moments in which they form a nexus (Bloch, 1985).[3]

In his discussion of art worlds and their transformation with the advent of mass commoditization under capitalism, Benjamin suggested that we see works of art on a continuum, from their beginnings as ritual objects anchored in contexts characteristic of *Erfahrung*, moving towards their secularization where they become 'art', and towards the anonymous mass society and commodity fetishism typical of *Erlebnis*, to an end-point in politics where works of art become objects to be exhibited. The act of exhibition is itself a forceful assertion of the commodity (Weber, 1972: 268–9). But perhaps Benjamin could not have foreseen that 'history' could and would become the object of exhibition and that history, replete with images of tradition, ritual, community – in short, *Erfahrung* – would become ubiquitous as a commodity, with history becoming a 'sign of the modern' (Dirks, 1990) – and *post*modern. Harvey, in describing 'the postmodern condition', speaks of the 'immediacy of events, the sensationalism of the spectacle', appreciated 'as pure and unrelated presents in time' out of which 'consciousness is forged':

> Such a breakdown in the temporal order of things also gives rise to a peculiar treatment of the past. Eschewing the idea of progress, postmodernism abandons all sense of historical continuity and memory, while simultaneously developing an incredible ability to plunder history and absorb whatever it finds there as some aspect of the present. (1989: 54)

There is no reason to believe that the task of understanding the specific changes in and nature of our current juncture is any less critical, nor that our historical epoch contains any less potential for liberation, than in Benjamin's day. Nor, for that matter, is there any a priori reason to believe that the past is any less amenable to a historical materialist, dialectical analysis. But there is a twist: now, it is apparent that we must simultaneously account for and relate historical process on the one hand, to representations of the past on the other. As Olwig writes, 'I suggest that the past is not a free resource, its negotiation taking place within specific historical contexts characterized by systems of power and authority that deem only certain forms of heritage credible' (1999: 370), arguing that:

> Central topics in the anthropological study of the past, therefore, should include the processes whereby certain conceptualizations of the past become dominant over others in particular historical periods in response to specific social and economic relations and the implications of these conceptualizations of the past for the creation of identity and community in the present. (1999: 371)

It is equally apparent that this challenge has crucial philosophical and methodological (not to mention political) implications. The point is for anthropologists to use creatively rather than merely invoke such antimonies.[4] The issue for anthropology becomes, then, how to construct relevant typologies that would allow for cross-cultural comparisons that could account for, say, the circulation of objects, the ways they are enmeshed with concrete social relations, and the way they presuppose certain kinds of relations of production, and how these in turn are related to the myriad representations of the past (and future) we observe in the realm of ideology.

I might boldly suggest that anthropology is extremely well placed (perhaps uniquely so) to undertake such an analysis. A casual glance at the major journals in anthropology over the past two decades will reveal a plethora of studies on peoples' conceptions of history, memory, senses of the past or, in Behar's (1986) phrase, the 'presence of the past'.[5] Our colleagues in the history profession are in the context of a crisis of epistemology (e.g. Berkhofer, 1995; Poster, 1997; cf. Schmidt and Patterson, 1995) for which White's *Metahistory* (1973) now seems to have been a harbinger (cf. Kramer, 1989). Old shibboleths such as the base–superstructure presuppositions and the unproblematic determinative role played by the economic base in social history writing (Joyce, 1995) have not been replaced by new paradigms. In the natural sciences and philosophy, there is a renewed emphasis on whether culture evolves or not (for the most reasonable position, see Fracchia and Lewontin, 1999).

It is the aim of this special issue of *Critique of Anthropology* to point to some ways in which anthropological concerns with the role of the past, and the relation between the present and the past, might be placed within innovative theoretical and methodological programmes. And, further, how

anthropologists might conceive of the place of 'history' as it affects group and individual identity. The case studies are from the Americas. In some senses these are exemplary societies for such explorations, given the ironies and paradoxes entailed by being the site of the first sustained European colonies, but also by holding the status of having the longest postcolonial experience – having been children, as it were, of modernity, but now in many ways seen as exemplars of all that is considered postmodern.

History, cross-culturally/history, historically

It has been many years since the possibilities of a cross-fertilization between anthropology and history were both touted and cautioned against by such luminaries as E.E. Evans-Pritchard (1961) and E.P. Thompson (1971). Even with more and more anthropologists recognizing the need to situate their ethnographies in historical contexts, which has sent many an anthropologist to the archives, it is now time to affirm the importance of developing theoretical principles for the cross-cultural study of relations between history, memory and identity, and to elevate 'the cross-cultural study of the past' to a status alongside such anthropological staples as the comparison of kinship and marriage, religion and rituals, economics and legal systems. We need to be able to causally account for concepts of the past and their role in nonliterate societies, as well as how industrial societies organize the study of history (among others, see Bloch, 1992a; Pocock, 1962; Trompf, 1979). We have to be able to relate religious ritual to remembrance, and we have to be able to account for the causes and consequences of rituals of state.

For example, Brown (1988) contrasts historical consciousness and historiographic traditions in literate societies with relatively 'open' stratification systems to those with relatively 'closed' ones. He argues that in the 'open' societies with high rates of mobility and relatively meritocratic stratification systems, historiography flourished and history was 'sound'. Here Brown employs a perhaps problematic definition of soundness where he admits 'all accounts of the past are inescapably subjective' but that a 'sound history' is one 'that in addition to its subjective elements . . . maximizes its objective content' (1988: 11), a soundness judged by the standards of modern Western historians. 'Closed' societies, on the other hand, characterized by caste or castelike organization, ascribed status and a heredity-based stratification system, exhibited unsound historiography, an ahistorical consciousness and, in these societies, 'history' was really myth. For Brown, the traits that tend to accompany sound historiography and open stratification include individualism, a uniform conception of human nature, biographical writing, uniform education, a humanistic-secular orientation, an interest in social science and elaborate divination. The absence of these traits, or their opposites, accompanies closed stratification

and unsound historiography. And in cases of transition from closed to open, it was the stratification system that preceded the historiography, not the reverse. It is clear that these arguments have a bearing on the comparative study of how hierarchy becomes naturalized (see Yanagisako and Delaney, 1995).[6]

What is needed, then, is a thoroughgoing approach to comparative historiography (e.g. Borofsky, 1987; White, 1991). In the Americas, some of the most eloquent examples are the studies of Richard Price and Sally Price. Their work on the historical consciousness of the Saramaka maroons of the Suriname rainforest (Price, 1983, 1990; Price and Price, 1999) is now complemented by Richard Price's study of conceptions of the past in modern, creolized, France-ified Martinique (1998). The authors of these studies relate the cultural construction of the past directly to social, political, and cultural conditions. Comparative historiographies thus become amenable to critique and evaluation.

Anthropologists at present seem content to sidestep the relationships between history and 'history', concentrating on 'history' as representation. In the present mood of the social sciences, difficulties – epistemological and political, not to mention methodological – are bound to arise if and when anthropologists weigh in and invoke absolute dichotomies between 'objective' and 'subjective' history, between 'real' and 'imagined' pasts, between 'actual' and 'invented' traditions (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983).[7] It is best to see phenomena classifiable as the 'invention of tradition' as fundamentally depictions, or, better, discursive representations of political positionings. To consider these as representations, and to an extent as ideological, the anthropological project expands beyond (or, back from) the mere analysis of shared (often depicted as 'implicit') meanings and forms of knowledge, integrated into a total(izing) system, to the analysis of the causal relations between social structures and the distribution of power, practice and discourse – in short, there is an emphasis on materialism, with materialism here being defined as 'the material content of social relations' (Meillassoux, 1985: 351). In this sense, 'history' means *both* the ontological arrangements and forms of consciousness that pertain to, arise from, interact with and serve to help shape those material, structural and causally efficacious arrangements. We can ascertain the role and function of ideas about the past in interactions between forces of production and political superstructures (Godelier, 1978, 1979). And only, then, by conceiving of the conditions for consciousness, and consciousness (and ideology) as inherently non-isomorphic, can we adequately conceive of and interpret social change and stasis (Asad, 1979). As the Morphys write, 'it is precisely through this aspect of historical process, the integration of the past within the consciousness of the present, that history enters, in an active way, the system of social reproduction' (Morphy and Morphy, 1984: 460).

History-as-representation refers to the creation of ideologically embedded knowledge represented as 'the past'. 'History' is, and can be,

more or less ideological. Here, one can be somewhat agnostic as to just what ideology is. One tradition sees ideology as systematic representations that serve class interests (McCarney, 1980). This is the basis of a definition I prefer. Another tradition maintains that we need to differentiate clearly between ideology in a Marxian 'negative' sense as thought that obscures reality and in the Gramscian 'positive' sense as essentially a system of ideas (see Larrain, 1983). Of course, not all ideas are part of ideologies. But history as a practical material process – because it is based upon material practices of producing 'facts', 'documents', 'evidence', 'artifacts' and the like, that become known as 'history' – often facilitates the working of ideology. In this process, what is actually social and cultural appears to be natural and self-evident. It is a material process that comes to stand in an objectified relationship – humans are dominated by the objects which are the products of their practice and this is one example. History-as-representation is susceptible to contradictions – beyond the fact that it is produced in the present but made to represent the past – to the extent that it can be subject to alienation, fetishization, and reification. But this formulation should be seen as an open-ended one. It presumes a theory of knowledge that entails the relatively independent reality of social forms in contrast to their cognitive apprehension, and the role of labour, work and praxis, in the constitution of social life and forms of (historical) consciousness. Thus the dual character of history-as-process and history-as-representation.

When conceived in this way, we can see the role played by Gramscian 'organic' versus 'traditional' intellectuals (Gramsci, 1971), including historians, anthropologists and the like, their very historical constitution, and how and if their ideas and ideologies relating to history articulate with hegemony (e.g. see Carstens, 1991; Comaroff and Comaroff, 1991; Fox, 1989; Kurtz, 1996; Martin, 1997; Mouffe, 1979; Williams, 1960). A key component of Goody's literacy thesis (Goody, 1977, 1987; Goody and Watt, 1963) is that the transition to literacy entailed new ways of thinking about the past (cf. Finnegan, 1973; Halverson, 1992). The important material issues for anthropologists on this topic are the way records are kept, indeed what counts as a record, how knowledge of the past is transmitted, and where and by whom and under what circumstances it is retrieved. What is perhaps more important than literacy per se is the proliferation of books, the cross-referencing and comparison of texts, the rationalization of records and the law, the shift to commercial book production and marketing (Eisenstein, 1966, 1968, 1979). Thus history and history-writing and historical consciousness can be traced through the apparatuses of literacy.

But of course stories of the past are told by means other than pen and paper. Objects, museums, monuments, and places are particularly effective, especially because they often escape scrutiny as 'history'. But perhaps more familiar terrains for anthropology are those of myth and ritual. Most anthropologists are certainly aware of the structuralists' analysis of myth, and of

Lévi-Strauss's assertion that 'myth' and 'history' are merely two ends of a continuum, and that he regarded 'history' in 'our own societies' to have replaced mythology, fulfilling the same function myth does in 'primitive societies'. For some, the distinctions between myth and history are blurred. So, in the end, 'myth' and 'history' may arrive in the same package, but the contents can be sorted out into 'structure' and 'evidence', with what is called 'evidence' used to judge what is 'historical', contributing to 'histories' or understandings of the past based upon the evidence (e.g. Graham, 1995; Hill, 1988; cf. White, 1997). Others focus on content as a differentiating criterion. Cohen, for example, lists a number of attributes of myth (e.g. narrative with a sacred quality, communicated in symbolic form), and differentiates 'myth' from 'history' thus: 'The narration of events and reference to objects unknown outside the world of myth differentiates myth from history or pseudo-history' (1969: 337). As much as we may think myth reveals the logic of human thinking, myths are embedded within history – within material social relationships – and they serve to comment on those relationships (Godelier, 1971). In the end, we must be attuned to the fact that what counts as either 'memory' or 'history' (or 'culture' for that matter) is dependent on competing politico-cultural interpretations and contexts, as Rappaport (1990: 11–17, 188–9) argues. Ritual, too, of course, is a prime locus of anthropological evidence and fertile ground in which to encounter 'alternative' or 'subordinate' histories and the social contradictions they entail, as Williams (1990) shows in her exemplary study of the rituals that provide histories of the 1763 Berbice slave rebellion (cf. Dening, 1996). This being said, however, some anthropologists might assume that secular and sacred rituals are the unproblematic place to search for the presentation (and contestation) of 'history'. Austin (1979) criticizes Bloch's article, 'The Past and the Present in the Present' (1977), where Bloch elaborates his ideas of cognition and ideology as two forms of communication, respectively practical- and ritual-based (see also Bloch, 1985, 1986, 1989, 1992b). For him, it takes two 'nature-constrained' cognitive systems 'which organise two kinds of communication, occurring at different moments in the long conversation'. The 'presence of the past in the present' is one of the components of the system of cognition that is characterized by ritual communication, which stands opposed to the cognitive system of everyday interaction in that it does not directly link up with empirical activities (1977: 287). As opposed to 'normal' practical activity, which implies universal understanding, ritual activity, according to Bloch, is the domain where symbolic communication serves to obscure, mystify and legitimate domination, and proscribe the attainment of true understanding. In response, Austin posits that 'the structural determination of ideas which produces legitimating symbols, is *a dimension in thought*, more or less pronounced, rather than *a particular type of thought* tied to particular domains of action' (1979: 499, emphasis in original). Bloch does make the point that the barriers between these two types of communication can become undone

(1977: 287), providing the opportunity for a practical-based challenge to mystifying symbols. But he still conceives of them as two distinct *types* of communication.

In her case study, that compares Jamaican working-class with middle-class ideologies, Austin shows how the vocabulary of class involves symbolic elaboration and legitimation of the antimonies between 'outside' and 'inside' kinship, work life and domestic organization: 'illegitimacy', economic dispossession and female-headed households versus Christian marriage, participation in economic mainstream institutions and the nuclear family. For the middle class, workers are a decultured class outside society – their inheritance from the days of slavery. Working-class ideology generally rejects this depiction, but it is contained within and attenuated by the dichotomy that defines the moral relations between classes and naturalizes their relations through the invocation of history: 'The inside/outside terminology not only provides a common theme for the interpretation of practical life, but also makes history its servant.' The 'delimitation of the class debate' therefore 'succeeds just because a symbolic medium permeates practical activity, and ties it to a reconstructed past' (1979: 509). Here the discourse of the past is bound up with the effects of a legitimating ideology and that ideology's support system. The point being, vis-a-vis Bloch, that 'the two modes of communication simultaneously inform the Jamaican class debate' (1979: 512; see, also, Howe's 1981 point regarding Balinese time reckoning).[8]

Regarding the question of myth versus history, historians often display their commitment to a positivist conception of 'sources' and 'evidence'. Even though a historian like Moses I. Finley (e.g. 1965) recognized that oral tradition reflects the interests of the rememberers, and felt that if they are high status they have an easier time converting their traditions into public traditions that justify particular constellations of power, some historians have sought to differentiate between myth and history by evaluating oral history against other evidence. As Miller writes, myth is 'a presentistic and communal *style* of reasoning and exposition in nonliterate cultures' while history is 'less a matter of style than of whether or not the narrative contains elements that descend from the past' (italics in original). History and myth, he maintains, 'are thus two entirely different orders of phenomenon', even though much history 'seems mythical because of the style in which it is written, or spoken as the case may be' (1980: 20, 21). But ' "History" does not stand in opposition to "myth", nor even "histories" to "myths" ' (Miller, 1980: 50). Historians must look at the myth-like structure of tales heard in oral societies 'in order to identify the ways in which evidence from the past survives there without writing' (1980: 50). Here, 'evidence' is 'those things that survive, either relatively unchanged as in the case of a document or altered in ways that can be determined, like the memories expressed in narrative oral traditions' (1980: 49). So, 'evidence' is here rather problematically defined as something which survives, not something that is produced and then labeled as evidence.

The perspective I advocate here is consistent with the (Marxist) goal of history as a materialist science (Fracchia, 1991, 1999). Such a theoretical position-taking involves methodological as well as philosophical commitments and entails at least the following caveats. Temporal differentiations are not self-evident or natural givens. Indeed, as Albert Einstein said, 'For us believing physicists the distinction between past, present, and future is only a stubbornly persistent illusion' (quoted in Calaprice, 1996: 61).[9] Not only this. Carrier's point (1987) that ethnohistory is not the only or even the best way to get at self-conceptions must be borne in mind. Further, even in the context of rapid social change, pre-existing historical schemes (e.g. linear, cyclical, evolution, stages) impinge upon consciousness in all societies (Burman, 1981).[10] At the same time, we cannot be fooled by the ubiquity of the discourse of the past in our own societies and unproblematically and inappropriately foist this concern with the past on to other situations. Nor can we take the apparent absence of discourses of the past to indicate a lack of concern or interest; we should, rather, be on the lookout for produced 'silences' (Roberts, 1990; Sider and Smith, 1997; Trouillot, 1995). It might be that the very gaps between different kinds of inquiry, validated and not-so-validated, provide the most interesting kinds of insights as to how discourses of the past are culturally caused (and reveal what is important to our informants, not just us).

Memory versus *re*-membering, *re*-calling, *re*-collecting and *re*-presenting/*re*-present-*ing*

Our everyday language of the past should make us aware that it hides what it claims to reveal. The affinity between terms like 'recollecting' that describe individual acts and those same terms that are (mis)applied to social collectivities is purposively replicated here. The prefix 're-' is highlighted to mark an awareness of the historical process and the passage of time involved in acts in the present involving the past: *re*-membering, putting together – perhaps a particular sense of community – what has been broken apart; *re*-calling, the issuance, oftentimes in ritual contexts, of pleas to 'retrieve' and commemorate selected aspects of the past; *re*-collecting, a new narrative ordering of dispersed, disparate and perhaps unrelated events and personages to form a coherent, authoritative story; and *re*-presenting, presenting and performing what was presented in the past, but in fundamentally different ways in what is, by definition, a different historical context, sometimes in the guise of *re*-present-*ing*, in the manner of imagining the present again, entailing the elision of historical process and change in the depiction of an eternal present, different still from the way an eternal present was depicted in the past.

One consequence of an already-historicized anthropology (Faubion, 1993) (and other disciplines) in this sense is a dissatisfaction with notions

of 'history' and 'culture' as artifice, that scholars no less than identity entrepreneurs emphasize 'memory', which is held to be more authentic, more personal, less amenable to distortion or invention. Some books that have crossed my desk in recent years include *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Blight, 2001), *Memory and American History* (Thelen, 1990), *Memory, Myth, and Time in Mexico: From the Aztecs to Independence* (Florescano, 1994), *Imaginal Memory and the Place of Hiroshima* (Perlman, 1988), *Time Passages: Collective Memory and American Popular Culture* (Lipsitz, 1990), *Memory and the Postcolony: African Anthropology and the Critique of Power* (Werbner, 1998), *History and Memory in African-American Culture* (Fabre and O'Meally, 1994) and *Between Memory and History* (Bourguet et al., 1990). This list is by no means exhaustive nor representative of the emerging work invoking memory.

'Memory' is everywhere and is often used quite loosely and, if it is intended to be used metaphorically, this is not at all clear. The result is often a false concreteness. In his celebrated work *The Black Atlantic*, Gilroy argues that plantation slavery 'has retained a central place in the historical memories of the black Atlantic', and that these populations, so defined, 'continue to make creative, communicative use of the memory of slavery' where, moreover, 'the memory of the slave experience is itself recalled and used as an additional, supplementary instrument with which to construct a distinct interpretation of modernity' (1993: 55, 71). For the French ethnographer Roger Bastide, 'African' religious consciousness survived in Brazil due to the workings of collective memory (1978; cf. Moniot, 1990). What might be regarded as an emerging crisis of representation adds up to what Megill (1997) calls the 'valorisation of memory'. Even in Confino's (1997) excellent essay, that problematizes the method of and for memory studies, there is a very loose and imprecise application of the very concept of memory.

I suspect this happens among anthropologists for several main reasons. First, because of the legitimate argument that the learning and practicing of culture is dependent upon memory (leaving aside its definition) (see Rowlands, 1993). Second, because, whether recognized or not, anthropological fieldwork and the recording of fieldnotes involves memory (Mayer, 1989) – the (fallible) memory of the anthropologist (see Feuchtwang, 1998). Third, because of the connections between 'identity' and memory-as-authenticity among the people we learn from (e.g. see Knapp, 1989). They, no less than some anthropologists, profess a dissatisfaction with notions of 'history' and 'culture' as artifice, and invoke 'memory' as an unproblematic, possessable, recollection of an authentic past. This is evidenced in the discourse of many an identity entrepreneur. It is also evidenced in the work of some historians. Pierre Nora laments that 'history' has eclipsed 'memory' (Nora, 1989). In Nora's extensive *oeuvre* on French 'national memory' (Nora, 1996, 1997, 1998), his mission seems to be to restore the 'realms of memory' to the French past (Bodnar, 2000). Fourth,

and as a result, anthropologists may choose to focus on 'memory' with the idea of getting beyond 'culture' and 'history', both of which are now constructed as entailing invention, to 'memory', construed as unmediated and genuine. But it is easy to forget (!) that 'memory' itself has a history, as Yates (1966) pointed out in her classic treatment and as others have recently shown (e.g. Confino, 1997; Matsuda, 1996; cf. Thelen, 1990). Again, recalling Rappaport (1990), *what counts as memory* (as opposed to 'history' or 'myth') is a political question. A fifth reason, especially applicable to North American anthropology, is that this conception of memory fits in nicely with the hangover of historical particularism: a group or culture is defined by its memory, and vice versa. Sixth, the invocation of 'memory' is a way, as Hacking (1995) suggests, of participating in a secular discourse on 'the soul', evoking a religious preoccupation with the fate of humankind. One might even add a seventh reason – an intellectual laziness that makes it easy for us to impute motives (for an early statement, see MacIver, 1940) and psychological 'inner states' (see e.g. Rosen, 1995).

Some anthropologists (e.g. Stoller, 1995) have chosen to follow Connerton (1989), who wants to show how inertia in social structures is not adequately accounted for. Connerton proposes that habit, gesture and bodily postures are a form of collective, social memory, and that they are the most effective vehicle for the formation and transmission of group solidarity. But in calling habit 'habit-memory' and labeling bodily automatisms 'memory', and claiming that groups entrust in these actions the values and categories they hold most dear, he engages, as Gable (1992) points out, not only in the universalization of memory but in functionalism as well. Memory is indeed 'embodied' (cf. Csordas, 1990) as Prager (1998) argues, but it is the embodied in a person actively engaged in constructing (embodied) selfhood with reference to its unique past. The experience of the self, the need to articulate bodily feelings and somatic states, characterizes memory as the self seeks to reconcile these inner states with outer situations, to account for the present with reference to the past. As Prager (1998: 83) writes, considering 'memory's *embodiedness* directs our attention to the ways in which feeling states and bodily desires, inherited from the past but prevailing in the present, can rewrite the past in the service of the present' (emphasis in original).[11]

It is important to return to the lessons of the masters. Not only to Freud, but to the work of Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945), the student of Durkheim, and Frederic C. Bartlett (1887–1969), the Cambridge psychologist. Their respective insights were integrated by their anthropological contemporary E.E. Evans-Pritchard (1940). In his *Les Cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (1925), Halbwachs showed how memory functions within social, collective circumstances – that it is socially constructed.[12] For Bartlett, 'because the mechanism of adult human memory demands an organisation of "schemata" depending upon an interplay of appetites, instincts, interests and ideals peculiar to any given subject', remembering 'is not the re-excitation of

innumerable fixed, lifeless and fragmentary traces', but, rather, 'imaginative reconstruction, or construction, built out of the relation of our attitude towards a whole active mass of organised past reactions or experience, and to a little outstanding detail which commonly appears in image or in language form' (Bartlett, 1932: 213).

> It is thus hardly ever exact, even in the most rudimentary cases of rote recapitulation, and it is not at all important that it should be so. The attitude is literally an effect of the organism's capacity to turn round upon its own 'schemata', and is directly a function of consciousness. (1932: 213)

Indeed, schemata are implicated in all cognition. Bartlett argued that we must pay attention to perception, which precedes the recognition process. For Bartlett, perception itself was dependent upon the senses, as well as 'another factor which constructs the sensory pattern into something having a significance which goes beyond its immediate sensory character' (1932: 188), what Bartlett called 'effort after meaning' (Bartlett, 1916). This entailed an elaboration of material that was not readily recognizable, a 'conventionalization' of images. That is a process of making the unfamiliar familiar.[13]

These insights link up directly with current concerns in anthropology and other related disciplines. Within anthropology I am thinking of schema theories. Schemas are differentially 'distributed' cross-culturally, and intraculturally too, according to structural, historical and practical logics. Within a particular culture, schemas might be distributed according to class, age, gender, ethnicity, education and so forth. Not only this. Schemas also vary in their 'schematicity'. In the holistic, context-sensitive 'connectionist' model advocated by Strauss and Quinn (1997: ch. 3), schemas are dependent upon, and the result of, a whole network of learned associations. They are more or less flexibly adaptive, but, at the same time, relatively stable. It is through schemas that we remember and process information; but is it through (other) schemas that we recall and remember. But not all memory is amenable to schematization, and not all schemas can organize and process all kinds of information to be stored in memory. Then, there is the whole question of schemas and motivation, which D'Andrade (1992; D'Andrade and Strauss, 1992) has pursued. And this is nestled within the problem of 'culture and cognition' more generally (D'Andrade, 1981). This entails not only the idea of locating the historical development of cognition, which has roots in Vygotskian pyschology (see Cole, 1985; Scribner, 1985), but also the relation of culture and cognition to historical contexts. Toren (1990, 1999), for example, has gone about investigating how culture-specific concepts are constituted, historically in terms of societal historical processes but also in relation to what she calls 'microhistorical' processes of cognition in people.

Memory, as Prager (1998) contends, is 'intersubjective'. That is, it is *not* characterized by the more or less complete and accurate recall of an actual past by an isolated individual, but motivated representations of the past that

call upon situated schemas, which are of course cultural. It relies on problematic processes of transmission (see Feuchtwang, 2000). Memory is an activity in the present, the production of symbolizations in relation to experience, significant cultural themes and categories and other objects in the social and cultural world. It is part of a process of the self situating itself, of interpreting bodily states and emotions. But cultural forms are not isomorphic with the meaning-making self. It is best to see memory as part of a process of the constitution of the self, where individuals may idiosyncratically appropriate cultural representations in the making of memories. The question remains of the groupness or collectiveness of memory. Is memory-as-intersubjective consistent with such a view? Instead of a rather literalist reading of 'collective' in 'collective memory', 'collective memory' might best be seen as a kind of metaphor (Gedi and Elam, 1996). Therefore, we might follow Wertsch (1985, 1987), himself following the work of Vygotsky. On the question of whether memory can be collective or social Wertsch argues that 'This sense of collectivity has to do with the fact that these mental functions are mediated by sociohistorically evolved (i.e., collective) tools or instruments' (1987: 19).

As with 'history', questions of evidence should come to the fore. Memory researchers going back to Bartlett (e.g. 1932: 264) suggest that cross-cultural differences in memory are not only due to differences in interests but also differences in the way things are recalled. Beyond this, how does 'memory' get represented? Eakin, in *How Our Lives Become Stories* (1999), shows how personal narratives present a more unified and organized portrait of the self (*the* self) than it possibly could be. Vasnia subscribes to a view of memory-as-recall but usefully points out that:

> Personal remembrance is not fit for public consumption. Most remembrances are simply not destined to be shared with the public because they are intimate. Reminiscences in an oral history interview situation are already somewhat edited with an eye to their potential impact on others. The informant may indeed want to remember all he can for himself, but this remembrance is a message. (Vasnia, 1980: 270)

Thus, memory involves a distinct kind of representation of the past. As such, representations must be accounted for. Sperber distinguishes between intra-subjective 'mental representations' and inter-subjective 'public representations' in seeking to develop an 'epistemology of representations', defined as 'a study of the causal chains in which these mental and public representations are involved', where:

> . . . the construction or retrieval of mental representations may cause individuals to modify their physical environment, for instance to produce a public representation. These modifications of the environment may cause other individuals to construct mental representations of their own; these new representations may be stored and later retrieved, and, in turn, cause the individuals who hold them to modify the environment, and so on. (1985: 77)

He is rightly critical of those materialists who 'discuss representations without consideration of their material existence as psychological stimuli, processes and states' and for ignoring 'the micro-mechanisms of cognition and communication'. He correctly insists that we must be capable of showing how material conditions 'act on the interaction of brains and environments in a cognitive or non-cognitive way' and, moreover, 'action' must be shown to cause 'cognitive and behavioural modifications' (1985: 78, 79). We must, therefore, consider both the cognitive and the social/cultural processes involved in ideologies of the past, at various meeting-points or interfaces.[14] Representations (mental and public), after all, are distributed and coalesce into institutions and social and cultural objects.

'Is "identity" a useful cross-cultural concept?'

Handler (1994) presents a serious challenge to anthropologists when he asks 'Is "Identity" a Useful Cross-Cultural Concept?'. He urges anthropologists not to transfer on to others those particularly Western ideas and culture that, he argues, underlie the concept of identity. Identity, he says, is characterized by a sense of boundedness, internal homogeneity, naturalness, uniqueness, immutability and wholeness. And he says that these ideas are characteristic of Western culture and ideological formations. Furthermore, according to Handler this is evidenced in Western collectivities. Corporate identities are seen as extensions of the individuated self and are conceived of in like manner. In both cases – that of the individual and of the corporate group – these Western notions are unique cross-culturally: these claims of internal homogeneity, boundedness and so forth are absent elsewhere.

Handler's arguments are convincing and forceful and, as such, raise at least two issues of relevance to the themes of this special issue, which have to do with identity as ethnicity, class and nationalism. First, is there a significant difference in the way the self is constituted cross-culturally? There is certainly enough disagreement between the established camps of the 'universalists', or those who answer this question in the negative, and the 'culturalists', or those who maintain there are crucial differences between the West and the rest (for a discussion, see Holland et al., 1998: 20–3). The extent of the disagreement at least leaves the 'identity question' an open one. Second, we might wonder if it is not the case that even non-Western folks in engaging in identity discourse have learned, as Handler himself says, to talk to 'power' in 'a language that power understands' (Handler, 1991: 71; cf. Handler, 1994: 38) thus representing themselves in Western idioms, resonant with the images that accompany Western notions of identity. The underlying lesson for theorists is, perhaps, as Handler writes:

> . . . that historically oriented ethnographers and ethnographically informed historians are in a position to explore, first, the utility of the term 'identity' for the analysis of various contexts within the history of the modern world and, second, the precise notions of boundedness, continuity, and agency that people of varying eras and social positions attached to their understanding of human activity. (1994: 34)

One way we might test for identity is to see what happens in its absence. Harrison (1999) draws on Weiner's (1992) concept of 'inalienable possessions' to talk about identity as a 'scarce resource'. By this he means inalienable possessions that become interpreted as symbols of identity, of some essential, defining aspect of a group (see also Brown, 1998; Harrison, 1992). However, these possessions are amenable to alienation by theft or appropriation via imitation (which gets represented in various ways). And the group or groups involved try in myriad ways to prevent such 'piracy' of identity from happening. Social power is inherent in such identity plays. Actors may be relatively powerless or relatively powerful in relation to those other groups whose symbolic practices they are attempting to adopt. The aim may be either to prevent or diminish divisions between themselves and some other group, or, by contrast, the strategy might be to create barriers or deepen existing divisions. Of course, representations of the past – whether phrased as 'history' or 'memory' – are crucial inalienable possessions (cf. Appadurai, 1981). As only one example out of many possible ones, consider the reaction against those who deny the Holocaust occurred (see e.g. Shermer and Grobman, 2000).

The notion of identity in question presents challenges to anthropologists. We want to play the dangerous game of filling in the blanks for 'our' group, the 'Others' with whom we work and on behalf of whom many of us position ourselves as advocates. Brubaker and Cooper (2000) worry about the slipperiness of identity, how identity as a conceptual category is not differentiated by most scholars from identity as something people seem to seek in a politics of affinity and affiliation. They admit that ' "Identity" is a key term in the vernacular idiom of contemporary politics, and social analysis must take account of this fact.'(Brubaker and Cooper, 2000: 2). But they argue that conceiving of 'all forms of belonging, all experiences of commonality, connectedness, and cohesion, all self-understandings and self-identifications in the idiom of "identity" saddles us with a blunt, flat, undifferentiated vocabulary' (p. 2). They recommend the jettisoning of the identity concept in the social sciences:

> Social analysis – including the analysis of identity politics – requires relatively unambiguous analytical categories. Whatever its suggestiveness, whatever its indispensability in certain practical contexts, 'identity' is too ambiguous, too torn between 'hard' and 'soft' meanings, essentialist connotations and constructivist qualifiers, to serve well the demands of social analysis. (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000: 2)

Brubaker and Cooper are talking about what anthropologists might call etic, as opposed to emic, categories. This might strike anthropologists, therefore, as yesterday's news or, at best, simply a restatement of one of the discipline's central concerns. Clearly Brubaker and Cooper are correct to suggest that these categories are not to be confused, and that anthropologists and others have an obligation to define concisely their analytic constructs. However, does this mean that 'identity' should be abandoned, or merely closely, rigorously and self-critically defined?

As with memory, any objectification of identity (to the extent we can use that term and concept) must be placed against and alongside subjective dimensions of selfhood cross-culturally. When identity's inalienable possessions are alienated, or at least threatened with alienation, the structural aspects of identity come into sharp focus. As do power relations, structural inequalities, and a general sense of how identity is constructed by and subject to social forces and cultural forms. But identities are arrived at and deployed – and 'arrived at and deployed' only clumsily depicts what happens – through historically situated practice. Holland et al. (1998) draw upon Vygotsky and Bakhtin to establish a 'practice theory' of identity (cf. Yelvington, 1995: 22–40). Holland et al. analyze identities as both the result of activity and as the means to self-activity. They elaborate on the idea of 'heuristic development' to negotiate between the 'cultural determination of behavior' and 'situational totalitarianism'. In their scheme, people develop more or less conscious conceptions and senses of themselves as actors, in reference and relation to more or less objectified identities. These senses of selves are mediated in various ways; culturally constructed activities – what they call 'figured worlds' – constitute agentic selves in processes of social and cultural transformation and reproduction: 'We believe identity formation must be understood as the heuristic codevelopment of cultural media and forms of identity' (1998: 45).[15] This 'figuring' does not take place in empty space or in the abstract. A number of anthropologists now remind us that histories, memories and identities take place within and are fashioned by particular *places* (e.g. Gupta and Ferguson, 1997; Hartigan, 2000).

Again, questions of evidence are, or should be, at the forefront of discussions of identity. As Scott (1994) shows, these are often rendered as 'experience'. She argues convincingly that this is problematic for two overlapping reasons. First, experience, rendered from a subject's own account of what he or she has lived through, is conceived of by historians and anthropologists (and others) as uncontestable evidence. The constructed nature of experience itself is rarely acknowledged. And, second, historians and anthropologists (and others) can remain within orthodox modes of inquiry (and evidentiary rules within their respective disciplines) by taking the identities in whose name the experience is made to speak (by the 'experienced', by those doing the representing) as self-evident. The inevitable result is an individualization of identities, and a naturalization of identities, rather than their historicization:

> When experience is taken as the origin of knowledge, the vision of the individual subject (the person who had the experience or the historian who recounts it) becomes the bedrock of evidence on which explanation is built. Questions about the constructed nature of experience, about how subjects are constituted as different in the first place, about how one's vision is structured – about language (or discourse) and history – are left aside. (Scott, 1994: 367)

Of course, anthropological entanglements with experience in testimony, in ethnography, in the recording of 'native voices', in the anthropologist as witness and so forth, that we count as evidence, bring with them the weight of authority and authenticity. Despite the influence of the 'postmodern turn' in anthropology, and the critique and exposure of authority-making practices within the discipline, we still too often depict identity (and thus difference) but not the relationships entailed in identity's coming to being. 'Experience', as Scott argues, appears to be a critical concept that might well keep empiricism at bay. But it ends up replacing other untenable foundational concepts as it individualizes and naturalizes and, for the anthropologist or historian, disguises the politics of the representation of 'others' whether they be cultural or historical.

The upshot of all of the foregoing is this: that history, memory and identity must become subjects of a philosophy of science *and* a methodological *problématique* for anthropology in a way that parallels Benjamin's insistence on the role of representations of the past in liberation struggles, as well as his insistence that these representations be theorized in relation to the struggles anthropologists are able to observe related to political positionings, historical change and structures of feeling. But even as this means embracing the 'historical turn' in anthropology – albeit in new ways – this does not obviate the need (nor the responsibility) rigorously to theorize the very categories used in anthropological analyses while simultaneously showing the processes (and histories) of their being and who (including anthropologists) has what stakes in the resulting representations.

History, memory and identity in the Americas

This Special Issue addresses history and memory and the implications of these phenomena for ethnic and national identity in a number of New World contexts. The articles taken together seek to examine theoretically the boundaries between history and memory and how they become politically established. The articles amplify recent work in anthropology that considers the ways in which the past is culturally constructed, defended and promulgated in the present in order to serve the needs of the present. The focus is on powerful and disempowered groups alike, and how they use the past to constitute identities. Attention is carefully paid to socio-economic-political contexts, however, and the power relations that arise out of class

inequalities, nationalist ideologies, migratory streams and attempts at self-determination in the crucible of the Americas.

Martínez's article is on what are called '*danzas nacionalistas*' in Venezuela. This refers to 'folkloric' dance that is made to stand for 'the nation'. But not the from-time-immemorial homogeneous nation – the nation characterized by *mestizaje*, or 'race'- and culture-mixing. This discourse of nationalism, a common one throughout the Americas, is used simultaneously to elide 'unassimilated' groups and exalt what is taken as 'European' culture and ethnicity. What better way than an analysis of dance to flirt with but challenge ideas (and ideologies) of embodied culture, of naturalness, of blood and belonging? Martínez deftly holds these two chains of argument – a naturalistic essentialism and cultural constructivism – in close contact as she shows how historical actors and their activities – including their discourses on and depictions of the past – constitute national identity through dance.

In his article, Green shows not only how national identity is conceived and articulated around certain core symbols that are made to stand for 'the nation' – in this case the Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago – but also how that identity, while contested, is projected into local, international and transnational arenas as a commodity. Not only is Carnival made to stand for the nation, but it is also seen as properly the creation and possession of one ethnic group, Afro-Trinidadians, at the expense of others. Green's analysis of an East Indian businessman engaging in 'cultural entrepreneurship' to promote Carnival locally and abroad shows initial success and subsequent failures which are tied to profound ambivalence about Carnival as commodity and the criteria of authenticity for Carnival masqueraders. Green is critical of those scholars, including anthropologists, who engage in what he calls 'academic nostalgia'; that is, the propensity of academics, including anthropologists, to lament the supposed inauthenticity and commercialism that is said to accompany changes in Carnival. He shows how these concerns mirror local discourses that always accompanied the politics of Carnival throughout the 20th century.

Pérez provides the rest of us with a difficult, if implicit, challenge to apply anthropological insights and ethnographic methods to formal legislative institutions – especially those that situate the crux of colonialism. In her article, she presents an ethnography of the 1990 Congressional hearings in the US Congress, the purpose of which was to help decide Puerto Rico's political status (cf. Burnett and Marshall, 2001). She focuses on the constructions of 'culture' and 'history' and the uses of these concepts by a number of parties involved in their efforts to resolve the issues of Puerto Rico's political status, and in doing so shows how the notion of Puerto Ricans and Puerto Ricanness were brought into play. There was a decided emphasis on – and controversy surrounding – questions of whether Puerto Ricans from the island or Puerto Ricans resident (and perhaps born) on the mainland should be counted as 'Puerto Rican'

for purposes of voting rights and, perhaps more importantly, as exemplifying national culture. Many intellectual arbiters of Puerto Ricanness based on the island try to marginalize Puerto Ricans based on the mainland and view them as contaminated, dangerous, intermediate figures because their existence does not square with a nationalist discourse centered on the construction of an ideology of homogeneity. What is at stake in – and who gains under – US colonialism is not at all clear nor obvious.

Formal institutions and their role in the 'history, memory and identity' triad are the focus of Cruz's article on the politics of representation in US history textbooks. She criticizes the lack of anthropological attention to the explicit, academic curriculum where ethnicity and nationalism are concerned. Ironic, indeed, in the era of textual analysis and deconstruction. So many anthropological studies of education focus on the 'hidden curriculum' (see Jackson, 1968): most educational institutions have a formal curriculum comprising those areas of academic knowledge pupils are expected to assimilate and master. But besides the explicitly taught curriculum, there is the set of values, messages, information and so forth, a hidden curriculum, that is *implicitly* conveyed to pupils and that has the effect of social control and identification with the established social order. But Cruz shows how Latinos and Latin Americans are 'othered' in these primary and secondary schoolbooks. Positive images are rarely provided, save for exceptional individuals. The USA's involvement in wars of expansion in Latin America take on the air of inevitability and rightness, and, as a consequence, Latin Americans are portrayed in negative ways. Latinos in the USA, soon to be the largest ethnic minority group, are given, literally, short shrift. The effects of this on young minds can only be imagined. A consideration of the formal curriculum in interaction with the hidden curriculum might allow us to find out.

Finally, in the article by Yelvington, Goslin and Arriaga, we see the political and economic interest behind competing depictions of history. They tell a complex tale of the 18th-century ship, *The Whydah Galley*, which brought enslaved Africans to the New World, and which was taken over by pirates before it sank off of Cape Cod in 1717. The ship was excavated in the 1980s by an adventurer looking for treasure, who was later involved with attempts to create a museum with a piracy theme. Critics of the plan pointed out that the *Whydah* was a slaver and wanted, rather than a Disneyesque representation of piracy, a serious treatment of the ship's role in the Atlantic slave trade. The project was eventually scuttled but not before the marshaling of authoritative discourses on history in the service of class and identity politics. The authors seek to develop an 'anthropology of reflections' that takes into account how museum goers and other consumers of 'history' make judgements about the 'historical' things and writings they encounter, and how they position themselves vis-a-vis objects and discourses.

Notes

The articles by Cruz, Pérez, and Yelvington, Goslin and Arriaga were originally presented as papers on a panel I organized at the 118th annual meeting of the American Ethnological Society, San Juan, Puerto Rico, 18–20 April 1996. Martínez's article was also presented at this conference. I requested Green's article when I realized that it fitted the theme of this Special Issue. I would like to thank the McNair Scholars Program as well as the Division of Sponsored Research at the University of South Florida for the funding to attend this conference. I would also like to thank Anete Arslanian, Alice Calaprice, Stephan Feuchtwang, Maximilian C. Forte, Elizabeth F. Loftus, Terry Redding, Henry L. Roediger, III, Nuno de Souza Lobo Filho and Andrea Sturzen for their assistance and advice in the writing of this Introduction, *Critique of Anthropology's* readers for their suggestions, Sophie Richmond for her copyediting skill, Janet Defreitas and Caroline Sparrow for their editorial acumen and patience, and the journal's editors John Gledhill and Stephen Nugent for their kindness and encouragement.

1 Besides my own reading of Benjamin (e.g. Benjamin, 1968 [1950], 1978, 1999), I am reliant on the work of Arendt (1968), Bernstein (1999), Buck-Morss (1989), Hanssen (1998), Nägele (1991), Smith (1989), Weber (1972) and Wolin (1994) for insights into Benjamin's theory of history. While it may be argued that Benjamin incorporated various, and to a certain extent, incompatible, notions of history and the past (see e.g. Benjamin's appropriation of the notion of 'natural history' in Hanssen, 1998), here I draw mainly on Benjamin's views expressed in 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (published in 1936) and 'Theses on the Philosophy of History' (completed shortly before his death in 1940 and first published in 1950).

2 Here, we may for the moment at least remain agnostic as to whether or not Marx engaged in a techno-economic determinism in his historical materialism (see Cohen, 1978; Llobera, 1979; cf. Shaw, 1978).

3 In this vein, comparisons might be further drawn to the standard anthropological 'gift–commodity' distinction between exchanged objects, with supposedly 'timeless' gifts representing atemporal, non-commodified relationships, and alienable commodities as the essence of temporal accounting even while they evoke a sense of interchangeability, equivalence, and convey the idea of their eternal existence as such. On the subject, Mines and Weiss (1997a, 1997b) instead urge us to see the transaction of objects as constructing the temporality intrinsic to *all* sociocultural orders: 'Object dispositions serve to constitute sociocultural experiences of temporality, as futures are envisaged and ensured, and pasts are recollected and undone all within the manifold possibilities of the present' (1997a: 162).

4 Donham (1999 [1990]: 213) criticizes Benjamin's romanticism, 'like many an anthropologist' looking 'backward for redemption', writing: 'this vision is fundamentally flawed. What capitalism has fractured was, quite simply put, never whole. Tradition only stabilized and inculcated a set of other inequalities – even if it is difficult for us, set as we are within capitalist ones, to see them as such'. Similarly, Roseberry (1988) cautions against 'domesticated models'. However, as much as I agree with these points, I would also like to preserve the right to creatively use such models for the purposes of cross-cultural, cross-historical comparison. I believe these two aims are reconcilable.

5 The literature being too vast to cite in any meaningful way, I will simply point the reader to two very useful review articles (Faubion, 1993; Krech, 1991).

6 We might compare the historiography of the modern non-capitalist state, for example, with the history of historiography in post-revolutionary China (see Dirlik, 1978 and Unger, 1993), or the use of the past in Cuba (e.g. Daynes, 1996; Pérez, 1985) and by historians of Cuba based elsewhere (e.g. Pérez, 1995 [1992]), and in comparative state socialisms (e.g. Watson, 1994).

7 Rather than cite the number of works that fruitfully use the 'invention of tradition' perspective and the growing number that criticize its deployment, let me here simply refer to the work of two trenchant critics, Briggs (1996) and Friedman (1992a, 1992b), within whose work the 'invention of tradition' scholars are discussed.

8 Critics of Bloch's ideas indicate something of the fruitfulness of these ideas rather than the reverse. His style has been to make thought-provoking and bold, if overly general (which he admits, see Bloch, 1979: 166), pronouncements that stimulate reasoned responses. See Asad (1979: 611–13, 616), Bourdillon (1978) and Bloch's reply (1979), Howe (1981) and Mair (1979). I am not disparaging an anthropological concern with meaning and knowledge, but suggesting strongly that meaning and knowledge are presupposed by and in authorized discourses and dominant ideologies. While it is true that ritual need not only be conceptualized as practice that affirms and institutes rights (La Fontaine, 1977), it is also the case that all rituals are not of the same kind. Some are 'life-empowering' and their study could be 'basic to efforts to imagine possibilities for real political change' (Kelly and Kaplan, 1990: 141). Bloch (1979: 167), responding to Bourdillon's (1978) critique, notes the need for the development of theory that associates 'ritual and hierarchy by concentrating on the aspect which distinguishes them from other types of ritual'.

9 Here, the phrase 'believing physicists' is generally assumed not to refer to belief in a religion or supernatural entity, but a belief in the laws of physics. Alice Calaprice, personal communication, 24 March 1998.

10 On time across cultures, see Greenhouse (1996); for studies from the Americas, see Birth (1999) and Florescano (1994).

11 Much innovative neuro-scientific research takes an integrated mind-body approach and shows how emotions affect memory (e.g. Damasio, 1994; Gazzaniga, 1998) For example, Clark et al. (1999) show how memory works by emotional arousal via stimulation of the vagus nerve. The overall direction of this research converges with the 'anthropology of the emotions' with emotions either conceived as basically amenable to cultural construction – and thus conceived of as amenable to a politics (e.g. Lutz, 1986, 1988; Lutz and Abu-Lughod, 1990) – or deemed essentially incompatible with a constructivist approach (e.g. Lyon, 1995; Reddy, 1997).

12 Halbwachs' main works on memory are collected and translated into English with a useful Introduction by Lewis A. Coser (Halbwachs, 1992).

13 This is not to say that Halbwachs and Bartlett are above criticism. For example, there is an imprecision in Halbwachs on the use of terms and concepts, as historian Marc Bloch pointed out long ago (1925). Bartlett (1932: 294ff.) (unjustly) criticized Halbwachs for a strict adherence to Durkheim, misunderstanding Durkheim in the process (cf. Douglas, 1980: 16–17).

14 See the relevant criticisms of Sperber in Toren (1983) and Tanney (1998; but see Zeitlyn, 1999 on the latter).

15 Practice theories of identity like these may recall Bourdieu's (1977) 'theory of practice'; but we cannot fall back on Bourdieu here. Under Bourdieu's theory of the 'habitus', structure and agency are too 'tightly wound' to permit historical change to enter. As well, cultural apprehension and discussion of

history is precluded for his subjects. The logical conclusions of Bourdieu's concept of 'doxa' (see Bourdieu, 1977: 164–71) – that which goes without saying, a culture's unquestioned assumptions – are, furthermore, ethnocentric. On the one hand, there is, as Toren (1990: 7) observes, an 'overaccommodation to culture' that makes his subject 'virtually a prisoner of history'. And on the other, Bourdieu denies the kind of self-reflection and self-critique – the 'space' necessary – for the development of active agents inhabiting historical figured worlds by 'predicating any ability to *challenge* cultural constructs on the historical conjunction of the members of one culture with those of another', not, in other words, from 'within' a particular culture and historical context.

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