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## **The Anthropology of Guilt and Rapport: Moral Mutuality in Ethnographic Fieldwork**

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SPECIAL SECTION

# The anthropology of guilt and rapport

## Moral mutuality in ethnographic fieldwork

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In this article I use Clifford Geertz's backhanded defense of Malinowski's seeming emotional hypocrisy—his dislike of the natives whose point of view he wished to understand—to argue that while empathy or at least sympathy are integral components of the intimacies of fieldwork, they are also the catalyst for the darker and usually far less openly discussed emotions that are associated with these feelings—guilt, anger, and disgust—that are also at play in the fieldwork encounter. Indeed these sentiments, inevitably intersubjective in origin and expression, are intrinsic to the kind of knowledge we produce as ethnographers. I explore how these emotions emerge from or shape conversation in the field and then inflect subsequent analyses. I review encounters I have had with Lauje of Sulawesi, Indonesia, and Manjaco of Guinea-Bissau, and museum professionals at Monticello where my interlocutors attempted to guide my research by enlisting my sympathy for their condition, and how such attempts to create fields of moral mutuality inflect in often unpredictable ways my understandings of social life in those places. My focus will be on how the fraught emotion of guilt emerges from and shapes the experience of moral mutuality in ethnographic encounters.

Keywords: intersubjectivity, morality, guilt, fieldwork, Sulawesi, Guinea-Bissau, Monticello.

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### Anthropologist as instrument

When I wish to show various audiences what anthropological fieldwork entails, I talk about my experience of a more or less unbroken stretch of fieldwork from 1984 to 1991 but in three very different places—with nominally Muslim Lauje in upland Sulawesi, Indonesia, with politically marginalized Manjaco in rural Guinea-Bissau, and with administrators and employees at Monticello and Colonial Williamsburg, famous sites in America's heritage landscape limned and shadowed by the problem



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of American egalitarianism. I stress that the experience of difference is central to the agenda of anthropology as a comparative discipline, for without difference there would be no basis for arguing that different kinds of sociality lead to different subjectivities, different moralities—in a word (or rather in a word so important to American cultural anthropology at least), difference allows for the idea of cultures as plural. I also stress that the experience of difference—that, in my case, Lauje were more unlike Manjaco than Manjaco were unlike Americans—was felt as much as understood, that it entailed intersubjectivity. I emphasize that I *loved* being with Lauje and that I often *hated* my time with Manjaco. I talk about how much I disliked many Manjaco I met, about how many of them disgusted me; how they made me angry but also guilty. And I emphasize that it was because of these emotions that I ended up “studying up” at Monticello and Williamsburg, places that also made me angry about their duplicities and hypocrisies but never guilty about my anger.

In telling the story of why I left Africa behind to take up fieldwork in American heritage sites I always recount one encounter in particular, a brief argument I had with a Manjaco aristocrat near the end of my stay, and I often choke on stifled tears as I try to evoke the scene and the words he spoke. That emotion says something. So does that compulsion to retell the story and reexperience the emotion in front of a public. In privileging the emotions elicited by fieldwork I want to convey to my audiences that in ethnography, the anthropologist is the instrument.

It was not until I assigned my students a book I'd written—organized at least in part on the problem of the anthropologist as instrument (Gable 2011)—and received the first tranches of papers that I realized how much most students misunderstood me. Perhaps predictably, given anthropology's haphazard record at enlightening our audiences by trying to dislodge their preconceptions, most students simply read my likes and dislikes as reflecting Lauje or Manjaco worthiness to be liked. Manjaco were less “good” than Lauje. They were meaner, nastier; end of story. Or others reflected more deeply on the problem of fieldwork and concluded that because I liked Lauje more I learned more from them, while conversely my disgust with (some!) Manjaco precluded my learning much from them. To these students my disgust or my dislike of some Manjaco revealed at most my prejudices and a prejudiced person could not really be a “good” anthropologist.

Absent from almost all students reflections on my reflections on the emotions generated in the space of ethnographic intersubjectivity was even an inkling that such emotions, whether pleasant or unnerving, are on the one hand a product of the encounter itself and not a litmus test of Manjaco or Lauje (or my) character, and, on the other hand, potentially equally productive of what counts as ethnographic knowledge in anthropology (Ingold 2008).<sup>1</sup> Those misunderstandings themselves

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1. Ingold argues two points that are also salient for me in my work. One, while anthropology might be broadly defined as “the study of *people* . . . what truly distinguishes anthropology is not that it is a study *of* at all, but a study *with*” that “opens our minds to other possibilities of being (2008: 82). Two, that our interlocutors are students in introductory classrooms. We should be *with* them when we construct our anthropologies (ibid.: 90). That is why I have retained the students in the section above as part of the set up to the sections that will follow that focus on how the *with* implicated in fieldwork conversations and arguments leads to a appraisal of different ways of asserting an intersubjective morality.



and what they reveal about American middle-class mores could do with a lot of unpacking. The tendency to privilege friendliness as an ultimate intimacy is perhaps telling, as is the tendency to be quickly judgmental about (black) Manjaco much as many white middle-class Americans find, for example, African American anger off-putting, off-base, inappropriate.

I will leave that task of unpacking to conversations in future classrooms. Instead I will explore what can be learned from the emotion of the fieldwork encounter first by revisiting two classic essays in Clifford Geertz's oeuvre, "Deep play: Notes on the Balinese cockfight" ([1972] 1977) and "From the native's point of view: On the nature of anthropological understanding" (1983), that are widely cited and often criticized when the problem of ethnographic intersubjectivity is raised. Then I will review my experiences with Manjaco, Lauje, and, in an epilogue, at Monticello where in each case my interlocutors attempted to guide my research by enlisting my sympathy for their condition, and how such attempts to create what I would call a sense of moral mutuality inflect in odd and often unpredictable ways my understandings of social life in those places.<sup>2</sup> Moral mutuality, as I am using the catchphrase, is a fairly obvious, if also significant corollary to intersubjectivity, an assumption that one's interlocutor agrees or should agree on basic moral perspectives, or at least can be convinced. Such negotiations are often as not implicit, even taken for granted, yet they work via the coproduction of emotions such as shame, anger, and guilt. My focus will be on fraught emotion of guilt. Fieldwork, I argue, is an intrinsically guilty act.<sup>3</sup>

### No empathy, no ethnography?

In both "Deep play" (as many anthropologists have emphasized, for example, Marcus 1997) and "From the native's point of view," Geertz deploys a similar rhetorical structure—a vignette very closely observed followed by a more abstract analysis of material that really has very little to do with the vignette at all. Thus, "Notes on a Balinese cockfight" begins with a wonderfully evoked vignette of "fellow feeling" as Geertz and his wife flee the police along with the villagers who have participated in an illegal cockfight, hide in what turns out to be a Brahmin priest's house, and subsequently become the pleasant butt of villagers' comical mimicry of their "graceless style of running," their "panic stricken facial expressions" (Geertz [1972] 1977: 416).

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2. Moral mutuality is a phrase about which I make no claim to ownership but which I use throughout as a motif. It is a response to my sense of what Johannes Fabian has been doing over the decades, and this prompted by conversations and arguments I had with him and others in the workshop, "How does anthropology know?" that Bob White and Kiven Strohm organized in 2008. Fabian has stressed the coevalness of his African interlocutors—in a moral as well as empirical sense. When he listens to them they are, to borrow from Ingold (see above), "people." But, like Ingold, I continue to think it is useful to imagine people, grouped into categories we (mis)label, as cultures or societies.
  3. While I am using a psychological term the encounters I describe are not the ones of deep, enduring, and potentially producing intimacy that Borneman (2011) addresses in his incisive essay on "interlocution-based" (2011: 243) fieldwork.

As Geertz sets things up, fleeing the cops with the villagers is portrayed as the catalyst for acquiring an especially remarkable kind of rapport—“a sudden and unusually complete acceptance into a society extremely difficult for outsiders to penetrate” (416). The allusion to rapport allows Geertz the authority to then write with considerable dexterity about the finer points of cockfighting. The knowledge—the facts about how you keep a dying cock alive, or how you bet on one to win or lose—are all there, but the natives from whom he acquired that knowledge, not to mention the circumstances of its acquisition, have receded into a kind of unanimous anonymity. As Vincent Crapanzano puts it in his powerful critique (1986), Balinese “remain cardboard figures,” “they” rather than he or she or several people.<sup>4</sup>

This same pattern is followed in what to me is Geertz’s more interesting if less widely cited essay on ethnographic intersubjectivity—“From the native’s point of view: On the nature of anthropological knowledge” (1983). Here he asks, “what happens to *Verstehen* when *Einfühlen* disappears?” (1983: 56). Geertz begins with a backhanded defense of Malinowski’s—as revealed in his diary—occasional dislike of his subjects and the pleasure Malinowski seemed to take writing about them in disparaging terms.<sup>5</sup> This, according to Geertz, might be read as hypocrisy, for how could Malinowski see things, as he demanded anthropologists must, “from the native’s point of view” and yet be so disparaging of them?

Because Malinowski revealed the potential gap between how an anthropologist engages with an interlocutor in public and what the anthropologist thinks of him or her in private, Malinowski, Geertz asserted, was being excoriated by anthropologists for telling “the truth in a public place” (*ibid.*). Geertz, for his part, partakes of a parallel pleasure in truth-telling by making a point of calling those people anthropologists used to refer to as informants (people most of us now call interlocutors, or hosts or colleagues, or partners or even friends) as “natives”—a term he was bound to know would cause at least some of his colleagues to squirm almost as much as did Malinowski’s private deployment of “nigger” in his diary.

After this provocative beginning, Geertz makes the fairly prosaic assertion that empathy—that feeling Malinowski asserted was at the heart of understanding “from the native’s point of view”—was a “guild pretense” (*ibid.*: 59). We never really could, nor did we need to feel as our interlocutors felt to understand how they inhabited and experienced the world. Case in point, you don’t have to believe in magic to understand how magic works its magic. Instead of empathy, we needed to interpret the representations they produced for themselves about themselves. These representations, whether we collected them in offhand conversations or

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4. Like many, I find Crapanzano’s critique both compelling and impractical. In my work in general I have struggled to maintain a sense of particular people in particular situations, but also want to use biography, portrait, conversation, event, and so on to make statements about collectivities. He and she become they in such a narrative. This idea of a they may be a “fiction” in both the total sense Crapanzano asserts and also in the more gently celebratory way that Geertz uses the term when he reminds us that all ethnography is “fiction,” but it is the kind of fiction we supply to the collective library and that we stop supplying at our peril.
  5. That pleasure echoes for me the same pleasure I get in “revealing” how much I disliked some Manjaco. Thus, the essay’s personal resonance.



in more formal interviews, or overheard them in public contexts, could then be “grasped” like a proverb, or a joke, and analyzed like a text. If fieldwork was about gathering such materials, then emotional identification need not be a vehicle for the work of anthropology.

To demonstrate this, Geertz returns to what for him was a well-worn path, the theme of translation of emotional states. Geertz chooses personhood as his example of natives “representing themselves to themselves” as glimpsed from the native’s point of view in three very different places—Java, Bali, and Morocco. He sketches personhood in the three disparate places in fairly abstracted terms such as the distinctions Javanese make between “smooth” and “rough” in etiquette and the way they associate this with a concept of “surface” and “inside” (ibid.: 61). The abstractions amount to an indigenous psychology, albeit one that is not necessarily ever completely articulated by any one native. Except for a sentence or two when Geertz describes a suddenly widowed Javanese man sticking to pleasantries and smiling as he deals with the death of his wife and adds parenthetically a snippet of a conversation the man had with him—“That is what you have to do, he said to me, ‘be smooth inside and out’” (ibid.)—he offers us nothing about the ethnographic encounter itself when he narrates what personhood is in Java or Bali or Morocco.

But the implication is that Geertz would not have had such conversations had he not already acquired some measure of rapport. So his backhanded defense of Malinowski’s seeming hypocrisy belied that he continued to assume that some form of “rapport,” if not “fellow feeling” was essential to productive fieldwork. It is the tool that allows you to acquire “knowledge”—which for Geertz was the systems of symbols people used to represent “themselves to themselves and each other” (ibid.: 58). Knowledge, what you, the ethnographer seek to know about them, is beyond empathy: “Whatever accurate, or half-accurate sense, one gets of what one’s informants are, as the phrase goes, really like does not come from the experience of that acceptance as such, which is a part of one’s own biography not theirs” (ibid.: 70). But this assumes that those “biographies” are separate from rather than products of ethnographic intersubjectivity, a point I will consider later.

These essays have been criticized for using rapport as a rhetorical justification for having the authority to make otherwise unsubstantiated claims for the ethnographic knowledge one conveys to the reader (Crapanzano 1986) or blamed for making the damaging assertion that empathy is not the heart of the ethnographic encounter (Hollan and Throop 2012; for an extensive engagement with empathy, see the essays in Hollan and Throop 2011). Rapport and empathy are semantically different, one being perhaps more focused on intellect, the other on emotion; fellowship, fellow feeling. Both, however, overlap as glosses for what ostensibly happens during the best, the most fruitful, and the most significant conversations that occur during that empirically messy activity our discipline continues to call ethnography. Indeed, one would not be wrong to say that productive ethnography is almost always portrayed as entailing rapport or empathy, usually both. Even in George Marcus’ critical reappraisals of fieldwork in a post-Malinowskian era in which he wishes to substitute the idea of “complicity” (1998) or “collaboration” (2007) for rapport, the underlying tenor of fieldwork remains the same. The conversations are essentially pleasant and therefore productive of knowledge.

Yet, if fieldwork is essentially intersubjective, if it entails human interaction in which the anthropologist and the interlocutor are embodied beings with feelings, biases, needs, desires, then such a characterization should not seem so obvious, so taken for granted. Some of the best conversations humans have are veiled arguments that seem to go nowhere, that seem to reveal the impossibility of rapport, and therefore lead to recognitions of profound difference. This does not mean that empathy is absent. Quite the contrary. Likewise, some moments of seemingly shared intimacy, of complicity, of cooperation, might yield less in terms of understanding than they seem to, that they feel like. But again empathy is present if less productive than it might feel. By way of illustration, let me offer a glimpse of fieldwork in Manjaco and then among Lauje.

### After rapport in Manjaco

Intersubjectivity is inherently about impressions. For me Manjaco, in the royal village-cluster or “land” of Bassarel where I resided from 1986 to 1988 always seemed to be arguing with one another. It is perhaps unfair to make too much of an ethnonym, but the folk wisdom on the origins of “Manjako” is telling. The term ostensibly comes from their frequent turn of phrase “*man ja ko*”—“I said something”—a phrase routinely flung at an interlocutor because he or she disagrees with you, which means that you repeat yourself, but more emphatically: “I said . . . !” Much of my fieldwork seemed to entail witnessing and recording arguments and then later using them as narrative hooks to make larger points about the “they” I constructed: my Manjaco. So, I wrote about the way women, for example, berated male ancestors in a confrontational style that belied easy theories of ancestral authority, but also supported their powerful alterity (see Gable 1996). Or I used a shouting match between recalcitrant youth and befuddled elders in the heart of the village’s “sacred forest” to make a point about how youth make moral claims about themselves as “other-interested,” via antagonism itself (see Gable 2000). In writing about Manjaco in this way I imagined myself following Geertz’s lead—via a vignette-generated narrative that leads to larger, if abstracted discussions of personhood that are intended to unsettle because they depend on a sense of revealed difference. Culture by contrast: because the I (or the you) is not the “they.”

My emphasis on argument to reveal the quintessential in a Manjaco ethos—to use the old-fashioned term Geertz refurbished—also depended on my own antagonistic experiences. Often it seemed that every time I wished to record or photograph, to visibly engage in gathering the precious raw material of “ethnography” some interlocutor would try to thwart me. Thus, when I was about to accompany a group of women aided by one man—the owner of a net—on a fishing expedition, my camera hanging around my neck, and the woman began chanting at me not to bring the camera lest the world “see their assholes exposed.” I responded loudly that, without the camera, Americans would never know how hard women worked by contrast to men because I had plenty of good shots of men working hard in the rice fields or tapping palms. The women relented. When they did, I felt the pleasure of Manjaco phrases tumbling from my agile tongue: “I said!”



But really only occasionally I would get that tone right and feel that sense of belonging via verbal jousting. On some of those occasions I'd even get a compliment: "You're Manjaco now, Eric!"

Such antagonistic exchanges excited me, though I was usually too slow to engage much less prevail. My skirmishes were particularly exciting with one middle-aged man, Louis, the de facto leader of the local aristocrats, because I found him so compelling in his hauteur. On several occasions when—as a guest of the king—I observed aristocratic functions, he ordered me to leave when it came time for the aristocrats to discuss their "secret business" (*kakut*). He always reminded me not to make tape recordings or take photographs. He told me that he knew what was done with such images. "In Paris, I have seen them in the theater—those pictures of Africa—the people watch and laugh."

Louis was not well liked. Many people—especially the younger men in the village who were beginning to take on positions of responsibility as household heads and so forth—complained of his arrogance and belligerence. Some enjoyed imitating his loud growl behind his back. But he was the de facto leader of the aristocrats in Bassarel, and the question that guided my work was to find out how some aristocrats exercised and maintained their political power in a radically transformed postcolonial world.

Guinea-Bissau had just ten years before I began fieldwork won a long and violent war of national liberation against the Portuguese Salazarist regime. Although there had already been one coup before I arrived in Bassarel, the nation still had a certain heroic aura; it was a place on the "right side of history" if one were sympathetic—and I was—to leftist views. Indeed it was my leftism, which I would define as characterized by a Nietzschean *ressentiment* of the rich and powerful coupled with a sense that the disempowered and exploited brought their fate upon themselves by admiring or otherwise accepting the rich and powerful as their betters, their leaders, that made me at once ever so slightly hopeful about Guinea-Bissau, and also drove my research agenda. I wanted to discover the patterns of power in Manjaco. How did "aristocrats" who were divided into a number of "houses" or patrilineal-property sharing groups, who competed among themselves for "titles," associated with wet-rice fields owned by the "land" or Manjaco polity, maintain their positions in relationship to larger congeries of houses made up of commoners, the "hosts" in any given Manjaco land? Manjaco "lands" tended to be small in size and population. There were dozens of Manjaco lands, each presided over by what the Portuguese came to call a "ruler" or king. Many of these, in turn, owed their position to the "ruler of rulers," the king of Bassarel.

Among the changes the leftist government enacted was an official shift away from traditional forms of authority that were perceived as at once holdovers of colonialism and indigenous forms of exploitation. Chiefs and kings, who had been given positions as intermediaries in the Portuguese version of indirect rule were stripped of those positions. Manjaco arguably were more the targets of government acrimony than other ethnic groups. During the war for independence they were rarely on the side of the revolutionaries. The Manjaco region remained inside the ever shrinking Portuguese zone of control until the end, and although Manjaco—commoners and aristocrats alike—also did not actively support the Portuguese effort, several aristocrats deemed to be collaborators were executed clandestinely by



the revolutionaries right after the war. A handful of others emerged as heroes from Portuguese prisons; they had ended up incarcerated because other aristocrats—competitors for chiefdoms—had lied to the authorities that they were collaborating with “the rebels.” Yet, more than ten years after the end of the revolutionary struggle, and ten years after they lost any official political positions in the Portuguese colonial system, Manjaco aristocrats were among the richest of their peers and many still had strong voices in village affairs.

This was in part because during the colonial era, aristocrats usually had family members who had worked as clerks and other petty officials. Colonial-era patterns continued into the age of national independence. The salaries from these jobs allowed the children of well-placed aristocrats to acquire a higher education and thus even better jobs in the national government, or to invest family capital in small business ventures such as bush-taxi and transport services or small taverns or general stores.

But more important than occupation for giving them access to wealth, aristocrats controlled large valuable wet-rice fields (which were linked to local political titles) that they could divide into parcels and rent out to commoner families. Louis was the richest of the aristocrats in Bassarel. He owned all three of the village cantinas and he leased them to petty merchants. He also controlled the second largest of the erstwhile “titled” fields in Bassarel.

He and the other aristocrats were often the subjects of backbiting acrimony. Many, in fact most, were using land that according to local custom was not theirs. They had inherited fields from their fathers that were the property of the Manjaco kingdom—fields that traditionally had been allocated by the king to chiefs for use only in their lifetimes. According to many of their neighbors, men like Louis were, in effect, usurpers or the sons or grandsons of usurpers, though there was little public outcry about their violations of custom, no complaints to the government authorities even though most of them were also technically in violation of a national land rights law (written with Manjaco specifically in mind), which forbade individual households to “own” wet-rice fields larger than a few hectares. Louis, however, may have thought of me as a representative of that government (after all, I had gotten government permission to do my research) and, therefore as a potential snitch.

Not that I needed Louis to acquire a detailed sense of aristocratic political machinations. In the Portuguese colonial archives, which were left intact and open to researchers when they abandoned the colony in defeat, there were plenty of documents that detailed squabbles over chiefdoms. Commoners with axes to grind furnished me with more than enough information. I was also on good terms with the elderly and deposed king who, out of bitterness for the disrespect he felt his erstwhile subjects (including the aristocrats) showed toward him, was more than willing to confirm and add details to what I could glean from the commoners and the colonial documents. From those sources combined I learned more or less what I needed to without Louis’ help. I already knew more than enough about the kinds of chicanery that aristocratic infighting entailed; I already had a fairly detailed sense of the structure of endemic conflict that was entailed in the relationship between aristocratic “guests” and commoner “hosts” in the Manjaco rulerships. What I was really after was not an informant, in short—I had plenty of those—nor really an interlocutor, if one imagines an interlocutor as a counterpart in a sustained



relationship; I already had people I considered to be friends who could set me straight about Manjaco life—people with whom I could also share palm wine and otherwise hang out with in a relaxed way. What I wanted was something else: a certain recognition from him that I was basically a good guy. I still felt compelled to convince Louis that what I was doing would meet his approval. Largely because of his antagonism, I enjoyed the effort of trying to get him to change his mind.

One afternoon late in my fieldwork I visited Louis alone to try to explain why I wanted to hear what the aristocrats talked about when they reviewed their business at an annual ceremony. The ceremony was to be held at the spirit shrine of the aristocrats. For months I had been attending the far larger ceremony for the village as a whole, and had tape-recorded the formal speeches and listened in as the villagers discussed local affairs. I wanted to compare those ceremonies to the ones the aristocrats attended. The king had already invited me to come and bring my tape recorder, and I could have gone without Louis' go ahead, even though I knew that customarily it was the aristocrats and not the king who ran the ceremony. We drank several gourds full of palm wine as we chatted, so our conversation was tinged with the affection of shared wine. When I finally asked him outright if I could participate while the aristocrats held their ceremony, Louis pointed to some shirts hanging on a line to dry in the courtyard. "Ask me for one of those and I will give it to you." He then gestured toward the chickens scrabbling in the sand near our chairs: "Ask me for that and my wife will cook it for you." But then he asked rhetorically, "In America, if I went to the White House and asked to sit with the president, would they let me?" I answered "no," and he explained that the same rule applied in the village. "What you ask for I cannot give you because it is not mine. What you ask 'the law' [that is, the state] cannot give you because it is not theirs."

With those few words I felt an overwhelming sense of guilt and gave up my plan to witness the ceremony. My reasons for attending and the knowledge I hoped to acquire—one more bit, perhaps a telling sound bite to two, about the tense distinctions between aristocrats and commoners, suddenly seemed so petty. Who would care really about whether or not the aristocrats in this tattered little fly spot village in this poor country were powerful or not, or threatened or threatening? Compared to what went on in the White House this all seemed somehow irrelevant to the problems of power that interested me, and worse my participation in the charade that it was significant felt cheap. I couldn't help thinking of the comparison Laura Bohannon (Bowen 1964) drew between fieldwork in colonial Africa and the work of an ambulance-chasing lawyer. Louis had made me feel like a scholarly vulture picking at the corruptions of his society in order to nourish the cravings of mine.

### A Lauje idyll deconstructed

The intense guilt I felt because of Louis' explanation for why I could not have the kind of access I craved would not have surprised me as much as it did were it not for the fact that before arriving in Guinea-Bissau I had spent two years doing far more pleasant research among Lauje in Sulawesi. Intersubjectivity is easy to imagine as a kind of psychology: two people with their hang-ups conversing. But imagine a different trajectory for ethnographic intersubjectivity. Here we focus on

the difference between individuals as representatives of a type. My hang-ups are my own but also ones I share with my consociates. Yours are also ones you share with your consociates. So Louis' angry sensitivity about the way Parisians "laughed" at half-naked Africans is not a feeling unique to him but a sensitivity he shares with other Africans who have spent time in Europe only to return to the village or more specifically with other Manjaco—something a "they" in Crapanzano's dismissive terms also experience.

Or we might make things more complex. Louis' subject position as aristocrat (all Manjaco aristocrats were embattled in Guinea-Bissau) makes him especially sensitive to such slights, plus my prying. So now Louis can represent or stand in for Manjaco aristocrats. Through the alchemy of the cultural his feeling of exclusion and his annoyance with me becomes a shared and often expressed feeling, an element of an ethos to use the old fashioned term. Ditto, of course, for me. My guilt is the kind of guilt that is endemic to a certain group of Americans. It is the pleasantly painful shadow of the American egalitarian ethos.

But, if we apply the generic idea of intersubjectivity to the specifically ethnographic context, that is, think about ethnographic intersubjectivity, then we add another layer to this—that intersubjectivity is on par with intertextuality. If texts cannot be interpreted independently of the texts that surround them, prompt them, are recalled by them, then so too with fieldwork encounters. Not only do we always go to the field with other fieldwork accounts in our library of experiences, not only do these texts shape how we will experience and write our experiences, but so too will some of us have (to borrow from Geertz borrowing from Javanese) "other villages, other customs" that will prompt similar interleaving of experience and text. Ethnographic intersubjectivity, whatever else it is, is clearly that.

If my encounters with Lauje and Manjaco taught me anything, it was that one encounter, one set of subjects, influenced how I felt about, perceived, conversed with, another set. "My Manjaco," that is the Manjaco I manifest in the stories I tell about them, are a product of my Lauje. When representing, as when reading, you can't help but be influenced by the library. My tendency on that score was to stress contrast. Lauje this, Manjaco very much that. In this way I followed, sometimes all too self-consciously, Geertz's lead: Java, Morocco; Bali, Java; always contrast.

So, I doubt I would have felt the intensity of the guilt I felt with Louis had I not just spent two years in the company of the far more accommodating Lauje. Just how accommodating is revealed in their attitudes toward the tape recorder and camera my wife and I deployed.

The Lauje I studied with my then wife Jennifer Nourse (see Nourse 1996, 1999, 2002) lived in two very different communities. One community among whose inhabitants we worked was a hill or highland village that Lauje counted as an ancient core of that precolonial kingdom. This village stretched along a ridgeline about 2 to 3000 feet above the coastal plane and an arduous hike traversing a swift and frequently flooded river and then up a steep slope. Hill Lauje occasionally sold garlic or shallots or rattan to coastal merchants. But mainly they subsisted on what they themselves could gather or grow, primarily corn, taro, and upland rice. They had a mosque and a school. Both were run by Lauje of the coast. All in all they were a sort of periphery to a periphery—their village chief, a low-level government official,



was also a lowlander, but he rarely visited the hills. Indeed few coastal people ever ventured into the mountains; only the most impoverished made occasional forays to barter dried fish or other goods for mountain crops. The steep hills and swift river formed a natural barrier and seemed always to have had. The periphery of a periphery was by almost any measure outside the control of the coast.

We also spent less time visiting a group of Lauje who inhabited a densely packed village along a coastal plain at the mouth of a river, among coconut palm groves owned by outsiders. Some had farms on the hillsides upriver from the coast where they grew enough rice, corn, or cassava to feed their families. But most depended on meager wages they could earn working for others—harvesting coconuts and making copra for example—usually outside of the Lauje community. Their villages formed a kind of impoverished periphery to a dusty entrepôt, Tinombo, which was not only the seat of government but a place of commerce and education both religious and secular. Tinombo was a fairly new town, an early-twentieth-century Dutch-inspired settler colony composed of Indonesians from elsewhere in the archipelago—Chinese, Bugis, Mandar, Gorontaloese, and so forth—in the midst of what had once been an independent if very minor kingdom. The Lauje village, Dusunan, which lay on the opposite bank of the river from Tinombo, was the home of the descendants of those precolonial era rulers and their aristocratic retinues. But with colonialism and its aftermath, Lauje, whether aristocrat or commoner, had come to work for or be otherwise indebted to people they considered to be foreigners in Tinombo. Foreigners, for example, owned most of the coconut groves. Lauje hauled copra for them. Foreigners owned most of the stores and warehouses and trucks; and they bought and bulked the garlic and shallots Lauje in the hills grew, and the rattan Lauje gathered in the forested mountains. They ran the schools and mosques; they were the police and petty bureaucrats or national party representatives. Foreigners dictated to Lauje what laws and regulations they had to follow. Foreigners defined Lauje relations to that abstraction, the state. Foreigners also defined what it meant to be religious, to be a Muslim. Lowland Lauje were, in short, a more or less disenfranchised peasant proletariat. But the aristocrats among them remembered and in some senses wished to return to a time when they, not foreigners, ruled the region.

Before the Dutch conquered this part of Sualwesi in the early 1900s and before the Indonesian government inherited it from the Dutch, Lauje rulers or Olongians had presided over a kingdom that comprised the scattered hilltop communities along the Tinombo River. The king's court was in a village close to the river's mouth on the coast. Although by the time we arrived the kingdom had been politically defunct for close to eighty years, the king still hosted a community-wide curing ceremony in which Lauje recognized the awful powers of "The Center of the Sea" to spread epidemic illness—cholera and smallpox—up from the coast and into the mountains or to withhold rain for the mountains that came from the sea. During the ceremony the king hosted a week-long feast for the spirits of the Sea, who manifested themselves in the bodies of the Lauje women they possessed, the Lauje people of the scattered communities providing the food and sharing in the meal. During that week the spirits, via the bodies they possessed, engaged in mock duels, chanted song-stories in foreign tongues or in Lauje that laid out the origins of the earth and its hierarchies of ethnic groups. The ceremony culminated with the

departure (or banishment) of foreign spirits and the indwelling of local spirit; and, by redrawing the boundary between foreign and native, it ostensibly restored the health of the king and his community. Smallpox and other plagues had been sent back to their home in the center of the sea; Lauje became at that moment an intact community again with a ritual ruler at its center.

A couple of years before we arrived, local representatives of the Indonesian government had declared the ceremony illegal, bowing to pressure from modernizing and fundamentalist Muslims in Tinombo who asserted that offerings to Spirits of the Sea could not be tolerated in a community that was ostensibly Islamic. Lauje in the coastal communities reacted by threatening to not vote for the Indonesian government's slate of candidates in the upcoming election, and the ceremony was again performed with the government's official, if reluctant, blessing. Our presence as researchers allowed these aristocrats to give voice to these pretensions. Specifically, they invited us to witness and record the community-wide curing ceremony. Throughout the ceremony we were given every opportunity to record and photograph. We were even allowed into the most secret of spaces where the ingathering spirits of the Lauje—the Lords of Land and Water—held a constant vigil over a shrine only the king and his kin would normally ever see.

We witnessed the ceremony twice. Meanwhile we lived most of the time in an upland Lauje village. There we learned that some mountain Lauje looked down at the coast and blamed their kin there for a recent inexorable ecological decline. Once thickly forested hills were now choked with spiky grass. It rained too much in one year, causing mudslides, stripping away the soil. In another year it rained too little, stunting and wilting anything they planted. Once fertile fields were now stripped of their crops by pigs rooting among the tubers, tearing down corn, trampling rice. To hill Lauje this was evidence of a cosmology out of whack because their lowland cousins had failed to maintain ritual obligations to the spirits. Lowlanders, especially some of the aristocratic ritual specialists, and increasingly those who no longer honored local spirits but only Allah, had begun selling rice and corn and by extension had sold the essence of the land itself. As a result the lands began to harden and the forest began to recede.

If lowland Lauje sold food and therefore violated cosmological injunctions that what "land and water" gave to humans should be given to others in turn. Lauje in the mountains asserted to us that they, by contrast, always gave food to anyone who asked for it or who visited. Because hill Lauje "gave food and never sold it" people from distant hilltops would stop at our place on their way down the slick muddy trail and give us taro or corn. When we would visit our neighbors' verandas they would invariably offer to share a meal, sometimes of rice or cornmeal and dried fish, often some boiled bananas or taro or cassava that we would all take from a common plate and dip into a little pile of salt and mashed hot peppers.

This routine generosity provoked in us a certain guilt-tinged desire to reciprocate. We felt the pain of our wealth and their poverty each time they shared with us their poor meal of taro dipped in salt. We felt the pleasure of belonging each time we ate a meal in common. So, we eagerly supplied medicine—for malaria, for worms, for giardia, and for dysentery—when we had it and were asked for help. We also shared with frequent visitors our supply of cigarettes and pouch of tobacco, and our coffee laced with powdered milk and sugar. And we too cooked for others



when they stopped on their way down or up the trail to spend some time sitting on our veranda.

When Lauje told us that they gave food and didn't sell it, they also warned us that it was an obligation to receive such largesse lest we offend the "spirit of hearth and fire"—the domestic refraction of a congeries of spirits that included the spirits of the land and Water and especially the "twins"—the spirits of the placenta and birth fluids. Each of these spirits was portrayed as having sacrificed itself for human beings. Hearth and fire exhausted their essence so that food might be cooked. Lord of Water and Land gave of itself and suffered as a result so that humans could grow crops. The twin-siblings of humans died at birth so that a person could be born. Humans "paid tribute" to the spirits when they were ill. Illness was a form of repayment—suffering for suffering—yet illness remained within a certain bounds because spirits were "poison and cure." They caused illness but they also left human beings alone, making them well again—that is, as long, as humans recognized the spirits' sacrifices by holding periodic celebrations involving the shared consumption of foods.

Eating a daily meal in common was a mundane version of such a celebration. If you, as a guest or visitor, came to a house when a meal was being cooked, you had to share in the meal lest "hearth and fire" were insulted at your refusal to recognize their sacrifice. As one of our hosts explained, "even if you are not hungry, take a bit of rice or a bit of taro and touch it to your throat." That, he counseled, would be enough to satisfy the spirits and ward off the effects of the sin of *ampunan*—a sudden slip along a treacherous trail, or a drowning in a flash flood while fording a steep banked stream—that horrible misfortune that occurs when you fail to accept the largesse of "hearth and fire." As long as we fulfilled that minimal obligation we were safe from sanctions that the spirits, not Lauje, enforced. So, Lauje enjoined us always to accept the offer of a meal or at least make the proper gesture of thanks.

It was pleasant and exciting to be encouraged to participate in an enchanted mutuality in which one's own travails or the world's degradations could be blamed on a failure to keep up a relationship human beings had with nature by recognizing nature's various spiritual refractions. It was also easy to project into their enchanted sensibility an allegorical critique of capitalism's corrosive powers, and to equate their allegiance to the Lord of Water, Lord of Land as local resistance to state sponsored Islam. It was also a pleasure to become their occasional allies against the state and against Islamic fundamentalism as when we were enlisted as experts in culture to argue for the centrality of the curing ceremonies that revolve on the Olongian and local folkways and customs.

## Conclusion

I have offered you sketches of my encounter with Lauje out of temporal sequence in order to try to disrupt what I at the time took to be an obvious difference between the two sets of experiences. At the time my frustration with Manjaco was exacerbated by my memories of rapport with Lauje. Rapport was experienced in the chants the spirits directed at our tape recorder and ratified in those shared meals and pouches of tobacco. Among Lauje access and rapport banished guilt and the

sense of otherness that comes with guilt. By contrast, my frustrated efforts to gain access via rapport with Manjaco like Louis made me all too aware of the sources of my guilt and of my otherness. It wasn't until a much later visit to Lauje that I realized how artificial was the contrast I was given to drawing between those encounters at least with regard to my own sense of estrangement.

When we lived in the upland Lauje village our foreignness receded from our consciousness because it was rarely remarked upon. As we shared those meals of rice and taro with our neighbors, the children of Taipaobal's most influential shaman, they occasionally remarked that in times when the rice or corn or taro were scarce they would eat a wild root crop called *ondot* that needed to be soaked in water for days before it was safe to consume. Never did we eat such food when those Lauje neighbors and friends hosted us. It was always rice or taro or a porridge made of ground dried corn. But a decade after our initial visit we returned and this time I spent two weeks alone with our erstwhile hosts, sleeping in their hut, traveling with them. One night when we returned well after sunset from a long journey the men asked me if I might like to try *ondot*. The meal was already cooked. So a porridge of *ondot* it was, which tasted richly pungent. It was as we shared this meal that I learned that my hosts often ate *ondot* and that they had always (at least often) done so, even in the years we had been their neighbors. Foreigners, lowlanders, they emphasized did not like *ondot*. It made Lauje "shy" to admit that they liked it, in fact craved it. So in those two years where we felt so close to our neighbors a dozen or so yards away and just down the path, we had been outsiders after all!

In Steven Caton's (1999) book on David Lean's famous film "Lawrence of Arabia" we are coaxed to see in Lawrence's somewhat embarrassed (but also exultantly narcissistic) effort to wear tribal clothing the dream of belonging that characterizes the desires of many anthropologists. We want to be accepted, to join in. That desire makes us occasionally forget that they still know we are only wearing a costume.

When I tell my students about my feeling of belonging with Lauje and estrangement from Manjaco, what gets lost is not only the obvious fact that my emotions are not a reliable barometer of the extent of my engagement with my hosts. More importantly, guilt might have been a feeling that I shared without recognizing it at the time with many of my Manjaco interlocutors. This awareness, if indeed it is true, has required the passage of time, as it is mapped out so deceptively simply in a recent book by Michael Jackson (2011). In *Life within limits* Jackson accompanies an African interlocutor on a visit home. The emigrant is made to feel guilty for leaving. That guilt keeps him tethered to his home village, makes him feel a responsibility toward those he has left behind even as he chafes and feels a certain anger at those entanglements. The guilt and the anger are symptoms of kinship. And those who elicit guilt are well aware that they are capitalizing on the moral mutuality that kinship implies. When Manjaco used to compliment me by exclaiming, "You're Manjaco now!" I was then perhaps less aware than I am now of how quintessentially Manjaco were the lessons in moral mutuality they were teaching me, even via off-hand and spontaneous compliments. And such lessons implied much the same sensibility as Louis depended on when he offered me his shirt, his chickens, but not the ceremonies that the aristocrats claimed as their own.



I often wonder how I would have experienced Lauje and Manjaco had I lived with Manjaco first (see Gottlieb 2012).<sup>6</sup> I like to argue, and in an embodied sense I tend to move more like a Manjaco than a Lauje. Like Manjaco, I make broad gestures with my hands and arms, while Lauje tend toward a closed-in reserve. Would I have liked Manjaco better and, perhaps, have found Lauje shyness off-putting, rather than endearing? Had I been with Manjaco first, would I have been more alert to the fact I never considered while with Lauje: we were not considered or called out as “kin” even as we lived among Lauje in “family-like” settings. Would then, our sense that we shared a basic moral perspective, the moral mutuality of looking together at a landscape and seeing nature in need of protection and recognition also be put into question? Would then the lack of guilt I felt have seemed odd, given our clear material superiority? Mountain Lauje often complained to us about their distant kin in the “stone houses” down below in the relatively modern and wealthy town of Tinombo. Down there, we had a stone house too. But because Lauje never explicitly linked us to them, we never felt called out on that score. Had Manjaco taught me their lessons first, I might have been more sensitive to Lauje shyness—and seen through it, and felt far less comfortable as a result. But I am certain that in whatever order I encountered Lauje and Manjaco I still would have become aware of the contrast—that the intersubjectivity of the encounters, and especially the context of guilt itself, would be evidence, if you will, of an ethos.

That is why that while I find much that resonates in Marcus’ update of Geertz’s musings on rapport, “The uses of complicity” (1998), I am also troubled by his dismissal of the utility of an “older” anthropology he associates with Geertz and his era. In charting what was then an emerging trajectory of fieldwork, Marcus takes it for granted that anthropology has become a guilty discipline and (therefore) much more overtly political than it was in the innocent days Geertz recalls so fondly in his essay on the Balinese cockfight. Then, Geertz could imagine himself, and imagine his interlocutors imagining him as a potential target for the police, as both on the same side. Now, Marcus surmises, such innocence would seem naive. Now, when many anthropologists who did fieldwork or wrote their dissertations after *Anthropology as cultural critique* train neophytes by telling stories of our disciplinary past, they are as likely to put their forbearers on the side of the police as on the other side. Guilt requires self-flagellation—a constant wallowing in a crime while also fleeing the scene of that crime.

In his critique of Geertz, Marcus argues that we replace the idea of rapport with the idea of complicity. He suggests that if we recognized complicity rather than ignoring it, we could find affinities in our social positions and the positions of our informants in the kinds of out-of-the-way places that so charmed Geertz and his generational peers: “What ethnographers in this changed mise-en-scène want from subjects is . . . an articulation of the forms of anxiety that are generated by the

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6. Whether first fieldwork and first love is an appropriate analogy, it produces interesting discussion because it raises the more salient question of the emotional state of the researcher and the relationship between that state and other, if you will “relationships,” which, if one is important enough in the discipline (e.g., Margaret Mead) can become a topic of a secondary scholarship on fieldwork and intimacy.



awareness of being affected by what is elsewhere . . . the ethnographer on the scene . . . makes this sense of elsewhere present” (Marcus 1998: 119).

My encounters with Louis certainly reverberate with Marcus’ analysis. To retell the story of his refusal of my attempt at rapport over and over as a confession (and enjoy the storm of tears) is precisely what one would expect of a guilty anthropologist. Likewise my effort at gaining access from him prompted the kind of criticism from Louis that makes “a sense of elsewhere present.” Paris, and by extension, my world, emerged in his argument against my prying as a place that excluded Africans via derisive laughter. But while I experienced in my encounter with Louis the “elsewhere” that ensnared us both, I also felt, through the way he performed aristocratic privilege with me as audience and actor, the immediacy of the aristocrat-commoner divide in Bassarel itself, and in the directness of his confrontations with me very different sensibility from the kinds of relationship that Lauje created with us. And it is in that kind of intersubjectivity that we return to the kind of anthropology Geertz championed.

Geertz drew sharp distinctions between Balinese or Javanese and Moroccans to make a case for the existence of “local knowledge,” or “ethos,” or “culture,” in order in part to assert that those contrasts are more profound than, say, the more pervasive kinds of contrasting anthropology is given to making between the “contemporary moment” and the past, the colonial and the postcolonial. As anthropology has become increasingly a guilty discipline, desiring to escape its complicity in pernicious othering, it also gives up on the creativity of contrast. That is a shame because exploring contrast is anthropology’s enduring contribution to human studies broadly conceived. Marcus and others sometimes dismiss that contribution as an “archival function that is past or has been accomplished in an earlier era of anthropology” (Marcus 2007: 8). When one is studying bureaucrats or administrators it can seem that no matter where one is it is all about “paraethnography.” But for those who continue to assume that there are out-of-the-way places in which difference is important and who likewise assume that demonstrating that continues to be of value, even at the risk of retracing a well-worn path, then Geertz’s effort remains relevant.

Indeed it could be argued that Geertz’s agenda shares much with recent efforts to push the envelope of intersubjectivity even further via difference and othering. Note that just as there are other cultures, other personhoods, there may also be other intersubjectivities. For us a common sense understanding of intersubjectivity is that we assume when we converse with someone that we know to some degree how they feel and think because we are alike—human—and as we converse we act on, even embody that assumption. Our conversation therefore is already premised on a model of the intersubjective and this model may resist or may be modified by the conversational encounter. Such a model can be very resistant. Think here of how Westerners talk to cats, or chickens, and imagine they are in a dialogue. Yet, clearly anthropology has shown that there are varieties of ways of imagining what it is like to be, feel, think human. So one can imagine an ethno-intersubjectivity, the goal of which would be to acquire native models of the intersubjective. Some such models, of course, would include other entities as intersubjects in ways that subvert our common sense understandings of the intersubjective—animals, bits of nature we tend to ignore, or technology, and so forth. Thus, the implicit exploration of



intersubjectivity in Actor-Network Theory. Thus, too, the work by anthropologists in lowland South America (see, e.g., Mentore 2012) and in New Guinea on local models of human-animal-spirit intersubjectivity.

Were I to engage with that emerging literature, I might begin with a contrast between Manjaco and Lauje that opened up yet other differences. For Lauje rice had, in a sense, a soul. When I asked Manjaco about the agency of rice and commented that for some people rice might have a soul, they scoffed. But to explore those differences would be a very different article. Even when one sticks only to human intersubjectivity, I find it useful to use the conversations and the arguments I had with Manjaco and Lauje to draw distinctions in order to revisit the idea of culture. But unlike Geertz, I worry constantly and more or less publicly that the contrasts I draw are too sharp, too motivated by my own subjectivity—that guilt-tinged post-colonial complicity, Marcus so deftly exposed, and that John Borneman recently called “the contemporary fantasy of equality” (Borneman 2011: 244). Yet, following Geertz I also assume that read, or rather, narrated properly, these experiences can be used to think about the different kinds of moral mutuality that lie, I believe, at the heart of ethnographic intersubjectivity.

## Epilogue

And there, of course, is more to Marcus and the problem or promise of intersubjectivity than that, because the purpose of his essay on “complicity” was not only to change the *mise-en-scène* of fieldwork in out-of-the-way places, to make that fieldwork “multisited,” but also to remark on the then—and still very much today—tendency in anthropology to become a repatriated discipline, especially in what Marcus called “second projects” (e.g., Marcus 1998). The guilt that defined a postcolonial era for many anthropologists explains the more general disciplinary trajectory Marcus charts in the essay and also pioneered in his own ethnographic efforts: that in this last quarter century anthropologists have at once endlessly explored our collective complicity in colonialism (note, that the classics are often read or, to be more accurate, referred to in courses devoted to this kind of auto-critique), while also escaping the savage slot in favor of the scientist’s laboratory, the Wall Street office, the hospital, the museum, the NGO—in short, to places where we could “study up,” speak truth to power.

Indeed it is precisely that kind of urge that made me so amenable to Louis’ refusal. Because of that conversation with Louis, when I returned to the United States I began research on Monticello (work that soon led to collaborative research with Richard Handler on Colonial Williamsburg), a house museum associated with Thomas Jefferson. Chastened by his remarks, my goal was to do something along the lines Louis had intimated would be impossible to do at the White House. I wanted to discover how a public institution that was in the business of the open dissemination of knowledge about the past in a pluralist egalitarian society addressed conflict and controversy about that past as it related to egalitarianism. Among the issues that quickly became salient were how Monticello addressed Jefferson’s participation in the institution of slavery, his sexual relationship (at the time alleged and also heavily contested, pitting so-called experts against an increasingly

skeptical public), with Sally Hemings, a slave, and, connected to all of this, the way Monticello staff managed the often day-to-day encounters they had with members of the public who they deemed culturally or intellectually inferior, but with whom they had to enact at least the etiquette of equality.

Paradoxically my initial foray into the museum world was a high watermark for access for me. It fulfilled a desire to study up without making me complicit with the powers that be, while also depending on an illusionary moral mutuality. I set up an interview with the then director of Monticello about his efforts to make Monticello a site more congenial to African Americans and to therefore aid an egalitarian project of racial reconciliation. But somewhat accidentally we also discussed the institution's efforts to disentangle itself from an increasingly activist fundamentalist Christian community that had become an embarrassment. At Monticello the Fundamentalist Christians had co-opted an event—the Easter Sunrise service that Monticello had hosted for decades but whose original justification was beyond the pale of institutional memory. Here are excerpts of that interview and excerpts of comments the director made when he and I subsequently reviewed the entire text and my commentary on it line by line:

The bottom line—and this is highly sensitive—is that I don't think the ceremony [the Easter Sunrise service] is appropriate for Monticello. I say that as somebody who is very active in a church, but I don't think that this is something in keeping with the Jefferson tradition—something Jefferson would have done himself, something Jefferson would be comfortable with. . . . In addition we ran into genuine logistical problems and it was easy, basically—to be completely candid—in a public relations sense, to say that because of the difficulties we were having that we were going to discontinue the service. But the core, in my mind, was that it was not an appropriate service for the Foundation to sponsor here at the home of Thomas Jefferson. . . . I'm being more candid with you than I hope you'd be with your audience. But we tried to present it in a way that made sense to the community. We could have presented it in a way that could have caused considerable controversy. . .

What we said, basically was perfectly honest. . . . We were working with a ministerial association. And this is not to be critical of anyone, but we were ending up with the same denominations every year. They were having trouble getting the public address system. There was an old timer that was prepared to do it but he was crotchety and wanted to drive the car right up on the lawn in front of the portico. We didn't think that was a good idea. . . . And the ministers said, in fact, that they didn't know if they'd be able to pull the program together.

It's not our program. Historically, we were just happy to make Monticello available for a program that they arranged. So, if they were having trouble, that was enough for us. . . . [Also] we had a couple of years rained out, and we had cold weather one year. And we don't want to be involved in programs where people are physically unhappy.

So that was basically the explanation we gave the public, but behind that was my own uneasiness about whether this was appropriate and I asked . . . our director of research and she said that she certainly didn't think it was within her reading of Thomas Jefferson's beliefs.



That's the story. Kind of a public explanation and behind that some other real concerns . . .

. . . We tried to get the word out in advance so people would know it wasn't going to be held so they wouldn't drive up and be disappointed. . . . We got the word out through the newspapers, radio; we had ads. And I was interviewed on television. I said basically what I told you—logistical problems, weather and all. I don't believe I got a call or letter from anybody. The ministers had some second thoughts when they heard that we were prepared to stop it. They would redouble their efforts to deal with the logistical problems. But I don't recall getting any critical letters in the mail. Or any positive letters. Some people personally said that it was a good decision, that Monticello had no business doing that anymore.

When the director and I reviewed my comments on the excerpts from the interview, he wanted me to make several changes that would, he felt, clear up certain distortions. He felt, for example, that the line "I'm being more candid with you" should be deleted because it made it appear that he wanted me to lie to my audience. To the director, while "logistical problems" certainly had the advantage of being a convenient excuse, more importantly it was a truth upon which all parties concerned could agree. He did not mean, however, that the Ministerial Association was an equally witting participant in this agreement. In fact, he hoped that the ministers would accept the public explanation as genuine and not rock the boat.

When I wrote up the interview, he and I scrutinized line by line, I had summarized the events by writing that "the problem of the Easter Sunrise service was simply a matter of reclaiming terrain that had fallen out of the Foundation's control." The director was uncomfortable with the word "control" in the sentence because it sounded "egotistical." It was not, he reiterated, an issue of "control," but an issue of what was "appropriate." He claimed that he did not feel that he or the Foundation as a whole dictates to others what is right or proper. (Thus, for example, he emphasized that he did not dictate to the members of the ministerial association or to the wider public as represented, for example by the press, that they accept as apt the Foundation's explanation for why the service had to be cancelled.) Rather, the director and the Foundation are simply acting as gatekeepers and stewards over a landscape that generates its own proprieties. For this reason, he wanted me to insert into the excerpt quotes from two eminent Jeffersonian scholars who had "personally said that it was a good decision" to discontinue the service. One, he told me, had called the ceremony an "anathema." He wanted me to include references to these scholars to indicate that his decision to cancel the service was not a personal decision. But he also wanted me to keep the names of these scholars "off the record."

That reference to keeping names "off the record" and the virtual handshake deal between us that it implied, made me feel that the director interpolated me as a journalist of sorts and subject to the kinds of rules of thumb implied by journalism. Throughout the interview there was also the sense that Jordan, the director, assumed I would agree with him that the religious zealots should not have speaking rights at Monticello. That is what his openness toward me and his befuddlement with my characterization of what he said to me revealed. Consent in journalism is an informal negotiation involving much the same combination of calculation and sentiment as does our relationship with the people we talk to and live with "in the field," but no

formalized procedures protecting sources from the journalist's urge to get a story. Thus the director's wish that I be less forthcoming with my audience than he was with me might depend at best on shared sentiments, or, in a pinch, on the assumption that if I wanted more information from him later I wouldn't "burn" my source now.

For my part I was happy to burn my source—to leave, as it is left above, not only the quote, "I'm being more candid with you," but also the director's name. Even though I had no sympathy for the Christian Fundamentalists, I wrote a paper with the conversation above intact along with the comments the two of us made as we went over the transcript together, but did not find a journal willing to publish my piece.

I am, upon reflection, not displeased with this. But nor do I feel, even today, a shred of guilt at keeping the fingerprints in rather than erasing them as the director wished. My interest in Monticello was never in exposing its particular duplicities to the "public," much less the foibles of its then current leader. Rather I wanted to get at the inevitability of this kind of duplicity itself—how museums in modern democracies require and routinely generate a certain delicate double-speak.

When I tell my various audiences (including students and those in the museum world) about this later conversation and when I link it back to the conversation I had with Louis, I want them to ponder the problem of guilt in anthropological fieldwork and whether, for example, I should feel as free from guilt in the last instance and as overwhelmed by it in the first. Thinking about what prompts guilt gets to the essence of the ethics of anthropological fieldwork. But I also want them to think about the fact that what I know about museum directors and Manjaco lords is inherent in the tenure of the conversations I had *with* them (to borrow from Ingold [2008]) and not in the form of knowledge I acquired after a moment of rapport. Anthropology is a guilty discipline. Guilt emerges out of moral mutuality. Moral mutuality exemplifies ethnographic intersubjectivity.

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## Anthropologie de la culpabilité et du rapport: mutualité morale dans le travail de terrain ethnographique.

Résumé : Dans cet essai, j'utilise la défense équivoque de Clifford Geertz de l'apparente hypocrisie émotionnelle de Malinowski (son aversion des indigènes dont il voulait comprendre le point de vue), pour soutenir que si l'empathie ou au moins la sympathie sont parties intégrantes de l'intimité du travail de terrain, elle sont également des catalyseurs pour des émotions plus sombres, et généralement beaucoup moins ouvertement discutées, associées aux sentiments de culpabilité, de colère et de dégoût qui sont également en jeu dans la rencontre sur le terrain. En effet, ces sentiments, inévitablement intersubjectifs dans leur origine comme leur expression, sont intrinsèques à la nature des connaissances que nous produisons comme ethnographes. J'explore comment ces émotions émergent des conversations sur le terrain et infléchissent les analyses. Je passe en revue les rencontres que j'ai eues avec des Lauje de Sulawesi, en Indonésie, des Manjaco de la Guinée-Bissau, où mes interlocuteurs ont tenté d'orienter mes recherches en faisant appel à toute ma sympathie pour leur état, et comment ces tentatives de créer des champs de mutualité morale ont influencé de manière souvent imprévisible mes compréhensions de la vie sociale dans ces endroits. Dans cet article, j'insiste sur la façon dont la charge émotionnelle de culpabilité émerge et façonne l'expérience de la mutualité morale dans les rencontres ethnographiques.

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