# In Memoriam Johan Galtung (1930-2024)

Johan Galtung

12-09-2024 ~ *"A very important reason for forbidding nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is that they increase the threshold for what is acceptable."*

A conventional war is often defended by saying it did not go nuclear.
The international legal framework for warfare is already a victim of nuclear arms and can only regain its validity by forbidding that insult perpetrated on humanity. (Galtung 2017).

Professor Johan Vincent Galtung, who passed away on February 17, 2024, is generally know as the founder of the academic discipline or interdisciplinair field, of Peace Research. He started in 1964 the Institut for Fredsforskning (PRIO) in Oslo, Norway. But he himself was much more than an academic. During and after his academic career, he was appointed ten times Dr Honorios Causa and was holder of the Right Livelyhood Award (aka Alternative Nobel Peace Price) 1987.
Let me focus on a few of his many abilities, like his research, his contribution to social science and his practice in creative conflict solution. And memorizing him is for me not possible without paying attention to my personal relation with him.

For me, and for many social scientist, Galtung became an inspiration thanks to his book on *Theory and Methods of Social Research* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1967). In that book he introcuced the basic concept of the data matrix. In short, the units and variables to be explored are given by the research strategy. Data collection is viewed as an effort to fill the data matrix with values, one for each combination of

unit and variable. By data processing the matrix is brought on a form suitable for analysis. Analysis itself is treated step by step from simple tabulation and computation of parameters through hypothetis-formation to theory-building. This serves as the basis for statistical inference and finally the generalisation of hypotheses. So this book presents on a systematic way the basis for multivariate analysis in social sciences!

But also Galtung's own theory development, for example the Center/Periphery Theory, has been used and is still being used by many scientists, also in the area of Peace Research. One of the projects in which Galtung used this approach himself was an research project launched by him via funding by the (former) Council of Europe, carried out by means of a huge international survey using representative samples, a so-called '*Twelve Nation Study*'. This study, carried out in the 1960s and the early 1970s in both East- and West-European countries, dealt with 'Images of the world in the Year 2000'. The research question was: how do people expect the world to look like in the year 2000 in terms of peace and conflicts?

I had the honor, being a new young inexperienced student and research fellow in Oslo at the time, to participate in this study, together with amongst others: Aake Hartmann (from Norge), Hakan Wiberg (from Sverige), and Knud Larsen (USA). And, how wonderful, Johan Galtung himself took in the year 2000 the initiative to find out who was right in prospecting how the world would look like in 2000! After secundary analysis of data collected by others, we found out that indeed, the periphery was mostly right in its expectations like: the cold war would be over, but international violence would increase. Of course this is only one out of hundreds of studies in the field of Peace Research that Galtung carried out, on his own or in collaboration with others, all over the world.

Later, already during, but much more intensively after, his academic carreer, Galtung started developing his '*Transcend Mediation*' theory and method, and successfully practicing that method in different international conflicts. This mediation practice may be considered as a fruitful basis for conflict resolution on micro- meso- and macro- level, ending in *Positive Peace*. This 'Positive Peace' concept is of course more than just lack of violence; it is considered by him as the ultimate aim of peace building! That is also, nearly mathematically, presented in his so-called Peace Formula:

*Peace = Equity × Harmony / Trauma × Conflict*

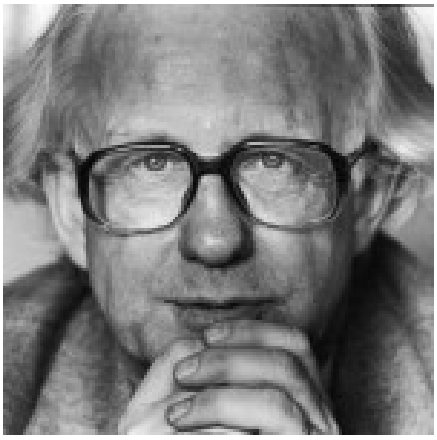
That process of peace building also includes the process of reconciliation. Maybe not so well known are Galtung's ideas on reconciliation.
Reconciliation is a process aimed at putting an end to conflict between two parties. It includes a closure of hostile acts, a process of healing and rehabilitation of both perpetrators and victims. Reconciliation processes often require the intervention of a third party. That party attempts to manage the relationship between perpetrators and victims (Galtung, 1998).
During the reconciliation process the victim can seek restitution for the harm from the perpetrator by having the perpetrator punished or give compensation.Another possibility is that the victim 'gets even' with the perpetrator through revenge. This may bring some gratification, but it may not automatically bring healing from trauma.

Based on his experience as a mediator in many conflict areas, Johan discusses in his article *"Twelve creative ways to foster reconciliation after violence"* different approaches to reconciliation. He concludes that no single approach is capable of handling the complexity of the situation after violent events, thus combining approaches makes more sense. The parties involved in the conflict should be invited to discuss these approaches and therefore be able to arrive at the best combination for their own situation. (Galtung, J. (1998) 3R: Reconstruccion, Resolucion, Reconciliacion. Gernika: Gogoratuz.

Besides his important work in the field of Peace Research Johan Galtung was for many young students and scholars an inspiration, a mentor, teacher, colleague and, for me personally, one of the promotores of my PhD dissertation on *'Ideology and Mass Media'* (1986) at the University of Amsterdam, and also a very dear friend.

The following article *'Twelve creative ways to foster reconciliation after violence'*, based upon Galtung, 1998, was published by *Intervention*, 2005, Volume 3, Number 3, pp. 222 – 234.

# Twelve Creative Ways To Foster Reconciliation After Violence



*Johan Galtung*

12-09-2024 ~ *Based on his experience as a mediator in many conflict areas, the author discusses twelve approaches to reconciliation.*

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Key words: conflict theory, peace work, reconciliation

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During the reconciliation process the victim can seek restitution for the harm from the perpetrator by having the perpetrator punishedor give compensation. Another possibility is that the victim ‘gets even’ with the perpetrator through revenge. This may bring some gratification, but it may not automatically bring healing from trauma.

The perpetrator may seek release from his guilt through submission, penitence or apology and asking forgiveness.
Since reconciliation essentially takes place between perpetrator and victim, either of them can block the process. In that case, the trauma and guilt live on, and eventually may fuel new conflicts.

In this article twelve different approaches to reconciliation will be discussed.

*1. The 'blaming the circumstances' approach*
During the process the third party tries to change the perspective of both perpetrators and victims on the cause of their conflict. Cultural factors and/or structural deficits in society are identified as the real underlying causes of conflict. Reconciliation is possible as soon as both parties agree on these causes. The key word here is 'agree'. 'Outer conditions made you a perpetrator and me a victim. That is not a good reason for us to hate each other, for you to feel excessive guilt, or for me to develop a victim psychology. We can close the vicious circle and heal our psychological wounds. We can even reconcile with each other and put the past behind us. We can join forces and fight those conditions that pitted us against each other in horrible acts of violence.'

Even if this is not the full truth, it can be more than half the truth. Moreover, it can be self-fulfilling.
Outsiders, like peace workers, may suggest that perspective as a way of thinking about their own situation. This may best be suggested to one party at the time rather than the parties together. This avoids the victim getting upset by seeing the perpetrator grab the opportunity 'to cash in' more on his professed guilt. It is important they first arrive at an exculpatory position, and then bring them together to celebrate a joint approach.
The peace worker's task is to carefully and tactfully open the eyes of all parties on the potential peaceful aspects.

*2. The reparation/restitution approach*
X has harmed Y. X is conscious of his guilt; Y is conscious of the trauma. X comes to Y and offers reparation or restitution: 'I'll undo the harm done by undoing the damage'. At the simplest level, for example a tenant buying a new vase to replace a broken one, to the most complex level of countries and alliances at war with each other; money, goods and services are used to undo damage. Sometimes the relation is direct, sometimes via institutions like insurance companies (e.g., for

damage done to cars in accidents; countries are not yet insuring against damage in wars). However, as any house- or car-owner knows: there is also the inconvenience and time lost in the process. Reparation must always be at a higher level than simple replacement cost. This approach will only work when the harm done is reversible.

When trauma has been caused and is deeprooted, any restitution borders on an insult to the victim. There is an element of 'buying oneself off the hook' by attempting to make the victim forget what happened. The harm is reduced to a commodity to be traded: 'By mistake I took something from you, here, have it back with an extra 10% for inconvenience and time lost'.
The task of the peace worker is to explore all possible arguments with the perpetrator and the victim so that they fully understand what is involved if this is the approach chosen.

They both have to accept the approach, so that the perpetrator does not offer something that falls on barren soil, or worse – increases the aggression. Moreover, the victim should not be further harmed by expecting a restitution that never comes, for whatever reason.

Another task that may fall to the peace worker is that of suggesting what might constitute a concrete act of restitution. People might have limited idea of what would be suitable, and this aspect must be taken more seriously than finding a gift for an anniversary. In addition to being wanted by the victim, the act of restitution must convey the correct symbolic message. That is also relevant for the perpetrator. He may for instance, be afraid that the act of restitution is an implicit admission of guilt and can be held against him as a confession. He may also worry lest the act does not lead to closure as a condition for reconciliation. He may wonder about the time perspective: are we talking about one act, or about a repetition, such as every year, like the anniversary of the violent act?

Restitution is a transaction, a two-way action that must contain balance and symmetry. The instrument to ensure that is a contract, signed by both perpetrator and victim. The peace worker should know how to draw up a document of this type; in short, s/he has to be a bare-foot lawyer, in addition to a theologian and a psychologist for reconciliation tasks. There may be objections that a contract is too formal, not sufficiently spontaneous, symbolic, or healing. However true, for those who choose this approach, that may be a minor matter.

*3. The apology/forgiveness approach*
X has harmed Y; X is conscious of his guilt, Y is conscious of the harm. Both are traumatized. X comes to Y, offers 'sincere apologies' for the harm, Y accepts the apologies.

Metaphors of turning a page, opening a new chapter, even a new book, in their relations are invoked. The slate is wiped clean, and will now be inscribed with positive acts. There is agreement that what happened is 'forgotten' and not to be referred to again.

However, is it also 'forgiven'? Does 'I accept your apology' mean 'I forgive you'? This is definitely not true and may have a variety of meanings. Some possible translations
– 'I apologize'='I wish what I did to be undone and promise, no more'
– 'I accept your apology'='I believe what you say, let's go on'
– 'Please forgive me'='Please release me from my guilt to you'
– 'I forgive you'='I hereby release you from your guilt to me'

Thus, forgiving goes one-step further in relating to the trauma of guilt. Guilt is in the spirit, and arises from the consciousness of having wronged someone. This establishes a relation to the victim, to one's own ego, and to any God/State believed in. The victim can only release the wrongdoer from the first form of guilt. To some, that is the only guilt acknowledged or perceived.

A positive effect of this approach is a bond of compassion between X and Y. A negative effect is its superficiality. Just as restitution is good for people with money, apology is for those good with words. X agrees to see the harm as wrong, as something he wishes undone, and Y helps him by saying that you can now live as if no harm was done. Yet, the root causes of the violence remain and are untouched.
For the peace worker this is very different from the reparation/restitution approach. There is a transaction which requires both parties to be willing, meaning that either one can sabotage the process. This can occur if the victim does not accept the apology, or does not to forgive; or if the perpetrator does not to extend an apology, or not ask for forgiveness.

In addition, whereas there is something economic and contractual in the process of restitution, this transaction is spiritual/psychological. Both parties have to be

‘in the mood’ to enter this relationship. This is frequently preceded by a feeling of ‘having looked into the abyss’; it is this, or hatred, retribution rather than restitution, with no end of the violent cycle.
The peace worker has to have it all in his/her mind and hands, actively steering the process toward closure. It requires knowledge, skills and above all human tact, with the only training mostly on the job.

*4. The theological/penitence approach*
This approach consists of a well-described, well-prescribed chain: submission-confession-penitence-absolution; to and from God. The penitence is mainly self-administered: prayer, fasting, celibacy, joining a monastery, and flagellation. The belief is some pain in this life is better than eternal pain in the after-life. Absolution thus releases the perpetrator as the sinner from his guilt unto God.

One problem is that this only works for the believer, or for the person who at least has some belief. There is little in this approach for the atheist.

A religious leader, in this case, holds the role of peace worker. What should he be encouraged to be a good peace worker on top of his theological role? The basic point has already been mentioned: to broaden the perspective. The priest helps by paving the way for reconciliation with God, and thereby for the believer, with the self. To do this he may have to strengthen the faith in self and help remove doubts. However, the other, the victim, still remains and is the forgotten party in this transaction.
In looking at the approaches already discussed, broadening the perspective means taking something away from one, or more of them. Obviously, the priest cannot make full use of the previously mentioned ‘blaming the circumstances’ approach, because he stresses the individual responsibility of the sinner. Yet, he can make use of the reparation/restitution approach and the apology/forgiveness approach.

What is recommended is that the priest, as peace worker, must include the victim. In some cases, the victim might say: ‘Leave me alone, I have had enough suffering. I do not want to add more by having to meet him again, accept some act of restitution, or even listen to his insincere apologies. None of that will ever undo what has happened.’ This reaction is understandable, and the peace worker may have to be a go-between if the direct encounter is judged to be too hard on either, or both. Rather than bringing them together, he may have to rely on an individual

dialogue with each of them.

*5. The juridical/punishment approach*
This is the secular version of the above The successor to God is the State. The judge takes the role of the priest. The prescribed process above now reads submission-confession-punishment by seclusion-readmission to society. The logic is the same. The perpetrator is released from the guilt toward 'society'; the other two forms of guilt remain. For problems, see above. 2)

How do International Tribunals work in terms of collective violence? Much as one would expect: the accused tend to be the perpetrators of person-to-person violence, those who kill with machetes and gas cham- bers, not those who kill with missiles and atom bombs; and they would tend to be the executors of violence rather than the civil- ians giving the order, or setting the stage. As a result, the general moral impact will probably be relatively negligible.

Yet tribunals exist, with a major one for war crimes, crimes against humanity and geno- cide being created. As conceived of within the juridical/punishment framework, they will all have more or less, many of the problems discussed above. The key to the solution is broadening the approach by adding other solutions as well.
The name of the peace worker, in this case, is the judge (and, to a much lesser extent, some of the prison personnel).

Like the priest the judge is also used to adding additional aspects to his juridical profession, which, like the priest, implies that what happens is according to the Book.

What should he look for to be a good peace worker on top of his juridical role? He should realize that the task is not finished when the relation to the International Community (of States) has ended because the prison sentence has been served. The perpetrator-state perspective is too narrow. Imprisonment does something to the body by limiting physical movement; yet leave the capacities of the spirit basically untouched, and in some cases, enhanced. The judge should add the skills of the priest, and the priest may have to learn how to do the theological/penitence approach with non-believers. Then there is also the possibility of adding the restitution and apology approaches. This could even be included as part of the sentence with a tacit or explicit understanding that the success of the process

could shorten the sentence, but not include amnesty. The truth has pre- sumably already come out through the well-tested methods of the juridical approach, with evidence, testimonies, pleas (pro et contra), and final evaluation.

*6. The co-dependent origination/karma approach*

In Buddhism it is believed that although any human being at any point can choose not to act violently, the decision is influenced by his karma, his moral status at that moment. This karma is the result of the accumulation of 'whatever you do, sooner or later, comes back to you'. But the victim's karma, and their joint, collective karma also contributes to this decision. All karma flows from the merits and demerits of earlier action.

Since these intertwining chains stretch into the past-lives, the side-lives of the context and the after-lives of the future, the demerit of a violent act cannot be placed at the feet of a single actor only. There is always shared responsibility for bad karma. Hence, the way to improve karma is through an outer dialogue, which in practice means a round-table where the seating pattern is symmetric, allocating no such roles as: defendant, prosecutor, counsel, or judge, and with a rotating chairperson.

Preparation for these round-table dialogues should include meditation as an internal dialogue, with participants trying to come to grips with the forces inside themselves. Thus, in Buddhist thinking, there is no actor who carries 100% of the responsibility alone; it is all shared. Whereas Christianity can be accused of being too black and white, Buddhism can be accused of being too grey. However, the idea of cooperating to plug the holes in the boat we share, rather than searching for the one who drilled the first hole, and having a court case on board as the boat is sinking, is appealing, both for conflict resolution and for reconciliation.

In conflict theory, the concept that comes closest to this is the conflict formation. The first task in any conflict transformation process is to map the conflict formation, identifying the parties that have a stake in the outcome, their goals, and issues, as well as defining any conflict of goals.

The peace worker can use the mapping tool of the conflict worker, and proceed in basically the same way. He can have dialogues with all parties over the theme 'after violence, what'? He can identify conflicts, hard and soft, and try to transcend them by stimulating joint creativity. Or, he can bring them all together and be the catalyst and facilitator around, rather than at the head, of the round table. Conflict work and peace work are closely related, and this approach is

based on the combination of inner dialogues (meditation) and outer dialogues, with or without the peace worker as a medium.
The karma approach is an excellent point of departure, given its holism, neutrality and appeal to dialogue. In that sense it is actually a meta-approach, above or after the other approaches, accommodating all of them, like the *ho'o ponopono* approach outlined at the end. It is an attitude, a philosophy of life, beyond the stark dichotomy of perpetrator-victim, and in that sense different from the preceding five, and similar to those approaches that follow.

*7. The historical/truth commission approach*
In this approach the basic point is to describe, in great detail, what actually happened. In trying to explain it, letting the acts, including the violent ones, appear as the logical consequences of the antecedents. The assumption is that deeper understanding may lead to forgiving. Although 'getting the facts straight'- however ugly – is important, there are serious problems with this approach.

To begin with, mere understanding does not always result in forgiveness. The hideous acts stand out, whether they include the names of perpetrators or not. Also, if they are not pardoned, why should they receive impunity, or get off the hook? It may be argued that the perpetrators will also read the report that establishes their guilt to the victims, to themselves and to the God they may believe in, and will be tormented by that and by social ostracism. That is punishing, not forgiving.
Next, this does not by itself produce the catharsis of an offered and received apology, nor the hoped for and offered forgiveness. Truth alone is merely descriptive, not spiritual.

Furthermore, this approach does not deal with the question 'how do we avoid this in the future?
Lastly, it limits the process to professionals whose task is to come up with the official version. It may be far better have 10 000 people's commissions, in each local community and each NGO, using round-tables which involve all parties whereby they themselves try to arrive at a joint understanding and reconcile in the process.

The task of the peace worker is to organize these dialogues and to ensure that the findings flow into some general pool. One way to accomplish this is to put at the disposal ofthe citizens in any part of a war-torn society, village, ward, company, or

organization, a large book with blank pages to be inscribed. The book will become a part of the collective memory, no doubt subjectively formulated, but that also has its strengths. Rather that than the truth lawyers and historians who think they can establish a single book that will encompass thousands of truths.

Contained in the book would be descriptions of violence and traumas, not only what happened but also how it touched them and wounded them. Added to that would be their thoughts on what could have been done, on reconstruction and reconciliation, the resolution of the underlying conflict, and their hopes for the future. In other words, the citizens would establish their own truths for themselves.

Something like this was done by the Opsahl Commission for Northern Ireland some years ago, and no doubt played a role in externalizing the conflict by seeing it as something to be handled objectively, outside the participants.

Soka Gakkai in Japan has also done an impressive job collecting the war memories of many women in 26 volumes, thereby establishing a collective memorial to be consulted by future generations. However, the major task of the peace worker is to give the search for truth the two twists indicated while remaining truthful to empirical facts: counter-factual history, what might have happened if, and the history of the future, how do we avoid this in the future. Again, let 10 000 dialogues bloom.

*8 The theatrical/reliving approach*

This approach would use exactly that: involving all parties, in numerous exercises to relive what happened. This is not about documentation and 'objectivity', but of reliving the subjective experience. The ways to do this are numerous; telling what happened as it happened, as a witness to a historical/truth commission is already reliving, revealing and relieving. To have the other parties do the same, adds to the whole.

To tell the stories together, in the same room, adds a dimension of dialogue, which can easily become very emotional (that's not how it happened! is that why you did it?) Then, to stand up, re-enact it up to, but not including, the violence, may have a cathartic effect provided there is an accompanying tension release through dialogue. The parties may even switch roles, which some might see as coming too close. However, it depends on the parties involved, like in a negotiation sometimes it is better to keep the parties separate. The important

point is to arrive at a deeper understanding, which is more emotional and less descriptive.

An alternative approach is, of course, for a professional to write this up and present it on national television for common con- sumption. In general, this should not be excluded, but should occur in plural, not with the idea of writing one play to finish all plays.
A basic advantage of the theatre approach, however rudimentary and amateurish, is that it opens windows so often closed to positive social science: what might have happened if and how do we avoid this in the future? The actors can relive history up to the point where it went wrong and then, together, invent an alternative continued scenario, up to inventing alternative futures, with theatre as future workshops. A play can be rerun at any point; history, unfortunately cannot.

The peace worker would have to talk with all parties in advance, have them tell their truths about what happened and then get their general consent for the theatrical approach. It should be done with the real parties as actors, and very close to the real story. For example, in a sexual harassment conflict in a school with a student complaining that the teacher made advances and the teacher denying that this was the case. In this case, the principal may say, show us what happened. In such a real case those who watched concluded that the teacher did not 'go too far', but also that the girl had good reasons for having apprehensions about what might have happened next. In a concrete situation there are so many dimensions to what happens that words are hardly able to catch it all. Enacting may help explore those dimensions.

Others may be called on as stand-ins for roles or scenes too painful for the real par- ticipants to enact. The drama can also be rewritten so that 'any similarity with any real case is totally coincidental'. The point is to give vent to emotions in a holistic setting by enacting them, taking in as much of the totality of the situation as possible. Writing the play, before and/or after it was enacted, can also prove very valuable.

Technically, videotaping may be useful, not only to improve the accuracy of the enactment ('let us take that one again, I am not sure you captured what happened'), but also to be able to stop the video and say: 'this is the turning point. This is where it went wrong. Let us now try to enact an alternative follow-up, what should, and what could, have been done'. Obviously, making and enacting

conflict-related theatre is an indispensable part of the training of conflict workers for reconstruction and resolution, not only for reconciliation.

*9.The joint sorrow/healing approach*

This approach is carried out in the following way: joint sorrow is announced for all conflicting parties. The myth that some people 'gave' their lives during the armed conflict is explored for what it is: those people had their lives taken away from them by incompetent politicians who were incapable of transforming conflict, themselves incurring little or no risk but willing to send others into (almost) certain death, and spreading that death to others in the process. Without opening a new front against the political and military class as a common enemy, war as such is deeply deplored. People dress in black, sit down in groups of 10-20 including people formerly enemies. They examine the basics: how could the armed conflict have been avoided? How can it be avoided in the future? Are there also acts of peace that can be highlighted and celebrated?

To discuss how an armed conflict could have been avoided is not new; any country that has been attacked may engage in that debate on each anniversary (one conclusion is often to keep the powder dry, and be better armed next time). To discuss this together with the aggressor who jointly deplore war, any war, as a scandal and a crime against humanity, searching for alternatives both in the past and the future, is a relatively new and promising approach.

The main issue at point is the togetherness. As time passes, more meetings in take place, including gatherings of veterans on both sides. The other side of the military story; evaluating victories and defeats in the light of new information gained may fascinate them. If they are soldiers in the real sense, then there may be no need for any reconciliation. They were professionals doing a job, unfortunately destructive rather than constructive. All professionals, even soldiers, want to know whether they did a good job; few would know this better than the other side.

The task of the peace worker is not to organize encounters of demolition experts however, but to have veterans meet civilians, civilians meet civilians, and to have both of them meet the politicians who gave the orders. The question to be asked is: when will any acts of war, and not only cruelty on the ground, come with the names of those responsible on them? Who ordered that bombing, killing X civilians? Not only the well-known names at the very top of the hierarchy, their

orders are usually general, but the generals whose orders are specific. Such encounters should not become tribunals. The focus is on healing through joint sorrow, not on self-righteousness. The model could be a village, town, or district recently hit by natural disaster. There are local fault-lines and enmities; although no one would accuse any one on the other side of a fault-line of having caused or willed, a disaster. Yet, there are casualties and massive bereavement with visible signs of shared, joint sorrow across fault-lines, such as flags on half-mast and people in black.
Of course there is also healing in this. Right after a war may be too early for joint sorrow. Nonetheless, after some years the time will come and that opportunity should not be lost.

*10. The joint reconstruction approach*
Once again, the point is to do it together. German soldiers used a scorched earth tactic in Northern Norway, leaving nothing to the advancing Red Army and driving out the inhabitants. Would it be possible for those inhabitants to cooperate with the soldiers after the war is over, making the scorched earth bloom again, coming alive with plants, animals, and humans, with building and infrastructure?

A good thing would be to have civilians from the same nation come and participate in the reconstruction. Of course, they should not be representatives of the perpetrators of the violence, and may even be their antagonists (like sending conscientious objectors to clean up after the soldiers, the non-objectors).
However, they would demonstrate that there are both hard and soft aspects of that nation, as of any nation, that could count toward depolarization. Moreover, there would be no direct confrontation between perpetrators and victims; years may be required before that could safely occur.

Nevertheless that should remain the eventual goal. Which brings us back to the point about revenge: by violence going both ways not only harm but also guilt may be equal- ized (to some extent); the parties meet as moral equals. Yet, it would be far better to build moral equality around positive, constructive acts rather than negative ones.
Hence, the argument would be for soldiers on both sides to disarm and then meet, but this time to construct, not to destruct. Then victims could meet with victims, command- ing officers (COs) with COs, etc. This could serve as preparations for perpetrator and victim meeting, both of them together trying to turn their tragedy

into something meaningful through acts of cooperation, rather than inserting some third parties in- between.

Once, when the present author was suggesting this approach in Beirut there was an interesting objection: this will not work here. In Lebanon there were not two parties fighting each other, but seventeen. Ammunition was used like popcorn, peppering houses, very rarely hitting the openings, yet still leaving bullet-scars all over. The response could be: no problem, get one former fighter from each group, give them a course in masonry, put seventeen ladders parallel, have them climb to the top and repair the facades as they descend.

Use the high numbers as an advantage. What a TV opportunity – provided there is also a spiritual side to the joint work.
That last point contains the crux of the matter. While rebuilding is a concrete, practical act, reconciliation is mainly spiritual. What matters is the togetherness at work; reflect- ing on the mad destruction, shoulder-to-shoulder and mind-to-mind. The preceding four approaches could give rich texture to the exercise: joint sorrow would seep in even if rebuilding could also be fun. Reflection on futility would enter. For this to happen, those who did the destruction should also do the construction, facilitating reliving on the spot. In doing so, two or more parties will find together a deeper, more dynamic, truth. Also, they will realize how deeply they share the same karma or fate.
In this, the peace worker should remember that there is much more to reconstruction than simply rebuilding physical infrastructure. Institutions have to function again; there are heavily war-struck segments to care for, refugees and displaced persons to resettle. There is much to be overcome by reconstructing structures and cultures. War hits all parties in some way; some lightly and some more heavily. It is inconceivable that no one from the former enemies will cooperate in joint reconstruction.

*11. The joint conflict resolution approach*
If joint reconstruction might be possible, how about joint conflict resolution? After all, that is what diplomats, politicians, and some military to some extent attempt to do. Nonetheless, there are two basic problems with this approach regardless of the quality of the outcome. It is top-heavy, anti-participatory and therefore in itself some kind of structural violence, often excluding the very people on whose behalf they presumably are negotiating behind veils of secrecy. Often they are protected elite who may not themselves have been the physical or direct victims

of violence and may even be responsible for unleashing that violence.

So the argument here would be for general, even massive, participation. Two ways of doing this have already been given: the therapy of the past, having people discuss what went wrong at what point and then what could have been done; and the therapy of the future, having people discuss and imagine how the future would be if there is work done in favour of a more sustainable peace, and what that work would look like, starting here and now. In short, having people as active participants in conflict resolution; as subjects, not only as the objects of someone else's decisions or deeds

It is in this process that human and cultural healing, as well as structural healing, would take place. As previously mentioned, a major form of horizontal structural violence before, during and after a war is polarization; what could be more depolarizing than reconciliation through joint efforts to solve the problems?

The psychological costs might be considerable; but the social gains would be enormous. What would be required would be for the ideas to flow together in a public joint idea pool.
Here the peace worker becomes a conflict worker again, trying Conflict Transformation By Peaceful Means. For example, efforts were made in the 'before violence' phase; is it now easier or more dif- ficult in the 'after violence' phase? No doubt it is more difficult in the sense that there is more conflict-related work to do: reconstruction and reconciliation. But is the resolution, or transformation, also more difficult?
This can argued both ways. On the one hand, the violence may have hardened both sides. The victor, if there is one, feels he can dictate the outcome, having won the violent process.
The loser thinks of revenge, and may never accept the outcome in his heart. Yet, there may also be acceptance, even sustainability, if the terms are not too harsh. Also, there may be a fatigue effect; whatever the outcome, never the violence again! How long the fatigue effect lasts is another matter.

One problem, mentioned above, is that the tasks of reconstruction are so pressing that reconciliation, let alone resolution, often recedes into the background. The peace worker has to keep the resolution discussion alive. Above we have given many examples of how reconstruction and reconciliation can transform the whole society so that a conflict that once was very hard can be softened. In this way,

Germany will probably ultimately have no border problems, because the borders wither away within the super-national organization, the European Union. It is an overarching structure that has reduced the polarization in Europe's midst, and made transformations possible in the long run.

*12. The ho'o ponopono approach*

A man is sleeping in his home when he hears some noises, he gets up, catches a young boy on his way out, stealing money. The police are called, and the young boy is now a 'juvenile' known to the police, obviously a 'delinquent', and as they say: 'three strikes and you are out'. The place is Hawaii. In Hawaiian culture there is a tradition in a sense that combines reconstruction, reconciliation, and resolution, the *ho'o ponopono* (setting straight). This concept may be known through cultural diffusion, e.g., to the owner of the burglarized, violated house. He looks at the boy and thinks of him serving twenty years in prison, and he looks at the police. 'Hey, let me handle this one'. It transpires that the boy's sister is ill and the family is too poor to pay for medication. Every little dollar counts.

*Ho'o ponopono* is organized. The man's family, neighbours, the young boy and his family, all sit around the table; there is a moderator who is not a member of the families or neighbours, the 'wise man'. Each one is encouraged sincerely to present his/her version; why it happened, how, what would be the appropriate reaction. The young boy's cause is questioned, but even if accepted, his method is not. Apologies are then offered and accepted, forgiveness is demanded and offered. The young boy has to make up for the violation by doing free garden work for some time. The rich man and neighbours agree to contribute to the family's medical expenses.

So, in the end, the story of the burglary is written in a way that is acceptable to all; the sheet of paper is then burnt; symbolizing an end to the burglary, but not to the aftermath.

This may be questioned as rewarding the burglar. However, if this restores all parties, reconciles them, and resolves the conflict, then this should be point.
Regardless, it may sound simple, but it is not. This approach requires deep knowledge and skills from the conflict/peace worker bringing the parties together, as does being the wise person who is chairing the session. There is rehabilitation for the victim, paying respect to his feelings, giving him voice & ear, apology and restitution. There can be manifestations of sorrow, even joint

sorrow. A new structure is being built bringing people together who never met before, sharing the karma of this conflict, imbued with the culture of this way of approaching a conflict. There are efforts to see the acts in the light of extenuating circumstances; nature, structure, culture, with restitution and apology followed by forgiveness as integral parts. So are the elements of penitence and punishment that builds ties between victim and perpetrator. The karma element may also be at work in this approach.

The truth element is obvious, as that all parties have to tell their truths (making it easier for the perpetrator). This is also theatre : *ho'o ponopono* is a reconstruction of what happened, with the parties as actors, all acting jointly.
In short, Polynesian culture puts together what Western culture keeps apart. There is coherence to these processes, which gets lost in the Western tendency to subdivide and select, and more particularly to choose a punishment approach. So, perhaps a cul- ture that has managed to keep it all together is at a higher level than a culture that, out of this holistic approach to 'after violence' (including 'after economic violence'), selects only a narrow spectrum?

*Conclusion*
Some conclusions flow naturally from these explorations. First, there is no panacea. Taken singly, none of these approaches are capable of handling the complexity of an 'after violence' situation; healing the widely diverse wounds, closing the violence cycles, reconciling the parties within themselves, to each other and to whatever higher forces that may exist.

One reason is that they are all embedded in dense nets of assumptions, some of which may be cultural.
Westerners would have no difficulty recognizing *ho'o ponopono* culturally specific, or 'ethnic', but tend to claim that theological and juridical approaches are universal, using Western = universal. However, human stupidity has to be tempered with human wisdom, which, in turn, has to be taken from wherever we can find it.

Cultural eclecticism is a must in the field of reconciliation, we cannot draw on any one culture alone; taken in combination these approaches may make more sense. The problem is to design the best combinations for any given situation, and that obviously requires knowledge, skill and experience. Some of the twelve belong quite naturally together, in twos and threes:

– the ‘blaming the circumstances’ approach (1): nobody is guilty, and the karma approach (5): we are all guilty/responsible, together, are perspec- tives that may have great conciliatory effect;
– the reparation/restitution approach (2) and the apology/forgiveness approach (3) complete each other, and may work if the case is not too hard;
– the penitence approach (4) and the pun- ishment approach (5) also complete each other, and may release the perpetrator from guilt;
– the historical approach (7) and the the- atrical approach (8) complete each other, providing an image of factual and poten- tial truths;
– the joint sorrow approach (9), the joint reconstruction approach (10) and the joint resolution approach (11) are based on the same methodology;
– *the ho’o ponopono approach* (12) is very holistic, in a sense incorporates all others.

As there is some validity to all approaches, why not try them all? There are good rea- sons to do this. The ‘blaming the circumstances’ approaches may blunt the trauma and the guilt, and pave the way for more symmetric approaches, with shared responsibility. *Ho’o ponopono* practiced within all sectors in a society might deepen that impact. The three ‘joint approaches’ (9, 10, and 11) could be initiated at an early stage, at a modest level, to gain experience. At the same time, history commissions and theatre groups will begin to operate. If someone has broken the law by committing crimes of war, against humanity, and genocide, they will of course have to be brought to justice, facing the State, the Community of States, and his/her God.

The time has then come for the two approaches that, together, give the meaning to the concept of reconciliation that most people usually have in mind: forgiveness, to the aggressor/perpetrator who deserves being forgiven. In a transaction, two-way traffic is required. What flows in the other direction is a combination of a deeply felt apology based on an undeniable truth, and restitution; in some cases to be televised nationally.

However, this transaction will only lead to healing-closure-reconciliation within a con- text of all the other approaches, as a crowning achievement. If attempted too early, it may fall flat, particularly if outsiders enter and say, ‘well, you surely have been through tough times, but it is all over now so why not shake hands and let bygones by bygones!’ Trauma, including the trauma flowing from guilt, may fill a person to the brim and beyond. Feelings that overwhelm the survivors have to be

treated with respect, and respect requires time.

In all of this, two traditions have crystallized with clear contours: the priest and the judge. They carry prestige in society because they know the book that can open the gates to heaven or hell, or to freedom or prison. The other ten approaches are less professionalized if we assume that historians do not have a monopoly on truth, or playwrights on drama. For all approaches a versatile, experienced peace worker would be meaningful and helpful. He does not declare people as either damned/saved, or guilty/non-guilty. He is trying to help them come closer to each other, not to love each other, but to establish reasonable working relations that will not reproduce the horrors. The bitter past should become a closed book, what happened should be for- given but not forgotten. In doing so, he will have to work with the priest and the judge without letting the asymmetry of their ways of classifying human beings become his own.

One simplified, superficial, but yet still meaningful, way of doing reconciliation work is to invite the parties to discuss them. They all more or less know what happened, but may be divided over why, and what comes next. The twelve approaches are presented, possibly with the peace worker acting some of the roles. The parties around the table are then invited to discuss, and through discussion to arrive at the best combination for their situation.
In the present author's experience this is possible, even in war zones. Furthermore, something important can occur: as they discuss reconciliation, some reconciliation takes place. The approaches begin to touch their hearts, even if the outer setting is only a seminar. Of course, this is nothing but an introduction to the real thing, but from such modest begin- nings waves of togetherness may spread – even from the most turbulent centres.

*References*

Galtung, J. (1998) 3R: Reconstruccion, Resolucion, Reconciliacion (3R: Reconstruction, Resolution, Reconciliation). Gernika: Gogoratuz.

1) Throughout this article the masculine terminology is used. Therefore 'he' should be read as 'he/she' and 'his' should be read as 'his/her'.

2) A personal remark: doing six months in a Norwegian prison provided ample opportunity to reflect on the functions of punishment. Yes, I broke Norwegian law by refusing to do the punitive extra six months of a (to my mind) senseless

alternative service. I wanted to do peace work. The imprisonment did not reform me; I would have broken the same law again. But I felt guilt, not for having broken a law, but for having broken the ties to family, friends, and fiancé. They said, don't worry, we can take it, but some of that guilt remained.

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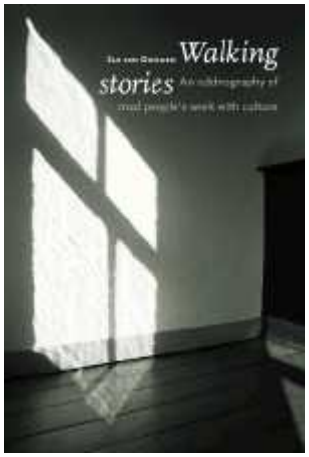
# Walking Stories




Lisa, a fragile Indonesian woman, walked along the paths of Saint Anthony's park. Saint Anthony is a mental hospital. Lisa was dressed in red, yellow and blue; I was looking at a painting of Mondriaan, of which the colours could cheer someone up on a grey Dutch day. She had put on all her clothes and she carried the rest of her belongings in a grey garbagebag. She looked like she was being hunted, mumbling formulas to avert the evil or the devils. I could not understand her words, but she repeated them with the rustling of her garbage bag on the pebbles of the path.

When she arrived at an intersection of two paths where low rose hips were blossoming, she stopped and went into the bushes. She lifted all her skirts and urinated; standing as a colourful flower amidst the green of the bushes and staring into the sky. A passer-by from the village where Saint Anthony's has its headquarters would probably have pretended not to see her, knowing that Lisa was one of the 'chronic mental patients' of the wards. Or, urinating so openly in the park may be experienced as a 'situational improperty', but as many villagers told me: 'They do odd things, but they cannot help it.' The passer-by would not have known that Lisa was a 'walking story', that she had ritualised her walks in order to control the powers that lie beyond her control. Lisa was diagnosed with 'schizophrenia' and she suffered from delusions. When she had an acute psychosis, she needed medication to relieve her anxiety. Her personal story was considered as a symptom of her illness. That was, in a nutshell, the story of the

psychiatrists of the mental hospital. Her own story was different. Lisa was the queen of the Indies and she had to have offspring to ensure that her dynasty would be preserved. She believed at that day that she was pregnant and that the magicians would come and would take away her unborn baby with a needle. To prevent the abortion, she had to take refuge in the park and carry all her belongings with her.

However, queens also have to heed nature's call and thus she went to the best place she could find: the rose hips. Lisa is indeed a 'walking story'. She has her story and she lives it. Her behaviour acquires its meaning when one knows the story. The story acquires meaning when one observes her behaviour. Saint Anthony's is a place full of walking stories. For many people their behaviour is odd. Writing about them may be odd ethnography. However, beyond the oddity lie meanings that reveal the often taken-for-granted cultural knowledge and understandings.

*What to do with Walking Stories?*

Mad stories are evocative and metaphoric. They are full of symbols, but we think that those symbols are used in very personal, even idiosyncratic ways. We consider them incoherent and incomprehensible. They are not 'rational' and do not represent any 'normal' logic. They do not fit into categories. They escape every classification, save that of 'psychotic stories' or 'mad stories'. They are matters out of place. They are viewed as signs of madness and therefore show how much we should value health and normality. Yet, mad stories are attractive. The many studies and literature on the topic which fill the shelves of bookstores and are so eagerly bought are the best proof of this attraction. Why then put another book on the shelves?

*De-pathologising mad stories*

Psychiatry kidnaps the stories of mad people. This means that the stories are often transformed and re-interpreted into medical stories. They become 'pathographies'. By describing others as 'schizophrenic', they are incorporated into the cultural scheme of things. At the same time mad people are made into potentially 'normal' people. The madness can be overcome by conversion; they can be re-socialised into normality by therapies and pharmaceutical treatment. If they remain 'mad' this can be fought by higher doses. The greater part of scientific research on schizophrenia is blind to the possible different socio-

cultural meanings of madness. The stories and behaviour are described in similar terms as used for ‘normal’ ones: expressions of experience, idioms of suffering. What the medical world sees as a disease has little to do with what people may experience. International, epidemiological studies leave out atypical cases to get better possibilities for cross-cultural comparison of onset and prognosis of the disease. One of the consequences of this practice is that the original stories disappear, taking on the meaning of a symptom, a sign of mental illness. In the clinic, during the intake process, the patient has to tell the story to enable the psychiatrist to provide good diagnosis. Clinical storytelling relies on a chronology of bodily and social events. The sick person experiences altered states of being and tells this to the psychiatrist or the therapist. The therapist renders the sick person’s story into narrative sequences to produce a diagnosis. The clinician brings the past to the present to locate causes of the sickness. The sick person, family members, friends and all relevant others have to recall the past to give meaning to the present state of the afflicted person. Reasons for misfortune are sought in the personal life of the sick person and his/her immediate social environment.

Yet, the stories themselves are thought to be important. This is stressed in the latest version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association, DSM-IV. The story has to provide the diagnostician with a better understanding of the cultural background and explanations of the patient. Although cultural concerns are represented in a significant way in the text of the DSM-IV, members of the culture and diagnosis task force heavily criticise the text. Good (1996) discusses the task force’s critiques. They view psychopathology as social and cultural. One of the criticisms is that the DSM-text makes too sharp a distinction between disease and illness, wherein diseases are viewed as universal biological entities, while illness consists of forms of experience and cultural interpretations of the experiences of the individual and cultural groups (Good 1996: 129). Another criticism is that particular forms of science are hegemonic and that ‘the reluctance to incorporate knowledge generated at the social margins, are issues of power and what the French social theorist calls ‘symbolic violence’’ (Good 1996: 130).
This means that the stories are still transformed into the hegemonic explanations and that the people who tell them are further marginalized. Diagnosis is not the only reason for bringing the past into the present. The story has to be told in therapy. Thus the patient becomes an observer of himself. He has to objectify

himself and to distance himself from the problem. He has to develop the capacity to reconstruct the story in a special way. Together with the therapist, it is transformed into a 'new' past with a different meaning and a 'new' sense so that people can live with it in the future. He has to cut himself off from the past and to look at it as if he were a stranger. He will become a stranger to his own story because it is transformed into the therapeutic myth and acquires the meaning of a symptom of severe mental illness. The result may be that, depending on the therapist's and others' position and strategy, which is linked to their interests, the story may offer either 'victim blaming', 'madness' or be a source of continued confrontation with and reflection about the past (Friedlander 1993: ix).

I do not want to show that psychiatry is a conspiracy against everything that is considered as odd, abnormal or awkward. Therapists sometimes understand stories as intelligible individual symbolic ways to signify feelings and experiences, but the stories always will remain idiosyncratic and do not have meaning to others. This may easily lead to the conclusion that the stories are outside the cultural realm and thus cannot tell about 'the work of culture'.
However, Littlewood and Lipsedge, both psychiatrists, say that it is 'particularly difficult to decide whether a person's belief is a delusion or not relative to the usual beliefs in his community when its culture is changing or when it contains a variety of conflicting belief systems' (Littlewood & Lipsedge 1989: 207). The authors give many examples which show that under certain circumstances, unusual beliefs are accepted or explicable. They argue that the community can use the stories of the psychotic as metaphors for their own experiences. They show that 'psychic epidemics' will occur when large parts of a population undergo experiences that they would be considered abnormal in other times. 'Mass hysteria' is an example.
The phenomenon of school girls in South Africa, who insist that they were sexually abused, or female labourers in Malaysia who said to be possessed, or that of parents in a small Dutch village, who insist that their children were sexually abused, becomes 'hysterical'. Their stories show that the concept of mass hysteria (or conversion, as it is now named) is a useful term for disempowering dangerous forces and undesired movements or resistance and protest. I agree with the authors when they say that mad people do not become sane when we tolerate and accept their stories. Their stories should be taken as they are. When such stories are told, cultural symbols and myths, rules, morality, values and norms are tested, violated, constrained and turned upside down. This draws attention to their

deviant nature, but also to the discomfiture of culture.

*Chronic Stories*

What about the 'chronic stories'? What about the stories that never change? It is suggested that people with long-lasting mental illness cannot cut themselves off from the past. They lack the capacity to 'locate the self as actor within a seamless unity of past, present and future' (Adam 1992: 159). The past and future are mixed and they leave no room for reality constructing in the present (Ibid.). This is a strong belief which has been discussed at length in the literature (cf. Rosenwald and Ochberg 1992) and brought into the daily clinical reality. Rosenwald and Ochberg even suggest that the reason to tell stories is to liberate the stories and therefore the lives of the people who tell them, because the stories relate to critical insight and engagement. They see stories as reflections on social conventions and telling a story as a means to make a 'better story', which means that people re-signify life and change it.

Storytelling is empowering for disadvantaged people and protects them against moral judgement. Storytelling is 'politics', or as the subtitle of their book tells us, 'politics of self-understanding'. Although I basically agree with the authors' arguments, I do not believe that storytelling is always liberating, emancipating and empowering. The idea of empowerment and liberation in science is a cultural belief, based on the creation myth of western religions: 'In the beginning was the word…' The word created the world. Although words are powerful, their power in itself is overrated. The power of the words depends on who speaks the words, when, why and to whom. The words of mad people alone have no power. They need more. To make others listen, words and deeds are needed. The words must become flesh and blood to be effective and convincing.

Re-anthropologising mad stories may provide a different knowledge. Illness experiences have become an area of interest in the social sciences. Medical anthropology focuses on 'the lived experience' of what is going on in bodies and lives. Studies of illness narratives, like those of Kleinman (1988), Csordas (1994) and Good (1994), see illnesses as polysemic and multivocal. Meanings of illness are personal, social and cultural. They reveal what it means to be ill. Illness cannot be separated from the life course. Anthropologists have argued that stories are the forms 'in which experience is represented and recounted' (Good 1994: 139). Actually, we cannot directly obtain access to people's experiences. Just like in psychiatric practices, life stories in anthropology are used as sources

of information about the human condition. Psychiatrists agree that the life story has a potential for providing insight. Thus, psychiatry (at least part of the discipline) and anthropology have much in common.
However, anthropology may have a different approach to life stories. They provide a different sort of insight. Anthropologists often collect life stories in order to obtain information about cultural practices. The study of stories questions the relationships between experience, symbols and culture. We need to approach stories from a variety of directions in order to understand illness and suffering because all too often, suffering resists language and cannot be given a name (Good 1994: 129). We have to understand culture and its work in order to formulate a perspective on the interplay of cognition and emotion, rationality and irrationality, morality and immorality, fantasy and reality, and body and psyche as human features that play their part in the story and life, and people's struggle to find a meaningful niche in society. But what will be the aim of understanding? Medical anthropologists differ in their opinions. Kleinman (1988) combined the anthropological and clinical traditions and opts for a more human relationship between the doctor and the patient. He sees experience as a mediator between persons. He argues for an ethnography of interpersonal experience, which gives room to 'the local context that organizes experience through the moral resounding and reinforcing of popular cultural categories about what life means and what is at stake in living' (Kleinman 1991: 293). Good comes to a similar conclusion: 'Narratives are the source of contested judgements … a rupture of the moral order' (Good 1994: 134). He suggests that we should investigate the 'experiential dimensions of human suffering' (Ibid.).

The problem is that human suffering escapes any category, whether it is ethical, political, medical or spiritual (Connolly 1996). Sometimes, suffering is a catalyst of more suffering. When people suffer, their relatives, friends and relevant others suffer too. Therapy with traumatised refugees often reveals that to tell a story may mean suffering again for the person who tells and for the listener. In my field experiences, this was the case with schizophrenic people. 'Interpersonal suffering' may relieve the pain and give a deeper understanding, but what do we do with this understanding when we only consider it 'interpersonal' or intersubjective?

The anthropology of illness narratives provides a preponderant number of studies that focus on the individual level, which is seen as the observable ethnographic

reality. Health studies often ignore the active role of people who shape the broader context. Stories are not only stories: they come into life and are 'acted out'. People actively shape their lives and are shaped by social and cultural structures. Stories are responses to conditions that the people have to face. This means that suffering is not only an experience, but also a social product 'constructed and reconstructed in the action arena between socially constituted categories of meaning and the political-economic forces that shape the contexts of daily life' (Singer and Baer 1995: 101).

Morality plays an important role in stories of misery. It is closely linked with emotions and passions. Anthropology has studied the relationship between what Scheper-Hughes and Lock (1987) call the individual body, the social body and the body politic. These authors discuss emotions and show how anthropology has always dealt with emotions when they were public, ritual or formal, leaving the more private emotions to psychoanalysis and psychobiology. Scheper-Hughes and Lock see these private emotions as 'a bridge' between the 'three bodies'. Emotions, they argue, are signs that illness makes and unmakes the world. However, it is not clear in their argument how exactly emotions are 'a bridge' and how they are linked with morality. Morality mostly is understood as a set of interpretations of goodness, badness and obligation (Connolly 1996: 252). Taped conversations of the therapists and the patients made clear that those interpretations were contested and that both the teller and the listener judged each other (Van Dongen 1994). Without doubt, one may say that the power to define the situation of the sufferer lies in the hands of others.

The stories contain expressions of love, hate, contempt, disgust, anger, and fear. These passions are considered very dangerous and threatening to the social world and should therefore be controlled and channelled into culturally appropriate outlets. For example, the stories of Rosa, one of the people in the book *Walking Stories*, are full of hate and jealousy toward her mother (and vice versa). For example, she tells that both she and her mother fell in love with the family doctor. Rosa became so envious that she wanted to kill her mother. Those feelings are considered morally improper, but 'natural'. Therefore, they must be expressed, preferably verbally, to a mediator: the therapist who has to resignify them. Maybe the therapist would judge the behaviour of both women, but the 'badness' would

be considered as innocent because both women were ill. The problem will be followed by a 'charity model of obligation, in which… helpers are pulled by the helplessness of the needy' (Connolly 1996: 255). Connolly argues that sick people do not need help; rather they need engagement in what is called the politics of becoming: the right to form a new identity, which is formed out of old cultural possibilities.

However, this idea of 'becoming' is based in a strong cultural belief that also forms the foundation of the therapeutic myth: the belief in progress and change by reflection and hard work, which are – according to some authors – rooted in a 'disenchanted worldview', deriving from the Protestant Reformation (Gaines 1984: 179). 'Becoming' can be achieved 'by action in this world, not by the intercession of preternatural forces and beings into this life. Action in this world is caused by physical factors, not by fate, immaterial saints, genies […], devils or miracles …' (Gaines 1984: 179). However, illness by itself does not lead to 'becoming'. In all those years I never heard people make the claim that they 'have grown' or 'became' by their illness. Those who made such claims and have written their stories are by no means the people in *Walking Stories* and in my ethnographic work. People like Artaud and Wolfi, both with mental illness, would have written anyway because they were writers. The people of *Walking Stories* are neither artists nor writers. They are 'common' people who have to struggle to find words for their stories.

Morality is also linked to the specific nature of the illness. In her paper on chronic illness, disability and schizophrenia, Estroff (1993) analyses how sceptical we are about chronically ill people. We cannot tolerate their presence on a large scale, but we also cannot punish or neglect those who are chronically sick. The author writes that our suspicion may increase regarding the role of will or individual unwillingness to become well. This is well illustrated by the mechanics at a garage nearby Saint Anthony's.

*A cordon of experts*

Anthropology has described and analysed the consequence of this scepticism with the concept of liminality. Chronically mentally ill people are in a 'frozen liminal state' argues Barrett (1998: 481), because the rites of reaggregation are vestigial or absent all together. There is a lack of resolution.

I do not totally agree. In a sense, schizophrenic people are not liminal in our society. They are of concern to policy makers, health care, and social work. They

are the focus of scientific research, pharmaceutical industries and even the arts. They are surrounded by a cordon of experts. Estroff (1993) argues by quoting other research, that among the factors that contribute to chronicity are the growing numbers of and the demand for jobs by mental health professions, the widespread belief (fuelled by public and political advocacy) that the people need medical care, and income maintenance resources that are illness-tested and bound to deservedness through disability. We may conclude that it is in the interest of many to keep chronically ill people in a 'frozen liminal state'. Thus, we may listen to the stories as attempts to free oneself from this state.

Several authors have 'de-medicalised' mad stories. For example, Perry (1976) found that there were common themes and personalities in the stories of psychotic people which were typically cultural/archaic: the hero, the victim, the God, the queen or the king. Perry describes the common structures of the stories. Each story is 'an inner journey' with one or more of the following components: establishing a world centre as the locus, undergoing death, return to the beginning of time and creation, cosmic conflict when opposites clash, apotheosis as king or messianic hero, sacred marriage as a union of opposites, new birth as a reconciliation of opposites, new society of the prophetic vision, and quadrated world forms (Perry 1976: 82). The author sees psychosis as a process of personal renewal with the help of cultural myths.

Others have described mad stories as stories that cross cultural and social borders (Foucault 1961). For example, it is often assumed that schizophrenic people violate social interaction rules and that they are 'out of reality'. This is too a general statement. Goffman (1961) describes a different picture. Working as an assistant physical therapist in a large mental hospital near Washington (D.C.), he was able to fraternise with the patients because he had a low staff status. He concluded that just as the patients' behaviour was bizarre to those who were not living in a mental hospital, it was natural for those who live in it. Goffman also shows that the odd behaviour of mental patients makes sense in such a situation and even is often a sign of sensitivity to social rules and norms. Through breaking the rules, people show their awareness of them and also how the rules work.

Some authors have described mad stories as 'ununderstandable'. For example, Jaspers (1974) argues that although people with schizophrenia are diverse, they all have the following in common: they are strange, they are enigmatic, they are alien, and they are bizarre. They are unknowable. You cannot empathise with

them. Their symptoms lie beyond the realm of human meaning, beyond the possibility of human interpretation. They are, not to put too fine a point on it, 'ununderstandable' (quoted in Barrett 1998: 469).

Jaspers was trying to discover what it means to be human. For him, human is what is understandable and interpretable. Others have tried to bring schizophrenic people back into the human community of understanding by arguing that mental illness is a myth (Sasz 1961), or by making sense of madness through a comparison with art (Laing 1967) and modernism (Sass 1992). These authors found striking parallels between art, modern society and madness. I agree substantively with Barrett (1998: 488), when he writes that the problem with the idea of the relationship between madness and art, or between madness and modern society, is that it may lead to restigmatising schizophrenic people because they represent symbolically much of what is going wrong in the modern world, while they also have to deal with horrors and pain. On the other hand, it is acknowledged world-wide that social factors contribute substantially to mental health problems. We should do in-depth research to study how exactly social and cultural factors do that.

Schizophrenia is a well-documented illness and considered 'a serious mental disorder of unknown cause characterized by delusions, hallucinations, associations of unrelated ideas, social withdrawal, and lack of emotional responsiveness and motivation' (Kleinman 1988: 34). It is increasingly assumed that schizophrenia has a pathological basis, that it is a brain disease (Boyle 1990: 171). The consequence is that the focus is less on stories of schizophrenic people and more on the refinement of diagnosis. Anthropology could make an important contribution, but to my knowledge, few anthropologists have studied the meanings and consequences of a life with severe mental illness, or the stories of mad people. Corin (1990) studied the life worlds of schizophrenic people and showed that the behaviour of these people is based in cultural norms and values and that their way of living makes sense in the social context. Estroff (1981) immersed herself in the lives of patients at a day treatment centre and describes a group of chronic patients as they attempt life outside the mental hospital. Rhodes (1991) wrote an ethnography of an acute psychiatric unit. Using a Foucauldian perspective, she describes how the staff manages briefly to treat and place often indigent emergency patients. She focuses on the strategies developed by the staff members to deal with dilemmas they have to face every day.

My own work (1994) focused for a great part on the interactions of schizophrenic

people and therapists. I showed that the odd behaviour and speech of schizophrenic people is often not a consequence of their illness, but caused by the paradoxes, ambiguities and power of the therapists. Martínez Hernáez (2000) showed that there is not only a pathophysiological or psychopathological reality behind the symptom, but cultural manifestations, metaphors, etcetera. He says that a symptom may be understood as a symbol which condenses social and political-economic conditions. This allows us to investigate the construction of meaning and the reality of suffering. Too many others have attempted to understand madness, to give meaning to it and make it 'reasonable'.

I will not attribute new meanings to schizophrenia, nor will I give a description of life in closed wards. I will focus the work with culture of schizophrenic people. Culture is not only something people can have, it is also something they can use, or something that happens to them. Agar writes: 'Culture starts when you realize that you've got a problem […], and the problem has to do with who you are' (Agar 1994: 20). Usually, people are not aware of culture; 'meanings usually float at the edge of awareness' (Agar 1994: 21). People simply assume that culture is an unequivocal whole of meanings and symbols, while they mostly are capable of dealing with the contradiction: the ambiguity and multiplicity of culture. However, meetings with 'walking stories' change that.

*Learning about culture through mad stories: tricksters and buffoons*

Across Saint Anthony's there is a garage. In the morning when the mechanics are working hard to get all the cars fixed, Vincent (one of the storytellers in *Walking Stories*; see below) comes from the hospital and leans against the wall of the garage with a bottle of beer in his hand. He observes the mechanics' hands and overalls becoming dirty from the lubricant. Some mechanics greet him; others just ignore the man against the wall. Vincent grins and takes a good gulp from his bottle. He challenges the mechanics, saying: 'You are crazy! You have to work to drink a beer! I don't! I get my money and I am free.' The atmosphere of benevolence changes into animosity. The tolerance of the mechanics becomes very low because Vincent touches on a sore spot in their feelings. Probably, they too want to be 'free', and drink beer in the morning sun. The image of the psychiatric patient, who is needy and with whom one should have compassion because he suffers changes into the image of someone who – in the Dutch Welfare State – gets his money from social security or insurance and seems satisfied and

conceited. ‘Go to hell! We have work to do.’ Vincent smiles meaningfully and walks away, maybe to look for others with whom he can amuse himself.

This is one simple event out of the many I have jotted down in my field notes. Those events bring about the deeper layers of ‘the work of culture’ and the work with culture. Obeyesekere describes the work of culture as ‘the process whereby symbolic forms existing on the cultural level get created and recreated through the minds of people’ (Obeye-sekere 1990: xix). However, work of (and with) culture is not only the creation and recreation of symbols. Symbols hide something that cannot be mediated or symbolised openly. Passions and emotions like jealousy, hatred, disgust, contempt, anger, and anxiety cannot easily be communicated and symbolised. Yet, it is suggested by Scheper-Hughes and Lock (1987) that they are the mediatrix between the individual, the social and the politic. Mad people, like Vincent, display emotions in a vivid way.

They are thought of as having lost their feelings of decorum and control over their emotions. A well-known and dreaded phenomenon in psychiatric practice is ‘acting out’. Although psychoses may be overwhelming emotional experiences, I disagree with the idea that mad people have lost their feelings of decorum or control over emotions. Sometimes they may do, but often the ‘mad behaviour’ and ‘situational improperties’ are intentional. I do not see ‘intentional’ acts as wilful or purposeful and conscious, but as people’s state of which the content of assumptions, ideas, commentaries or beliefs have to be made clear to others (cf. Sperber and Wilson 1986). The madness cannot be divorced from the social and the moral, because others react to it. Fabrega (1997: 36) speaks of ‘emotional contagion’, which refers to others’ responses to emotional display. One may feel shocked and repelled when people talk so openly about rape, sex, violence, badness, incest and revenge in such an emotional way to everyone, certainly when one witnesses the story coming alive. One looks, and one probably looks twice… Miller (1997) argues that such paradoxical reactions to emotional stories and behaviour are both negative and positive, because they help to preserve dignity; they mark the boundaries between others and oneself, enabling one to overcome feelings of repulsion. However, those feelings go hand in hand with moral judgements of others and oneself, which one feels that one cannot make. Miller continues to explain that people are truly in the grip of norms and values, because once the emotional reactions are recognised, the results are often shame and guilt. This can be illustrated by an event in Saint Anthony’s. Vincent, a

colleague and I were chatting in the coffee shop. Suddenly, Vincent asked my colleague if she thought that he was crazy. Her answer was to pretend that there was nothing unusual about him. Vincent did not take that. He laughed and told her that he was really crazy and different from her and me. She should not lie to him. He said that he looked different and that he was not like others. My colleague felt uncomfortable. Miller might have explained this with the following: *The stigmatized variously generate alarm, disgust, contempt, embarrassment, concern, pity, or fear. These emotions in turn confirm the stigmatized person as one who is properly stigmatized. […] Strangely enough, it has come to pass that one of the surer markers of our recognition of stigma is our guilt for having recognized it. The stigmatized make us feel that we are not properly according them civil inattention, for we are never certain what we are supposed to do in their presence (Miller 1997: 199-200).*

We cannot allow that moral emotions govern all situations, because people would be brutally and badly treated. Nevertheless, the emotions are there. We feel that there are sometimes instances that lie beyond our tolerance and decent treatment of crazy people and we feel guilty about it. Crazy people see through these behaviours and they will tell us so.

It is through the work of emotions and morality that one may compare mad people with tricksters. As one could see in the example of Vincent and the mechanics, mad people call attention to the ambiguity, ambivalence and instability of symbols, rules and morality. They deal with what Kerenyi (1972) calls 'the spirit of disorder, the enemy of boundaries'.

Tricksters have a double role. On the one hand, they have creative insight and serve human beings. On the other hand, they show compulsive and excessive behaviour, lust and greed for unsuitable objects and relationships (Basso 1996: 53). Mad people expose the forces behind social interaction and the instability of norms and values. Their emotions counter rationality; disruption is more common than integration. Their stories will show that phenomena of ambiguity and instability belong to the essence of social life. Carroll (1984) poses the question of whether one should regard the trickster as a cultural hero or as a (selfish) buffoon. The underlying question is what the implications of 'disorderly' actions are. Should we see mad people as 'free and uninhibited experimenters' who are exempt from moral responsibility? This is suggested by the 'mechanics story'. Vincent's challenge triggered hidden opinions and emotions of the mechanics. I

could not overhear the words of the men in the garage (if there were any) afterwards, but I can imagine that they might have said what I usually heard when I talked to villagers. On the one hand, they might have said that Vincent was mad and thus not knowing what he did. On the other hand, somebody might have said something about 'injustice' and 'parasites who live on my tax money…', not an uncommon banal accusation in a Welfare State. But there also might have been feelings of shame and guilt for one's own feelings, like in the episode with my colleague. Madness is such a negative stereotype that it inherently threatens and even destroys being a social being, but feelings of shame and guilt may prevent mad people from total social isolation and downfall.

Mad people resemble the trickster. But for mad people, the repetition of their stories and what they do is problematic. Basso (1996) suggests that a trickster is successful only when he does not repeat an action. In trickster stories repetition is an indication that the trickster is foolish, compulsive and stupid. Mad people repeat stories and actions endlessly. And when they do, one speaks of regression and chronic illness. One labels them as chronic patients. Basso's description of the trickster who fails is very similar to psychiatry's description of chronic mental patients: 'characters whose actions are stable and fall into a general pattern and whose goals and modes of orientation to goals seems not to vary are in danger of being regarded as *excessively compulsive and inflexible* and, ultimately, failing in imagination' (my emphasis).

However, it is not only words that make mad people similar to tricksters. To compare mad people with tricksters also means that one has to study the dramatic performance, because performance is an essential part of social interaction. Anthropologists have studied drama as 'social drama', which is considered by Turner as the 'social ground of many types of narratives' (Turner 1980: 145). However, the social drama in Turner's view is functional and cognitive. 'The drama moves towards crisis and ultimate solution' (Jules-Rosette 1988: 149). In mad stories and lives, especially those of 'chronic mental patients', there seems to be no 'solution', no finality or reintegration of members of the social group.

The assumption that contradictions and 'disturbing compulsive, excessive behaviour' can be transformed into socially acceptable forms is based on the

functionalistic belief that order and consensus in society are norm-al (hyphen on purpose). It seems to me that the value of the performance of mad people cannot be measured with consensus and reintegration. It is by definition disturbing, shocking and jolting. Mad people's stories and lives are dramas which have dramatic and comic dimensions (Van Dongen 1994). Especially the way in which the people involve others in their stories is an often humorous or ironic and intentional way to break social manners. By 'bizarre' connections of symbols of different domains (religion, science, art, sexuality, etcetera) and by suiting the action to the word, they make others laugh and – at the same time – they give others a fright about what is mostly hidden. It is extremely difficult to resist or ignore a man who comes very close to a therapist at the beginning of their conversation, touches him, opens his pants and shouts: 'It comes out again!' This is a 'ceremonial profanation', which is according to Goffman (1961) a token of sensitivity for rules, values and norms. This behaviour undermines power relationships and forces the therapist to reflect on those relationships. The man was saying: 'I fuck you.' The main characteristic of their performance is openness and reversal of taken-for-granted rules.

The meaning of the performance is in the performance itself. If the performance of mad people invites the reflection of others, it is the reflection in (social) daily practice (like in the event with the mechanics or the therapist). Besides, the idea of Schieffelin (1985: 707) that 'through performance, meanings are formulated in a social rather than cognitive space' fits very well in this case. However, mad people always run the risk that their performance turns against them. What keeps them from total exclusion? Ricoeur (1969: 219) noticed that tragic-comic persons amuse others, but also that ethical and moral accusations are essential in comedy. According to this author, the tragic person is protected against moral judgement and presented as an 'object' of pity. Tricksters and mad people both evoke double feelings in other people. Some of these feelings are pleasure, aversion, attraction, admiration, compassion and rejection. But others will never be indifferent to them. The difference between tricksters and mad people is that the latter succeed in letting others feel the stories they tell, because they do not stop to tell and because they perform so intrusively into others' space. Nobody can resist Vincent when he comes close and talks about the cosmos and the apocalypse; nobody can ignore Joris when he speaks so loudly. The taken-for-granted world is usually turned upside down. The difference between tricksters and mad people is that reversal, which is a common phenomenon in trickster stories, carnivals, theatres

and festivals, is permanent in mad stories (Littlewood and Lipsedge 1989). One should seriously wonder if this condition is a problem of mad people, or a problem of others. When one hears the odd stories, one knows that there is too much meaning. Too much is the revelation of cultural reserves. Madness is not a trick to reveal hidden meanings; it shows extra and unforeseen dimensions of symbols and myths. It shows that culture is a permanent unstable process.

*Symbols, myths and magic in mad stories and lives*

A general characteristic of the stories in *Walking Stories*, and all the other stories of the people in the wards, is that the tellers are 'hermitic thinkers'. Hermitic thinkers see correspondence between events, models, myths, meanings and symbols. Everything is meaningful and people play 'le jeu des ressemblances'. The world of the stories and subsequently the lives are 'a palace of mirrors in which everything reflects everything' (cf. Eco 1985). The stories rest on core models, myths and metaphors of the culture with which we all are familiar and which we take for granted.

These core tropes are used to make sense of lives. They also expose the basic building blocks of culture (Turner 1967: 110). They reaffirm and reinforce these blocks and they test, question and judge them. Anthropological studies of chronic illness have argued that stories often deal with the liminal state of people. From the perspective of those studies, chronic mental patients are in a permanent liminal state. It means that the final stages of the social drama as Turner has described does not take place. One of the reasons that those stages cannot take place is ascribed to the private, personal or even idiosyncratic use of symbols, myths and cultural models by schizophrenic people, which deviates so much from the way they 'should' be used that the stories are rendered incomprehensible. The problem is not how symbols, myths or models 'should' be used; close examination of mad stories makes it clear that they deal with the inherent indeterminate and ambiguous meanings of symbols, myths, models and metaphors.

Littlewood and Lipsedge (1989) discuss the relation between public and private symbols. They write: 'To express adequately our experiences to others in our community we have to be able to perceive the world symbolically in a standarized matter' (Littlewood & Lipsedge 1989: 219). The authors continue that when people have experiences for which there is no acceptable code, or when we are uncertain which is the proper code to use, confusion in communication may arise. The more uncommon the experiences are, the more difficult it is to communicate

them to others. The authors write that schizophrenic people employ highly idiosyncratic symbolic communication. They write: 'It is difficult to explain the overwhelming hold symbols possess over us unless they were learnt in association with powerful personal experiences. …They [the symbols] appear both to have a personal emotional or sensory pole and also to articulate general culture and social concerns' (Littlewood & Lipsedge 1989: 220-224). I think that the authors are referring to the 'combat zone of disputes over power…' (Taussig 1980: 9) because what is personal and what is public, is not as plain as it seems to be and may differ from situation to situation, from context to context, from interest to interest.

Devereux (1979) defines a symbol as a special form of fantasy, 'which as a rule, stands for something having, or alleged to have, an existence, and susceptible of being designated by a conventional and specific signifier' (p. 19). Thus, convention is an important aspect of a public symbol. Devereux tackles and questions the problem of the difference between private and public symbols, which was discussed by Firth (1973). Devereux concludes that the nature and genesis of private symbols does not differ from that of public symbols and that both can be decoded by recourse to identical methods and techniques. In the first Lewis Henry Morgan lecture in *The Work of Culture*, Obeyesekere (1990) also discusses the distinction between private and public symbols. The author revisits the story of Abdin, a psychotic Muslim ecstatic, who hangs himself on hooks and cuts his tongue, both known rituals in Hindu India. For Obeyesekere, Abdin was 'abreacting his past and using the pregiven cultural symbol system to express and bring some order to and control over his psychic conflicts' (p. 10). Abdin reverted from the level of the symbol to the level of the symptom, because he repeated his acts compulsively. For Obeyesekere, a symptom is characterised by an overdetermination of motive, while a symbol is characterised by a surplus of meaning. The difference between a psychotic person and a priestess would be that the psychotic person moves in a regressive direction as he acts out the symbol system, whereas the priestess does the reverse (p. 14). Obeyesekere sees the significance of this distinction in the notion that people express their ontological problems of existence and being through the available cultural repertoires. Personal symbols are cultural symbols, public and private at the same time, that make sense in relation to the personal history of the individual. Obeyesekere calls the distinction between public and private symbols a false distinction (p. 24).

I too believe that schizophrenic people do not use 'idiosyncratic or private symbols'. They use public symbols in such a way that others are alienated or become confused. The stories of mad people are full of (all too) well-known symbols which always have a surplus of meaning because cultural symbols are inherently ambivalent and ambiguous. For example, a chain may be the symbol of captivity, but also of solidarity.

Culture is extremely powerful. Even when people are overwhelmed by psychosis and madness, culture does its work. The views, beliefs, assumptions and opinions that are expressed in myths and stories by symbols, claim a certain truth, which is always debatable, because their meanings depend on the context and the situation. Symbols claim truth, but one can never be sure what exactly their meaning is unless one understands the context. The conclusion has to be that symbols are perfectly suitable for manipulation and (power) play. I disagree with the idea that the repetitive, compulsive use of symbols by mad people is regressive. I maintain that the use of symbols is 'special'. It is related to a mimetic process. Mimesis is a normal human tendency and can be observed in education, schooling, cultivation, etcetera. It enables people to acquire certain cultural attitudes. It requires guidance and taboos. When no restrictions are accepted, it will manifest itself in every domain of human behaviour (Girard 1978). This is often the case in mad stories. The models and myths have a strong force. Models will be mimed. Often, this means that the symbols will be repeated, acquire unexpected meanings or will refer to additional meanings which we did not know existed.

One should do away with the traditional way of approaching mad stories and what they do, and presuppose heterogeneity between the stories of mad people and other types of stories. If those other types were to account for mad stories, they would make them say things that they do not say or that they do not signify. The known approaches to mad stories do not explain why the stories and behaviour remain the same over time.
I will try to explain my approach and I base my explanation on the work of José Gil's *Metamorphoses du corps* (1985), which takes an interest in 'forces' and power and focuses on the practical effects of signs and symbols. He takes the study of forces as the way to understand how signs and symbols function in their own right, sometimes in ways that may differ from the ways they are usually attached. Gil presupposes that phenomena in modern societies are quite similar

to those that take place in bodies during magical ceremonies. Madness consists of extra-ordinary forces which drive people away from their community. The people of the wards told me that their psychotic experiences are fearful and incomprehensible for themselves. After they experienced their first episode of psychosis, they believed that their lives were profoundly changed, and that they had to make sense of their intense experiences. However, intensity of experiences is not enough to drive people to give meaning. What drives people is the fact that two forces are set in opposition to each other: the people's struggle to signify their lives in a meaningful sense, and the social force to control that struggle.

Mad people try to get a grip on their lives and to influence their courses, which actually lie beyond their control. They do so through the use of myths and symbols, stories and models that 'inspire' their motivations and desires, and influence their emotions. Culture, as a collective of stories, is used to practise magic. The idea of magic in relationship with mad stories may be odd. Usually, magic is understood as something by which people influence the 'supernatural' powers of the world. Traditionally, anthropology sees magic in relation with religion. But the concept may be used in a broader sense without referring to religion directly. In this sense, magic is the human control of what actually lies beyond control, but, though there is strong belief that magic exists, it too must be controlled and signified. Magic is the ability of words to effect things.

On the one hand, madness is a power that exists and must be controlled by specialists. In this context, it is meaningful that psychiatry is sometimes seen as the 'new religion' of our society. People see psychiatry as a power that can control and manipulate the superpowers of irrationality through control of the powers of flesh and blood (i.e. mad people). On the other hand, culture itself is a powerful force to control the experienced powers in madness like devils, ghosts, voices from heaven, demons and spirits of the dead. Because the magic of psychiatry has more prestige than the magic of the mad, there is a gap between the two and mad stories will no longer relate to the former. It means to control and manipulate the powers of madness through the rituals of therapy and the use of medicines. However, in the case of chronic schizophrenic people it is difficult to control. Patients of Saint Anthony's know for example very well how to escape regimens or how to play with rules and how to influence the flux of daily life in the wards.

The idea that certain phenomena in modern societies are much similar to those

that take place in bodies during magical ceremonies, is described by Gil (1985). This seems to be the case in stories of chronic schizophrenic people, who also try to control the powers of madness. Magic is the ability of words to effect things. Signs, symbols and myths are recycled, mixed, and put together in a way that alienates others, but that has power to manipulate the course of events and the others' responsive actions. This was exactly what nurses in the closed wards of Saint Anthony's always complained about; their plans were thwarted by incarnate stories of their patients; they felt manipulated, and the daily routine was disturbed.

It is tempting and reasonable to describe the world of chronic schizophrenic-psychotic people as magical if one looks at core aspects of the affliction: 'reality testing' and the differentiation between logical and prelogical thinking. Generally, it is assumed that schizophrenic people live 'outside reality'. It is also suggested that the psychotic world is irrational. However, it can be misleading to contrast the world of normal and abnormal; reality and 'outside reality'. First, schizophrenic people also live in 'reality' (the normal) for a greater part of their time. Second, the magical world cannot be described in terms of the normal discourse. The mad world has its own universe of discourse, its own conception of reality and criteria of rationality, perhaps different from the nonpsychotic world. Until here, the argument is similar to Winch's argument that describes the scientific form and the magico-religious form of thinking as a distinct form of social life whose practices and beliefs are only intelligible in the context in which they are held (Winch 1958). This is precisely the argument of Goffman (1961), which I have described in the previous section of this paper. It is also true, but not surprising, that the psychotic world is often seen as 'savage'; that psychotic people are, to put it in Comte's not too fine words: 'slaves of the infinite variety of phenomena' and 'nebulous symbolisation' (Comte 1908, cited in Lévi-Strauss 1996). However, Winch insisted on the incommensurability of the two worlds (science and magic). That would mean that no communication is possible. As we have seen in the discussion on private and public symbols, the symbols used by mad people are known, public and private at the same time. The differences between the two worlds lie in the fact that non-schizophrenic people and chronic schizophrenic people live different forms of life. For this reason, the magic world of mad people demands its own discourse, logic and rationality. The problem is whether others will accept this discourse.

There is another fascinating parallel between the magic world of mad people and other magic worlds, in relation to power. Both Taussig (1987) and Lévi-Strauss (1955) discussed the magical power of the written word. To quote Taussig (1987: 262): 'what is in effect obtained through the purchase of magic books is the *magic of the printed word* as print has acquired this power in the exercise of colonial domination with its fetishization of print, as in the Bible and the law. *Magica*, so it seems to me, does not so much magicalize colonising print as draw out the magic inherent in its rationality and monologic function in domination' (my emphasis). I see the parallel between the magical books of the Colombian Indians with mad stories in the idea of the power of written words.


Schizophrenic people also are very aware of the power the reports, files, judicial decisions – all written words, that determine and control their lives. The patients often counter them with letters to the board of the hospital, psychiatrists, judges, or other personnel of Saint Anthony's, repeatedly and in a ritualistic way, often with similar words. Lévi-Strauss (1955) described the case of chief Namikwara, who imitated the ethnographer's writing and in so doing gained prestige among his people, even if his writing was not understood. This example also shows a similarity with the patients' writings. For example, Rosemary, an older schizophrenic woman in one of Saint Anthony's wards, had a typewriter in her room with which she wrote letters about her life to staff members, to me, and to her mother. The typewriter gave her prestige in the ward; her room partly gave the impression of an office (she was a secretary at one of the Dutch multinationals), or a 'writer's room'. Besides, Rosemary tried to convince others with her letters that she, although 'mad', was capable of controlling her own life. Rosemary repeated her typewriting and her stories over and over again. It seemed, like the stories of other patients, a ritual performed with symbols, words, and attributes.

The repetitive and formulaic nature of the mad stories resembles the fixed rites in a liturgy, although this 'liturgy' is not, like for example the religious liturgy, in service of the community. But the mad stories have important liturgical characteristics in their repetition of the same symbols, words, and actions. Besides, like in a liturgy, they need answers from others (staff members, people in the streets, family members, the anthropologist). Mostly, it is assumed that the

stories are about the past; the events of the past are constructed within the personal and social history of the patients. Thus seen, the stories are attempts to give meanings to the past. This is also the case in liturgy: what happened in the past – for example, the Last Supper – is re-given meaning and memorised.

However, mad stories are not so much attempts to remember the past or to give meaning to it; they are attempts to master and control the future. This also resembles the liturgy; it means reunion of people (and gods) and renewing the bonds within the group. Mad stories reclaim the place of their tellers in the community. Mad people tell and live their stories in an almost ritualistic manner: they tell the same stories over and over again, they use the same symbols and they will live them again and again. They have to, because they have to practise double magic: the counter magic to control the powers of the healing system, and the magic to control the powers of the madness.

Remembrance and repetition are attempts to master not only the past, but also the future. During all the years that I heard the mad stories of the same persons in different periods of their lives, I discovered that the stories did not change. This discovery was confirmed by review of the patients' files and the stories of therapists and nurses. There was also something else. In anthropology, it is assumed that stories are about the past, about those parts of life which are already lived. Events of the past are constructed within the personal and social history. Thus seen, memories and repetitive compulsion are attempts to master the past and to give new meaning to it. However, we should not stress the reflexivity of people, the re-play of past actions, too much. In our studies of narration, we also should consider that stories may be a fore-play of what will happen in the future.

Having said that symbolisation and metaphorisation of mad people are not idiosyncratic or private, we still have a problem. This is the issue of distance and demetaphorisation. Usually, a metaphor or a symbol stands for something else, but mad people often are what they say they are. They tie the symbols directly to their body and life. Thus, there is no difference between the story and the life. Jim told me his story, as he insisted, for the last time in his life. Then, he told me that he was a rock. How can we understand this? We know that people can be 'steady as a rock', but this was not what Jim meant. He is a rock. Maybe, anthropology, and also psychoanalysis, would interpret the 'rock' as a symbol for insensitivity and closeness to the outer world and incapability to have inner feelings. Another

interpretation is possible. The fantasy of the rock, a powerful cultural symbol, can be a mark in the process where a schizophrenic man closes his body for the forces which make him repeat his story vis-à-vis more powerful stories. The solution for his frustration and hopelessness may be to become a rock. The problem that others have with these kinds of stories is that such things are symbols for them, whereas they are reality for mad people.

This leads me to the role and the weight of culture in the stories and lives of the people of the wards. Anthropology may see culture as a collective of beliefs, customs, symbols, etcetera. There are more than a hundred definitions of culture, but what is often lacking is that culture is also a force, an energy that is directed to something. Culture has power over people. It is even so strong that people become 'possessed' by symbols and stories and do everything to come close to, for example, an ideal model. The body model of the tiny, active and thus beautiful woman may have such a strong impact on girls, that they will go beyond a healthy life pattern, become taken over by the image, and become anorectic. But when they are, they are told that they are not healthy or beautiful at all.
Cultural ideals and images cannot be described as coherent. What to do with 'walking stories'? The stories will make clear, as we will see, that people are not helpless victims or scapegoats. They are active agents who have nothing else than what their culture provides them to combat. They reclaim more than their own lives. They also reclaim the right to be involved in moral and cultural matters. The symbols and myths are not used as metaphors for signifying illness. Rather, they are used by people to re-take their place within the culture. They have to tell their stories, and others should listen, because they are not about illness; they are about the human/cultural condition.

One of the stories from Walking Stories: Vincent, Morrison and the cosmic man

*Desire and resistance of a schizophrenic man*

*Billy, are you completely crazy?*
*No, it's true. Really. This guy told me. It's true. I'm really gonna do it.*
*I bet only reason you won't come with me is because I ain't got any money. Well, listen, I'm telling you*
*I'm gonna go back up there and getme some money, lots of it, maybe*
*even ten thousand. And then I'm coming back for you. I'm coming back.*
– Jim Morrison: the Hitchhiker

The story of Vincent is emblematic for my argument. I followed Vincent's well and woo for many years. In general, his story and his life remained the same over all those years. Vincent had a dream and this dream became his life. He lived his story and he still does. Obviously, the ideas and models which were so important in our shared history were so strong for him that he could not resist them. His story shows the magic of culture and his struggle to resist and manipulate the world. How does this work?

Anthropologists have highlighted that 'human motivation' has to be understood as the product of interaction between events and things in the social world and interpretation of those events and things in people's psyche (Strauss 1992: 1). This approach stresses that motivation depends on cultural models, but that the motivation is not automatically derived from ideology, discourses or symbols in a culture. Cultural models have a 'directive force'; they set forth goals and include desire. Emotions and cognition are interrelated. According to Quinn (1992) an important way cultural models become goal-schemas is by supplying people with understanding of themselves. It often is assumed that mad people suffer from disturbances in the sense of self. These disturbances are attributed to a false incorporation into culture in the crucial stage of childhood, causing a semi-permanent identity-crisis and a repetitive desire to construct a self. This, in turn, results in continuous redefinitions or elaborations of an imaginative, 'unrealistic self'.

However, the sense of self or self-understanding may vary throughout one's lifetime and may even vary from situation to situation. We all have to deal with experiences which raise disturbing existential questions, with 'sequestration of experience' (Giddens 1991). Many of us are 'homeless minds' in an era in which old cultural boundaries are opened up and new ones are established. However, it is sufficiently shown that these disturbances and inconsistencies do not mean fragmentation or permanent disturbances in a person's self per se. In fact, Vincent's story is about a 'stable self': he remained the same 'self' over many years. The story of Vincent has to be interpreted differently; it is a reclaiming of his life and his story from psychiatric discourse and therefore is a form of resistance: against medical discourse, against moral ambiguities in his culture. Vincent's desire seems to be a positive force which produces resistance against the moral and ideologies, power and control. Above all, his story and his life form a resistance against 'settings of technical correction' (Giddens 1991: 160) and a plea for imagination and emotional 'play' with culture.

*The story and the life of Vincent*

Vincent was a forty year old schizophrenic man. Vincent looks like his famous namesake: Vincent van Gogh. He was red-haired. His face has also the tensed and restless expression that can be seen on Van Gogh's self portraits. As a result of extensive use of psychotropes his movements are sometimes slow and his tongue hangs out of his mouth. He has lived for more than twenty-four years in a mental hospital together with his brother, who is also diagnosed as schizophrenic. He is a well-known man in the hospital and in the nearby city. When a student came to see me for advice on her master's thesis on mental illness she saw the portrait of Vincent in my office. She recognised him and told me stories about his life in the city. Those stories were very similar to what I heard during my fieldwork!

When we ascribe an identity to another person it may summon resistance of that person. The resistance is comprehensible, but in clinical psychiatry it is made an issue. Consider the utterance of Vincent, who was involved in a conversation with his personal supervisor. The conversation was a part of my research project on schizophrenic and psychotic people (Van Dongen 1994). Therapists and nurses talked with their patients about the patients' lives. Contrary to most of Vincent's conversations, this one was a rather sad reflection on his situation. It was not like his usual wonderful stories of success, pop culture and cosmic life.

The nurse and Vincent recorded the conversation. The opening is as follows: *[Nurse: How long are you in psychiatry?] I want to undo my chocolate. [Nurse: Vincent?]* Vincent undoes his chocolate and does not say a word. *[Nurse: How long are you in psychiatry?]* Vincent does not answer. *[Nurse: Well, let me ask you in another way. How long are you taken in here?] Vincent: Twenty-one years!*

These utterances point to several things: the starting point of the nurse, Vincent's reluctance to answer the first question and the assumption that there is something special with psychiatry to Vincent. The nurse wanted to talk about Vincent's life in a linear chronological way: from the beginning of Vincent's admission to the hospital to the present. Vincent's reluctance to answer the question about his life in *psychiatry* is clear.

However, as soon as the nurse asked in a different way, Vincent responded. He

strongly disliked being identified with a mental inpatient. He had a totally different view on the hospital. For him, the hospital was a place to sleep, to eat and to get protection when the outside world had become too threatening. The hospital was a shelter for withdrawing and settling down after a turbulent evening out in the city. Vincent often remarked ironically that everyone had to work and yet could not be sure to have a home, good food and enough leisure time. He was sure to have such things. But he resisted being referred to as a psychiatric patient. This had a strong negative impact, as it did for most of the patients who participated in my research. The model of a mental patient had a negative moral dimension and a negative directive force. It did not fit into his self-perception, just as it did not fit most patients in my research. The model of madness was related to guilt and shame.

Popular ideas of madness in western cultures are less rational and biomedical than one may expect. Those ideas include different cultural models of the human mind, the brain, religion, etcetera. They also include models of the moral order. Popular models are vague and loosely constituted. However, they share one aspect. They explain when someone exceeds the limits of the social order. Exceeding limits is shameful and embarrassing, not only for the person who crosses the border, but even more for the members of the social group. By ascribing the responsibility for exceeding limits to individual failure and personal guilt the madness and shame become a matter of the individual who commits the 'crime'. Madness becomes badness. To be assigned as a psychiatric patient means a moral judgement for the person. Vincent shows this belief in a compact package of ideas which is related to his view of the social reality and self-identification (cf. Strauss 1992: 205-207). The hospital was for Vincent a 'place where strange and wild things happen' and 'fights are going on'. He went through 'mad things like scuffles and breaking windows and so on'. He said that he had not a 'psychiatric disease', but that he went to the institution 'to rest' and 'to become an adult'. For him, the hospital was a 'nunnery', which indeed it was twenty years ago. It had a protective meaning. His ideas about madness and the mental hospital belonged to an 'authorative discourse': 'sharply demarcated, compact and inert […] one must either totally affirm it, or totally reject it' (Bakhtin 1981: 343).

There is no doubt that Vincent rejected the model of madness and the connected intrinsic moral judgement. The consequence was a considerable inner and social conflict, since others identified him as 'mad' or 'schizophrenic'. His turmoil was

connected to conflicts with nurses, family and people in the town. In spite of his overt rejection of the madness model, Vincent was always involved in fights, quarrels, drinking, gambling, begging and exhibitionism. In short, he was involved in all the things, which he thought to have belonged to the mad-bad model. Vincent was very aware of the contradictions between his models and those of others, and of the difference between a part of his story and his actual behaviour. He knew that he was different. He said: 'I am unlike others, maybe because I am red-haired.' He knew that others rejected him and he cared about it: 'They always reject me. When I enter a pub, they will say ta-ta. In other words, they say: Piss off. I am hardly inside when they say: Ta-ta, piss off!'

How did he manage the contradictions for himself and in front of relevant others? First, he reversed the moral dimension of the popular madness-badness model. He was not mad, he was not bad: *God does not exist any longer, because the people are bad. The devil became a common human being. People destroy each other when they finish their plundering […]. All that I say wrong, are the thoughts of bad people. From my birth on I fight with bad people.*

The badness of others was directly fixed upon Vincent. He experienced 'the lives of others'. This sensation gave him 'troubled feelings', because 'people creep under his thoughts'. The badness of others had become a physical experience. Other subjects like death, education, fatherhood, psychiatry and sexuality were penetrated by the evil of other people. This had such a strong negative effect on Vincent that he wanted to be 'a cosmic man', stripped of all human qualities and possibilities to do any evil: *I want to be a cosmic man. Cosmic people don't die. They don't have an anus. They are very clean and wear white clothes. They have a kind of penis, but they don't masturbate or crap. […] Life in the cosmos is rough. You have to drink until you feel good.*

Sometimes he thought that he 'had to lay down shorn and naked' until he was transformed. The only way in which he would achieve his exalted goal was by a life in the hospital, where he could 'work' at his transformation. He said: 'I work at my standstill, to live at myself.' This higherlevel goal – the ultimate 'good' – was an echo of a Buddhist ideal of the seventies which told him to make his mind empty in order to achieve the absolute state of Nirvana. This ideal was mixed with other ideas of the seventies, when flower power, pop culture and alienation from the parental generation predominated the lives of adolescents. We hear wellknown cultural and psychological issues in Vincent's story of the cosmos:

human beings who are not imprisoned in lower desires like sexuality; white clothes could signify purity; the cosmos could be heaven: one feels good. Purifying oneself by removing everything that is dirty (clothes and hair): shaving could be symbolic castration. There exists an over-determination of meaning in Vincent's story. There are lots of symbols of different (cross)cultural domains. Shaving for example is also a symbol of castration in Buddhist India. One can recognise the angels in the people without anuses and the little virgin penis. Thus, this polysemy refers to the determination by the motives of evil and good, and the many symbols which Vincent used. The problem is that there is no distancing or disconnection between the desire and the cultural public domain of storytelling. The story's text remains close to Vincent. His story is perceived by others as 'fleurs du mal', an illusion, simply 'crazy', or personal symbolism. The assumption that crazy people tell through the use of personal symbols, which are cultural but not distanced from motives, desires or imagination, means that they are disempowered. The symbols are similar to the public symbols.

When Vincent was a young man he was very attracted by these ideas. He tried to get rid of an authoritarian father and he wanted to live like his idols Jim Morrison and The Doors. Vincent was the son of a factory worker. His mother was a housewife. He had left school when he was sixteen years old. He became a waiter in a second rate restaurant. He fell in love with a girl, whose parents were well-to-do. The young couple went out and made trips by taxis. The girl's parents were willing to pay for them. Vincent must have felt very successful in those days, because his family was not rich and he himself did not have the job that could afford him the desired lifestyle. However, the relationship came to an end.

Vincent wanted to continue the life to which he had become accustomed. He remained a regular visitor of the city's bars. He went for taxi rides and he took the train to Paris. His father paid these trips. When the father finally refused to pay, Vincent's lived dream of glamour and wealth collapsed. Vincent became psychotic and was admitted to the mental hospital in which he still lived at the time of my field work. But the dream remained alive and very strong. In the first years of his stay in the hospital he often lived in the locked wards. When his dream took over him, he broke the windows and escaped to the city or jumped on the train to Paris. He was imprisoned for some time, because his debts to the national railway company had risen to unacceptable heights. Seclusion and imprisonment could not prevent him from escaping again and again. What

Vincent experienced as ‘high life’ was irresistible for him.

The idea of ‘standstill’, his identification with Jim Morrison and The Doors gave force to a range of related goals. He wanted to be sociable, successful and well known. In a certain way, Vincent succeeded in achieving these goals. He was well known in the hospital. Personnel and patients knew his stories and imaginations about his travels with Jim Morrison. Sometimes Vincent felt repelled, but he could not convince others of this feeling. When he tried to explain his feeling to a nurse, the latter said: *When I see you in daytime… at night, well, everybody knows Vincent, and you set us on laughing. I don’t have the feeling that you are repelled…*

Jim Morrison 1969

Vincent was also well known in the nearby city. He liked to go to cafés, bars and night clubs and to talk to the people. Sometimes he travelled by train without paying. He still rode in taxis when he had the opportunity and the money. People would give him a blanket when he had to sleep in porticoes of a flat at night. However, as a psychiatric patient Vincent could not afford the lifestyle he desired. Social insurance paid him a little pocket money, not enough to cover his costs. He lamented: ‘How much does life cost to make it without begging?’ His passionate wish to be Jim Morrison or to be with the pop star was so strong that he had to go into the world, mixing with corruption and sin, dirtying [him]self with externals, having some trick with the despised forms, instead of worshipping the sacred mysteries of pure content (Douglas 1982: 155).

He felt frustrated, because he could not achieve the status of a ‘cosmic man’. He felt dirty and polluted. He had a strong but not unusual idea that money was a guarantee for success and happiness, which he saw as a bridge to the higher-level goal of the state of emptiness, Nirvana. Success was an intermediate station to cosmic existence. In his view earning money in the usual way was a sad thing to

do. He rejected the social value of 'working for your bread' by saying: 'Life is not for working, life has to be pleasant.' However, he had to supply his pocket money in order to keep his dream alive and to live his dream. He did so by gambling, begging and exhibitionism. These activities belonged to the evil, the polluting. He slept in the street or in porticoes of houses on a piece of cardboard when he had no money to pay the bus or a taxi. For others he was no different from the tramps that people the modern big cities nowadays.

For himself, dirtying was a necessary evil: he did so to achieve his goals. Each little amount of money he got by begging, gambling or exhibitionism permitted him to be like Morrison for a short time. To be like the pop star was a mark on the road to Nirvana. The ideas of the pop culture – fame, plenty of money, beverage, women, music and a 'flashy lifestyle' – were part of Vincent's success model. This model was a strong leading principle. But begging, gambling and other behaviour gave rise to conflicts with others. In the city Vincent was abused many times. The incidents that followed his exhibitionism illustrate this: *I show my penis. [Els: You do?] They say that I must do that and I get forty guilders. [Els: If you don't want to do it, you can refuse.] No, I must, otherwise they beat me up. It is like a rape when they beat me. They beat so heavily, it's like I am in a woman. [Els: Why are people so curious to see your penis?] I am red-haired and red-haired people are special. So, people want to see my penis with that red hair. That's special for them. [Els: Don't you think it's annoying for you?] Even the sportsmen do it when they take a shower. [Els: Is that the same?] Yes, they are naked.*

In this narrative Vincent related his exhibitionism with his otherness. He also stressed the role of others and his helplessness. His abnormality was transformed into the badness of others. The realisation of his dream clashed painfully with his madness, the evil and the limits of society. No matter how strong the motivational force of his success model was, in this case the bridge between money and success and the good was very insecure. The piers of this bridge were inadmissible behaviour and social taboos. Nevertheless, Vincent showed a certain obstinacy in his continuously repeated efforts to achieve success on his way to the cosmos. Vincent was an incarnated problem of the western consumer society. One the one hand, his life is an extreme example of the rat race: pursuing success and happiness. On the other hand, his life was a struggle between evil and good.

*Desire and passion*

Vincent's story may support the claim of certain psychiatric theories that the

process of becoming a ‘self’ in psychotic people is disturbed. Serious disorders as psychosis and schizophrenia have disturbances in the sense of identity and capacity for social relationships. However, to view psychosis or schizophrenia as a combination of ego-functions and deficiencies in parental education, family structure and communication show the cultural foundation of the approach. The cultural beliefs and values are manifest on the level of ideology, but also on the level of behaviour and social interaction. Prominent characteristics are self-reliance, selfdirection and verbal expression (Kirschner 1992). These notions persist in modern psychiatric ideas. Vincent’s story and life may support this view. He does not seem a person who is self-reliant, autonomous. His behaviour does not match the accepted social behaviour, his verbal expressions violate the rules of interaction. His life story suggests that the theory of a derailed self through disturbed identification and education is right. His hospital files tell about an indulgent mother and an authoritative father; an uncertain situation in childhood, due to which Vincent’s ego was not integrated in the cultural domain.

In psychosis the passage from the imaginary order to the symbolic order does not take place (Lacan 1966). The name of the Father (to be understood symbolically) is rejected (‘forclusion du nom-du-père’). This means that the configuration of differences and rules – the law of the Father – is also rejected. The child does not participate in the symbolic (linguistic-social) game. The ‘metaphore paternelle’ fails and the result is that the child stays subordinated to desire (of the mother). The child has no choice and no own identity. The child coincides with the other’s words. It has no possibility to take a symbolic marked identity from the symbolic order and therefore it has no distinguished position. His self is what others say it is. For Lacan the idea of an integrated ego is rejectable.
Every self is divided and fragmented. Desire is the inevitable result of division and fragmentation, and becomes the motor of human creations. Lacan’s idea is similar to Ewing’s notion. This anthropologist states that the presentation of the self may differ from context to context (Ewing 1991). Desire created Vincent’s ‘cosmic man’. The fulfilment of that desire (being first like Jim Morrison in order to become a cosmic man), however, could not be achieved through the life Vincent had since he was an adolescent. In a Lacanian view desire means only more desire. According to this view Vincent’s desire was a regressive process. His dream of success and the good leads him back to his starting point again and again. However, the dream and the subsequent stories are more than that: they are means to survive and to resist.

Plurality and anbiguity are to be studied in their context. Vincent's ideas about the self embody certain assumptions about the person which are characteristic of the culture in the south of the Netherlands. Here the self consists also of significant others. The self is partly composed of elements over which a person has no control. The self can change and is less unbound and autonomous. Vincent shows for example this awareness when he said: 'You have to live with other people in a social way.' Psychotic people frequently violate the cultural rules in order to satisfy their needs. Vincent was involved in an ongoing social conflict. Sometimes it seemed as if he did not experience an offence of a cultural prohibition when showing his genitals in town. However, rather than suggesting that there is no conflict, as some psychiatrists do, I suggest that Vincent's behaviour was intentional and conflictual. It is well known that when people learn different or conflicting assumptions about what is right or wrong, moral or natural, a possibility exists for resistance to cultural ideas and beliefs (Quinn 1992: 122). In Vincent's case the conflicting assumptions had their origin in childhood. His rigid assumptions about the evil and the good were not simply cultural models which had directive force because they were learned in childhood and experienced as 'natural'. Vincent's story suggests a long process, beginning in adolescence, in which his ideas about failure, success, evil, purity, etcetera became incorporated in Vincent's understanding of himself and led to the identification with Jim Morrison. His behaviour and his almost conscious will to behave like he did echoed, as I wrote before, ideals of the youth in the seventies: resistance against authority and the ideal of total personal freedom. In fact, it echoes resistance against the cultural law by a large 'peer group' of adolescents: the 'protest generation'.

Vincent's technique of resistance was that of parody and grotesque realism. He offended precisely those cultural norms of which he said that to offend was a bad thing to do. He did it very openly. Begging, drinking, and exhibitionism seemed to be what Goffman (1971) called 'ceremonial profanations', i.e. conscious offence that shows sensitivity for values and norms.

Anthropologists showed that the directive force of cultural models is 'over determined'. Social sanctions, pressure for conformity, reward and values act together to give a model its directive force (D'Andrade 1984: 98). In this sense the cultural models Vincent used seemed not very rewarding for him. His offence was chastised immediately, sometimes through beatings, sometimes in the

hospital by being prohibited from going out. The socialisation process seemed not to be very effective. Vincent was admitted to a psychiatric hospital and he lived in the margins of society. He offended the rules and violated cultural norms. No matter what therapists or other mental health workers did over the years to reinforce a moral and proper way to behave, he maintained his dream and thus his way of living for more than twenty years. Obviously, there was a strong force involved. Vincent knew the values and norms of his culture, but he had different feelings about them. For him norms and values were associated with strong negative feelings. His experiences with people in town, his resistance against the ascribed identity of psychiatric patient and his feelings about the 'hypocrisy' and 'badness' of people caused these feelings. To understand what motivated Vincent (and others as well) we must know the feelings that he associated with cultural models as the result of his specific life experience. They were his passions of life…

If culturally organized views of possibility and sense must figure centrally in the acquisition of a sense of self – providing images in terms of which we unselfconsciously connect ideas and actions – then culture makes a difference that concerns not simply *what* we think but how we feel about and live our lives. Affects, then, are no less cultural and no more private than beliefs (Rosaldo 1984: 140-141).

*Desire and intentions*

It is not so strange that Vincent wished for a completely different way of life when we know how he lived. The different life was situated in the cosmos. For other psychotic people the ideal way of being was in heaven or in some utopia. One may say that the 'real' life of psychotic people forms a negative force. Often, this particular kind of desire had not developed in childhood, but in adolescence. From my research data it became clear that most of the psychotic patients which expressed so plainly a desire for heaven, utopia, or cosmos, were the adolescents of the seventies.

They were involved in the counterculture of that era. This desire is not so very different from a general desire people express for example in religion, myths or ideologies. The problem is not that psychotic people desire heaven or so, but that they desire it too often and too 'loud', therewith showing that the desire for 'heaven' is ridiculous. For us, this is very uneasy, because that which we express and believe in religion or ideologies, we deny to madness.

Should we define desire as a force that is characterised by a lack of something? Or should we view it as a positive force? Lacan (1961) defines desire as a lack, but Deleuze and Guattari view desire as a presence and a productive force. According to these authors 'needs are derived from desire: they are counter products within the real that desire produces' (Deleuze & Guattari 1984: 27). In their theory an individual is not bound to be a slave of his desire nor is the desire always a repetition of the oedipal triad mother-father-ego, but a will-to-power, a will-to-become, while opposing the regular social discourse. The authors do not exclude Lacan's version of desire, but they see desire as discursive, that is, emanating from power and control, while the object of desire is created in social discourse. In their view desire is dual. I will explain this by Vincent's case.

On the one hand, when his desire to become a 'cosmic man' is seen as a lack, there is always something that is lost and has to become reinforced. In a psychiatric view, what is lost is his sense of self and his sense of reality. What has to be reinforced involves re-territorialisation of his ideas and beliefs within the common ideology. This is what psychiatry wants to do. On the other hand, when his desire is conceived as a willtobecome, Vincent would have room for resistance to the social and the cultural order. In this case re-territorialisation becomes an outcome of discursive practices. This means for example that the 'cosmic man' can be made into a central figure in conversations with Vincent.

However, there is still Vincent's desire to be like Jim Morrison. I explain this desire for identification as a bridge between his actual life and his life in the cosmos. This desire cannot be explained by repetition of an oedipal model or a familial model of authority. Morrison is for Vincent a model of anti-authority. It is possible to see the repetition of the 'Morrison'-desire as 'pursuing failure', as Shafer (1984) describes for clients in clinical psychiatry. These clients have failed in life tasks and their emotional patterns related to these failures seem to persist. Failures become goals with directive force and their pursuit is valorised. Embroiding this theme, failure can be a model of something that happens to vulnerable people and the model of a vulnerable self with elements over which one has no control might make failure a goal. Thus, powerful forces like marginality, moral judgement of others, exclusion or denial of worth on the basis of a position as a psychiatric in-patient can lead Vincent to take on some of these models. It can be argued that this is for example the case with marginality when Vincent sleeps on the streets, in porticoes, or even on a dung-hill. But the

Morrison-model – the desire to double Morrison – is more complicated than an intra-psychic model of free, individual choice (if there is any!). There are two important items related to Vincent's Morrison-model, which I would like to discuss. Firstly, desire as a positive intentional force of resistance, and secondly, desire as a 'political' and mimetic process.

Vincent was an active agent. He was the 'nomadic subject, able to become, to resist, to see that things can be otherwise' (Fox 1993: 86). The desire of Vincent to be Morrison soaked his life. Morrison was a model with a strong directive force for many years. 'Higher-level goals' clustered around this model: success, freedom and happiness. Morrison stood for all. Nothing is abnormal in the goals of success, freedom or happiness in the Anglo-American and Northern European cultures. D'Andrade (1984: 98) notes for example about the American emphasis on success: 'there are external sanctions involving money and employment, there are conformity pressure of many kinds, and there are the direct personal rewards and value satisfactions'.

However, for Vincent the achievement of these goals did not pass off by socially accepted employment, but precisely by the opposite. He tried to achieve the goals by begging, gambling or exhibitionism. These activities are not signs of madness per se, but in Vincent's case they are signified as symptoms of mental illness. However, they offered Vincent satisfaction and pleasure, because if he succeeded to win a couple of hundred guilders by tapping the buttons of a gambling machine his dream about 'good life' became reality. People would accept a drink and would even have a conversation with him. He would take a taxi and the chauffeur would be polite and open the door for him. This gave him 'the kick'.

The directive force of such models cannot be entirely explained by personal and social reward. According to D'Andrade there are two motivational systems involved with cultural meaning  systems: one that satisfies personal needs and another that represents a self as proof of a particular set of values (D'Andrade 1984: 98). For example, what motivated Vincent to identify himself with Morrison may be rewarding because it satisfied his need for recognition and attention. The effect of this open identification was the constant attention and care of mental health workers, because this identification was conceived as a sign of madness. Ironically, mad people have to behave mad in order to stay in social contact with others. The identification also represented the 'free' self and this self came close to the cosmic man.

However, the need for success and related feelings of freedom and happiness was only temporarily satisfied. The ways in which Vincent tries to fulfil his desire often meant a social conflict. We can hardly speak of any form of reward in this case. What made Vincent do this again and again? To explain this, we need another dimension of desire, namely intentionality. From a psychological view intentions are mental representations capable of being realised in action. I do not mean a full conscious effort to make something clear or to satisfy a desire. Analogous to Sperber and Wilson (1986) who see a communicative intention not just as an intention to inform someone else of something, but as an intention to make an informative intention known to the one who communicates and the one who listens, intention of desire is a semi-conscious effort to make an intention clear or to make clear that there is an intention to everyone who is involved in social interaction. Desire is thus not only a positive force that takes place in the real, as Deleuze and Guattari see it, but also an intentional force, not only to fulfil needs but also a force that is effective and productive in the social domain. The desiring subject communicates an intention with the desire. The question is what effects it has, and what it produces.

Jim Morrison and especially his ideas of fame, a 'flashy' lifestyle, plenty of money, spirits, women and music, were strong leading principles for Vincent. The proceeds of begging, gambling and other business enabled Vincent to live like his model. He could buy drinks and ride in a taxi. This, in turn, gave him the idea that he was 'on the road with Jim'. Vincent told me: 'I think I am the fifth Doors.' This is a remarkable phenomenon. Vincent did exactly what Morrison did. Morrison was not only a 'success model' for young people. Essential components of his life were 'doing dirty', protest, nihilism, anti-materialism and death. It is striking that Vincent fitted almost perfectly in this double Morrison-model. But the dark side of the model, e.g. anti-social behaviour and death, was disregarded in Vincent's discourse. About Morrison's death, he said: *Is he still alive, Morrison? [Therapist: He is dead.] He is dead? But I never found out he is dead! [Therapist: No?] Never. Does it hurt? [Therapist: I don't know, I was never dying.] I don't know whether he is dead or not.*

When the movie on Morrison's life and death was shown in the nearby town, Vincent did not want to see it. When I took a photo of Morrison's grave at Père Lachaise in Paris, he did not want to see it. He said that he disliked 'the ugly images of Morrison', but I believe that seeing Morrison's grave or the film would

mean the end of Vincent's story and thus the end of his life. The most important thing in Morrison's life for Vincent was his glamour and success. Doing dirty, although it is an essential component of the star's life, was not a motivating force for Vincent, but an inevitable necessity. Vincent pointed therefore to the evil of others and the 'logic' of his own behaviour. He did dirty, but by doing so he was confronted with norms and values in his society. His behaviour was not tolerated. Complaints of his family, fights in the town, people making a fool of him and sending him away were the results. Yet, some of the things Vincent did are not uncommon in towns, where people 'celebrate the weekend' or have their parties. Carnivalesque ideas and a 'we-live-just-once' model could be seen. Vincent described this as follows: *They say: We live just once, when they walk around with a big glass of beer. Do you understand that? Who lives once? They say: When we are dead, we rot away, so let us drink! That is not possible. There is maybe a life after life. Incarnation? Rubbish! It is your world. You see so many people and then you may ask yourself: Why are you seeing that? Why are they destroyed like that?*

Vincent connected the carelessness of people, their badness, the evil and the consequent destruction. He contrasted these with the cosmos, the good and infinity: *My life is eternal. […] I don't reincarnate, I disappear. The universe is infinite. Life continues till the entire universe is filled up with cosiness. There is no end to my life.*

Vincent did 'bad things' to be in the 'scene' he despises. This was not simply copying Morrison's life. The proceeds of his 'jobs' guaranteed him not only fulfilling of a personal desire to be Morrison, but also meant (short-term) social relationships. This was the only way Vincent had. Alternative social institutions that could satisfy his social needs were missing. Through his madness and status of psychiatric patient he was marginal and lonely. So, social aspects created the conditions of the force of his models. The forbidden actions Vincent used to attain his goals belonged to these social factors. What he did openly, others did clandestine. He knew this: *I have to tell everything to my wife. Are you mine? [Els: No, I have already someone else. I am not yours, but I am listening. Tell me.] Well, if I tell my wife she falls asleep… [Els: I don't fall asleep. Do you have a friend?] Yes. She is a twin. [Els: Does she live here?] No, I meet her in town. She takes a gin from me and leaves it. Then my money is gone and she does not want anymore. If I had five thousand guilders, she would come with me, she said. She is so beautiful, she is a twin. I want to tell her anything, but she won't listen.*

He almost exactly copied a song of Morrison, i.e. 'The Hitchhiker' (the text is at the beginning of this part). This image suited Vincent. He was wandering about and he always tried to get some money so that he could buy love and a social relationship.

An older but still actual argument of Goffman (1971) in his 'Asylums' on intentionality of mad behaviour is that such behaviour is not so much a result of any violence, but an intentional offence of rules. The behaviour shows sensitivity for those rules. It is a profanation. According to Goffman the behaviour is of interest, because it shows us the common ritual order. In its offence the behaviour shows us rules of which we are hardly aware in our daily lives. Later (1971: 411), Goffman adds: 'In sum, mental symptoms are wilful situational improprieties.' It is not so difficult to see the intentionality of 'mad' acting here. Also the relation with Morrison's wilful offences of culture and social rules and norms is clear. The openness with which Vincent offended cultural norms brought him not only into conflict with people in town, but the offence ridiculed a double moral.

Norms of what people can do in public are ambivalent and ambiguous. This ambivalence and ambiguity offered to Vincent (and other psychotic people as well) different possibilities to withdraw himself from the obligations of 'social regulation' and cultural norms. Vincent's contempt of behaviour of the feasters in town was evoked in others by his own behaviour. Showing his genitals in town was to stage the hidden and secret perversity of people: 'They say I have to.' When Vincent would refuse to do what the drunken people asked, he was punished by abuse. When he did what was asked, because he wanted to earn some money and because people wanted to see his penis, he was punished by his supervisors in the hospital. This was a dilemma for him.

The question is then: who was bizarre? Vincent or the people in town? I would like to stress that I do not claim that Vincent's 'mad' behaviour is a fully conscious act to make people aware of the ambivalent morals and norms and the hidden passions in his society. I argue that desire has three positive intentional dimensions which motivate people to act the way they do. First, there is the intention to satisfy the need to feel well, to be happy or get 'a kick'. This is a personal intention. Second, there is the intention to satisfy social needs, for example to have social contacts or sympathy of others. Third, there is an intention to express displeasure or an awareness of hidden negative aspects of a moral

system within a society. These intentional dimensions are intertwined. For example to express displeasure of negative aspects in a moral system can be of personal worth because it satisfies personal needs for a certain achievement and because 'it represents the "good" self' (D'Andrade 1984: 98).

*Desire, resistance and mimesis*

In this section I want to explore the intentionality of a desire in relation with the effects of the behaviour that follows from that desire on other people in Vincent's culture. In other words, is desire a 'will-to-power' that has a positive social impact? Is it a political act? Vincent's caricatured mimesis of Morrison and 'wilful situational improprieties' had an enormous impact on social relationships for himself, but did they show the ambiguity of cultural values and norms? In other words, could Vincent be compared with the trickster figure? Vincent's life threw him into conflict with the cultural conceptions of a person, norms of behaviour and social rules, which are in force in the society. These are regulations that somebody is trained and educated to adhere to mainly in childhood. These regulations always enclose resistance, because individuals may differ in the degree to which they are committed to cultural ideas (D'Andrade 1992).* They can reject ideas totally or partially. [* *D'Andrade expands the ideas of Spiro (1987) by adding the motivational force of cultural models to Spiro's concept of internalisation. He writes: 'Spiro has pointed out that all parts of a culture are not held by people in the same way; that cultural propositions vary in the degree to which they are internalized (1987)' (1992: 36). Somewhat before he writes: 'Thus it could be said that the statements generated by cultural models had directive force for some people, that is, had a force which made people obligated to do what the statement said. However, the term "directive force" refers to a specific kind of motivation – the moral or quasi-moral sort, where one feels obligation' (1992: 39)*] Vincent's desire to become Morrison and finally become a cosmic man reflected intentional efforts to dismantle the cultural rhetoric on decency, autonomy, self-reliance, labour, and all other concepts which seem so important nowadays. He showed the 'ridiculous' and arbitrary use of these concepts. It was as if Vincent wanted to say: 'You want me to be mad or to violate norms and rules? I will give you want you want.' He did this by well-known mechanisms in our culture, i.e. 'desire', 'mimesis', 'identification'. The mime had the same effect as that of a clown.

Jim Morrison
(Graffiti Rosario)

The people in the centre of the city laughed and challenged him to behave 'crazier'. Two issues are important. First, the issue of flexibility and constraints of cultural ideas. Second, the related issue of power. Obviously, notions of what is, what can be and what must be done have thresholds. On the one hand there are infinite possibilities for people to explain themselves. The flexibility, or pandemonium as Gergen (1985) names it, is not as infinite as it sometimes seems to be in a post-modern society. When Vincent said 'I am Morrison' or 'I want to be a cosmic man', the social impact and force was large, but only because of the irony, 'exaggeration' and impossibility of what he did. We cannot gather information about the irony in Vincent's life from his texts as they are presented above. We canderive his ironical attitude from the tone in which he talked and from the rhythm of his behaviour. His stories were sometimes told in a Rabelian way.

They are of grotesque realism, using vulgarisms, puns, mockeries and benignant fabrications. His behaviour was also ironic. I happened to be a victim once of his way of begging. To illustrate this I quote a fragment from my diary: *There comes Vincent! His red hair flickers as a warning signal in the sun. Without knowing why, I feel something is going to happen.'Hey!', Vincent shouts. With his long thin legs he rushes at me, his hand held out. He laughs. 'How are you? What are you going to do?', he asks, while shaking my hand. 'I am going to work, Vincent.' 'Work? What work? Are you going to tell stories about the hospital?' 'Yes, I will.' 'That's great, that's very great. Are you doing this alone?' 'Yes, I do it alone.' Vincent tilts his feet. He gets a deep breath and then: 'Hey, do you have something for me? For buying a bottle of lemonade? You gave me something lately, but that is gone. It does not matter what: nickels, dimes. I pay you back, I pay you. I will tell you another story. I pay you back. Please?' Vincent held his hand. 'I am so thirsty, girl!' [To make a longer story a little shorter, I gave him some money.] 'I pay you back! Did you note down the dates of the coins?' Vincent*

*comes very close to me and smiles. I can smell his body and see his brown teeth. 'Thanks, I pay you back!' Then he disappears to the café.*

I have to admit that this encounter gave me mixed feelings. On the one hand I felt rather defenceless against Vincent's charms. I felt as if I had to laugh, which I did indeed. To note down the dates of the coins was ridiculous. On the other hand, I felt repelled by unwashed flesh and I also was embarrassed, because I did not like to be forced to give him money. The stories and behaviour of psychotic people are tragic and comic. Psychotic people amuse, but they are also accusing. The tragedy, which summons compassion of others, guards them from total rejection.

This resembles the reactions people have for the behaviour of the trickster. The effects of his behaviour may be compared to 'the drastic entertainment' of the tricksters' stories (Kerenyi 1972). Stories of such grotesque realism, imaginations or fabrications are mostly only permitted in childhood, in our silent thoughts, in a cabaret or as an artist. What Vincent did and said had to stay behind the curtains of the public stage. His madness offered him a possibility to resist cultural values and norms, or to challenge them. Desire became a 'political' process. In the story of Morrison and the cosmic man Vincent presented himself as a caricature of the ideal of a totally free man. This was an ideal that developed out of the youth culture in the seventies and seems to be accepted as normal in the nineties. He pointed to the 'good' and the 'evil' and their ambivalent character. He pointed for example to drinking and gambling, which belong to evil things in popular cultural ideas, but which are at the same time permitted during an evening out. With irony and caricature the psychotic man or woman is accusing: he or she points to and makes a mockery of cultural values and norms.

However, we have to be careful to take this resistance and protest as political acts that undercut power and ambiguity. We can learn from feminist studies on disease that hold that resistance and protest against gender domination do not undercut existing power relations, but are utilised in the maintenance and reproduction of these relations (Jaggar and Bordo 1992). For example, a study on eating disorders shows that transformations of meaning 'through which conditions that are "objectively" (and experientially) constraining, enslaving, and even murderous, come to be experienced as liberating, transforming, and life-giving' (Bordo 1992). The transformations appear to be non-liberating; they reproduce the existing models of femininity. How is this in the case of psychotic people, whose ideas are dominated by the culturally accepted ideas? Vincent's

protest and caricature appeared to be counterproductive. The symptoms of chronic psychotic diseases weaken people and turn the lives of patients into an all-absorbing desire. Because psychotic people are wedded to an obsessive desire, they are unable to make an  effective change in their lives when others are not willing to acknowledge the social meaning of psychotic language. Vincent remained the 'reproducer' of the dependent person of the psychiatric in-patient. Employing the language of the moral through his own psychotic 'language' involved the ambiguity of that moral and suited perfectly the dilemmas of a culture's mores, but everything remained in its place because Vincent's language reproduced, rather than transforming what was protested and mocked. The fact that the psychotic world has been taken as the 'unreal' world during the history of psychiatry in spite of attempts within psychiatry to give this world its meaning, is significant. Psychotic symptoms and pathology as potential means for resistance and protest serve in the maintenance of established and generally accepted cultural order. How can Vincent's desire become implicated in the cultural order?

D'Andrade claims that the standard analysis ignores what organises the desires. Desires are not simple things in themselves or motives independent of culture. D'Andrade claims that desires are 'conscious interpretations of goals activated by other cultural schemas' (1992: 55), and he agrees with the claim of the standard analysis that 'idiosyncratic and cultural schemas (or models) are organised in complex hierarchies'. Which schema is at the top of a person's interpretative system, varies. Top-level models are 'master motives' and contain the most general goals. For Vincent these were things like success, happiness, and standstill.

Further down in his hierarchy of models there were things like money, social contacts, drinking, women, etcetera. According to D'Andrade there are two empirical issues involved. First, it is not clear how the notion of 'directive force' should be used. D'Andrade proposes a psychological description by organising the data around cultural models which have the greatest directive force. Second, which factors cause cultural models to be internalised? For example why did the cultural model of success affect Vincent so deeply, while others of his generation are not so much attracted by it? D'Andrade gives us a part of the answer. It is because others have already learned other models, which interfere with the success model. The author concludes: Each individual's life history can be viewed as the building of new schematic organizations through processes of

accommodating to experience and assimilating these experiences to previous schematic organizations. The final result is a complex layering and interpenetration of cultural and idiosyncratic schemas which always contains some degree of conflict (1992: 56).

D'Andrade's conclusion is valuable for Vincent's story. However, there is a mechanism involved, that Girard calls mimesis. This mechanism is related to the directive force and internalisation of models and has to do with the maintenance of a model despite the evidence that desires will never be fulfilled. This is what has happened in Vincent's life. Vincent was an adolescent in a critical historical period. It is suggested that the rivalry between youths and adults in western societies during the seventies was uniquely critical. The young were profoundly alienated from the parental generation. Two main forms of dissent were important in that time: the radicalism of European youths with significant social criticism,and an American experimental and flexible dissent from what Roszak called 'the technocracy' (1970: 4). Although the European radicalism was closer to the front door of the Netherlands, it limits itself to the intellectual young people at the universities. It seems that the experimental dissent had a greater impact on the young outside the universities in the Netherlands. Vincent was one of the latter. Flower power, hippy culture or pop culture flourished well with the youth. It offered them the impression of full freedom, with no binding loyalties, no personal attachments, no home, no family, no obligations, no authority. What Vincent, and many others with him, did not see was that the propagated 'leisure' of sunny beaches, luxurious hotels, big cars, cool drinks and drugs were adjuncts of the jet set and high income class, not of underpaid waiters in a small restaurant. Vincent was confronted with and opposing a 'technocratic society' which equipped the young with an 'anaemic superego', made possible by unrestricted pursuit of profit, commercialising and permissive education. Withdrawing from the family and becoming a beggar or a gambler for example was a formidable gesture of protest.

The culture of permissiveness ill prepared the young for life. Adolescence was no longer a passage to adulthood, but 'a status on its own and a prolongation of permissive infancy' (Roszak 1970: 32). Vincent demonstrated awareness of this status of the adolescence period, when he said: *At that time I could not care for myself. […] You are only an adult when you are forty. […] I am not a psychiatric patient. I stayed in the hospital because I got lessons, perhaps for becoming an*

*adult.*

Such a permissive culture as in the seventies smothered protest by saturation coverage. Strictly speaking, it was not the parental default, but the social conditions which caused problems. The counterculture of the seventies was not simply an expression of protest or cultural renewal. The essence of this culture was, as it is with all countercultures, to aggravate contradictions and conflicts which already existed (Abma 1990). These contradictions and conflicts were social conditions. One of these conditions was not the lack of models for mimesis, but the lack of someone in that time who told, for example, the adolescent Vincent that on the one hand, his identification with Morrison could be beneficial and rewarding sometimes, but, on the other hand, it could not continue life long. When he was young his fantasy was nourished by the indulgence of the parents of his friends and his mother. When he grew up he was left too long without restrictions. He did not adjust to prescribed patterns of an adult man. He continued to assert pleasure, freedom and doing dirty, just like Morrison. Originally developed as a resistance against authority and society, Vincent's model came to dominate his entire life.

It came to belong to his passions and it shows the magic of culture. His mimesis presented itself as a caricature of the ideal of a totally free man – a cosmic man – an ideal that developed in the seventies and seems to have a climax in the nineties' hyper individualism. Apparently, the model of freedom and standstill had not lost its force. On the contrary, Vincent mimed Morrison as much as he could. He was so fascinated by his model that he was warming up to it. Morrison was the embodiment of all 'master models' and the models lower in the hierarchy. The pop star became over the years Vincent's 'master's voice'. The mechanism that lied behind the exceptional manifestation of mimesis was that Vincent's being was no longer defined by a place in society. Motivation was stirred up instead of decreased (Girard 1978) and desire increased at the expense of differentiation between the model and Vincent. Being mad was being mesmerised by the models of desire. However, it is not fully correct to ascribe the mesmerising totally to Vincent's madness. It is also not fully correct to see Vincent as a scapegoat. Through intentional behaviour Vincent showed the conflict, rivalry and undermining of the cultural order which were joined together.

Vincent's behaviour did not transform the cultural ideas about a person or the cultural ideas of good and evil. On the contrary, it strengthened the cultural

models of madness. The ‘solutions’ offered by psychotic language, too excessively uttered, lead to their own undoing. Vincent remained a ‘docile body’ (Foucault 1979). He remained a locus of social control; a psychiatric inmate.

*In conclusion*

If Vincent’s story is perceived as a ‘fleur du mal’ and a fantasy, how is it related to his life? Normally, lives are storied. What keeps the stories from being odd is that they summarise and justify the work from which they arose, and that they do not become identical with the teller’s desire or motives. But, this is precisely what happens in odd stories: the lives are not storied, but the stories are lived. They are identical with the tellers.

Crazy people are disempowered by the fact that their story is perceived as odd and personal. The problem with odd stories is that they are very attractive for normal people. We suspect ‘deep meaning’ in them. This becomes clear in the literature on art and madness. In this literature it is assumed that madness enables a person to get access to the deeper domains of creation and ontology. Good examples are studies of Nietsche and Van Gogh, and many other artists. Crazy people are ‘createurs bruts’, who have access to an original pre-cultural world, which serves as a source of creativity. I do not want to argue that every crazy man or woman is an artist, but I agree with the opinion that crazy people are ontologists: they are engaged in a new way of experiencing fundamental categories, in experiencing new frames from which reality can be described and experienced. Craziness is thus a new way of experiencing, like art. But it is an involuntary way, sometimes fearful and certainly not comfortable. Mad people do not invent a new culture or a new frame. They unbolt normative frames and inverse the rules of social relationships.


Their stories and lives have sensational and shocking attributes and therefore they resemble the trickster. But, everything in the world has a deep meaning and that drives them crazy. Mad people test possible worlds in their stories to see if they are endurable. Their stories *must* come to life because it is often the only way to contact the social world. But the openness with which Vincent and the others offend cultural frames (values and norms) brings them into conflict and ridicules a double morality and the arbitrariness of the frames. Cultural norms of what people can do in public are fully alive to ambiguity and ambivalence.

One does not show his penis in public, but when one is drunk on a Saturday night, one asks someone else to show the willy. Vincent and his story are at the core of our culture. We witness the interplay of emotions and cognition, of rationality and irrationality, of calculation and raging passions, of morality and immorality. It is a struggle to fight the magic power of culture. Vincent's story is a sad one and he knows it. When the story comes to an end, his life will end too. His denial of Morrison's death has to be understood as his will to survive. But what will happen when he becomes old?

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**In Memoriam**

**Els van Dongen (1946-2009)**

*By Sjaak van der Geest*

In the evening of 4th February 2009, Els van Dongen, anthropologist, colleague and editor of this journal, died at the age of 62. Her death came after a long and painful sickness, a period of hope and desperation, of gratefulness for a rich life mixed with stubborn resistance to the unfairness of that same life.

Els was a gifted anthropologist and an unusual colleague. Students loved her teaching, original, sharp, concerned and full of entertainment. Colleagues admired her for her unbridled energy and productivity and her many talents. She was fast in everything she undertook and impatient if things went too slowly. She deeply disliked bureaucracy and its meetings.

Her anthropological life started late, at the age of 35. She first trained as primary school teacher, during which time she met her husband Leo Hulshof. From 1968 till 1978 she taught in two primary schools in the proximity of their beautiful house in the rural south of the Netherlands, near the Belgian border. In 1978 she decided to study geography. During that course she discovered anthropology, which she liked instantly.

In 1982 she decided to join the new part-time evening course anthropology at the University of Utrecht. She combined the role of student with the care of her

family. She completed her master's 'cum laude' in 1988 with a thesis on the semiotic approach in the study of illness [1988].

Six years later, in 1994, she defended her PhD thesis based on conversations with psychotic people in a psychiatric hospital. The title of her thesis 'Zwervers, knutselaars, strategen' (Tramps, handymen, strategists) betrayed her aversion to psychiatric labels:  She regarded the people she met in her research first of all as people out of tune with the 'normal' society, but gifted with extraordinary skills and ideas. I am sure that she experienced 'kinship' with them in their common 'unusualness'. Provocative also was the quote from John L. Caughey that she chose as device for her book: "'Schizophrenic' is perhaps best kept in its traditional sense, as a pejorative label for deviants whose visions we do not like." A few years later she would write that 'madness' showed: "that otherness is present in all of us.The otherness we fear"

In her book, which ten years later was published in a slightly revised English version, she sought to describe and understand how psychiatric patients experienced their world. She did so from the patient's point of view, focusing on the fears and hopes that characterise the life in a clinical mental ward. Dilemmas in that life are: How to express subjectivity in an atmosphere designed to restrain demonstrative emotion? And how to maintain personal integrity in a completely ordered regime? She portrayed the psychiatric patients as 'wanderers' – homeless people, as it were – in an alien and hostile country, creating a 'bricolage' reality from materials at hand. Although she often positioned the therapists and psychiatrists as representatives of an oppressive regime, she did not doubt their integrity either.

In 1996 she joined the staff of the Medical Anthropology Unit at the University of Amsterdam and began to play her key-role as teacher and researcher in our team. She taught both general courses in anthropology and specific medical anthropology modules on themes such as 'anthropology and psychiatry', 'anthropology and chronic illness' and 'medical anthropological ethnography in Europe'.

She published a collection of six narratives by people she met in the closed wards of the mental hospital during her PhD research. The personal stories are alternated by her observations and comments. The book, she wrote in her prologue, was her debt to these people: "I became indebted because the people

shared with me what they had: their stories and (part of) their lives” .

A little further she reflects: “When I went into the hospital, my aim was to study how people deal with mental illness and how mental illness could be understood from the perspective of the people themselves. Now I must admit that madness taught me more about the power of culture and the power of people than about madness” .

The power of culture… In 2000 she co-edited a volume with contributions about the way Europe treated migrants in need of health care. A central theme in that volume is exclusion. It proved a recurrent theme in all her work: exclusion and marginalization of ‘others’, such as psychiatric patients, migrant, refugees, victims of violence and older people.

When she turned her attention to older people in South Africa, she came home with touching stories about the beauty and warmth of old age but also with horrifying data of older people being abused and maltreated by their own children and grandchildren. In one article she spoke of ‘social gerontocide’. Invisible dramas unfold in poor households where the young generation despise and reject their older relatives for their passive role in the Apartheid era and try to ‘kill’ them socially. But, she stressed, the older people are not helpless victims. They fight back and develop strategies to survive.

Research among older people drew her attention to remembrance. Being old consists of having many memories. Rejecting or silencing those memories, however, implies a rejection of the older people themselves. “It is almost as if the past never happened,” one person tells her. In one of her last published articles she quotes a common saying of the young silencing the old: “That was your time… This time is ours!” In other words: Shut up. The ‘culture of silence’ in which they were forced to live during Apartheid is thus prolonged into the post-Apartheid era. That awareness of muted memories inspired her and Monica Ferreira, with whom she collaborated throughout the South Africa years, to bring out a collection of ‘untold stories’ to give voice to the lives of older people in the new South African society.

Her last major publications were two edited books, one about lying and concealment in medical settings and one about distance and proximity during illness. The former, co-edited with her long-time friend and colleague Sylvie

Fainzang, argued that lying is a way of dealing with major crises that people encounter, particularly during illness. The theme connects with ideas she has been airing from the very beginning: health problems are not only about health; they are linked to shame, exclusion, suffering and social violence. Lying in such circumstances may be the most effective medicine to restore the damage. But lying is mutual; those with power in medical contexts may exploit the lie as well, to maintain their position in the medical hegemony.

Facing distress, co-edited with Ruth Kutalek, brought together papers of a conference of the European Association of Social Anthropology in Vienna. Distance and proximity constitute the ambiguity of the illness experience. On the one hand, illness leads to loss of independence and need of help and care by others; on the other hand, illness makes one lonely as it isolates the patient from normal social encounters and may scare others away. The pain of the sick body will thus be aggravated or replaced by the distress of ostracism.

In 1998 Els and I organized the first conference on 'Medical Anthropology at Home' (MAAH). For Els doing fieldwork 'at home' was a personal experience. For about ten years she had been doing research 'around the corner' in a psychiatric hospital. For me, it was – and remained – mainly a dream. For both of us it was an attempt to contribute to the de-exoticisation of (medical) anthropology. The theme and format (small-scale / intensive discussions) proved successful and since 1998 the MAAH conference has been held every second year, in The Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Finland and Denmark. Els, Sylvie Fainzang and Josep Comelles, became the driving forces. Els co-edited two voluminous special issues with conference proceedings and remained active as long as she could. She wrote a paper for the last conference in Denmark focusing on her personal sickness and suffering, but was unable to present it. We discussed her moving self-reflection in her absence.

In 1990 Els published her first article in Medische Antropologie. She described the social meaning of medicines in the psychiatric ward where she did her research. The medicines, she wrote, had a binding as well as an oppressive effect in the interaction between patients and staff. Relations between these two parties had the character of a combat in which medicines (taken or refused) replaced words. The article became a key-text in our work on 'pharmaceutical anthropology'.

In 1994 she helped as guest editor to make a special issue about Zintuigen (The Senses) and in that same year she joined the team of editors. She kept that position till the end of her life. Medische Antropologie has been the main outlet for her ideas on health, culture and violence, certainly in the first decade of her career. She wrote eighteen articles and comments and an uncounted number of book reviews for this journal and (co-)edited five special issues on 'the senses', 'older people, wellbeing and care', 'shit, culture and well-being', 'medical technology and the body' and 'violence and human rights'. We, the editors, will miss her fast and sharp judgment in the evaluation of manuscripts, her invaluable editorial suggestions to the authors and her cheerful directness during our discussions.

Another journal favourite journal for her was Anthropology & Medicine, in which she published about the creation of cultural difference, lying and illness, and bodywork in nursing.

From the beginning in 1994 she has also been one of the editors of the book series 'Health, Culture and Society' which has brought out sixteen titles so far.

Els was a person with many talents. She took lessons in drawing and painting and produced beautiful canvasses with symbolic objects and portraits of relatives, friends, and people she met during fieldwork. Many of her productions can still be viewed on her website. She was also a filmmaker and photographer. The topics she chose for her photographs and films were sometimes from her anthropological research but often focused also on other things such as nature, everyday life and unexpected details such as the movements of hands during a conference.

Els has lived a very full life and accomplished more than most of us will be able to achieve in a life twice as long as hers. Even so, she was not always a happy scholar, perhaps feeling that her close colleagues did not fully understand or appreciate what she was doing. Close colleagues are sometimes more distant than those who are far away. Nevertheless, in this space, she carried on with her own strong and positive energy, becoming a popular guest lecturer in universities abroad and serving on various international scientific committees. When her sickness grew more serious, about two months before her death, we decided to make a book of friends for her. Thirtyeight people, colleagues from Amsterdam, from other Dutch universities and from abroad, plus students and friends

contributed brief essays (and one poem) that dealt with the themes that had been prominent during her academic life. They focused on people who are excluded or marginalised, because of their age, their illness, their 'madness' or because they are living in violent circumstances. Other contributions were about people who are oppressed because they do not fit in the dominant discourse: people with HIV/AIDS, victims of (sexual) violence, refugees and migrants.

The title of the book 'Theory and Action', was the name of a famous core module that Els taught in the Master's of Medical Anthropology and Sociology. In one of her papers she stressed that theory and action are closely connected in medical anthropology. "Theory helps us to bear our ignorance of facts," she quoted George Santayana. Facts, she continued, acquire their meaning from what people do to them, in this case anthropologists and the people they are working with. Theory provides a way of finding pertinent meanings and making intelligent interpretations that open the door to relevant action. She then cited the famous line from Kurt Lewin that there is nothing so practical as a good theory. A good theory is practical because it enhances understanding and produces the questions that really matter in medical anthropological research. In her module, Els discussed with the students that problems of ill-health and suffering should be regarded in their historical, political and economic contexts and how larger social and political forces shape relations and actions and cultural imagination at the local level. The necessary – but often difficult – cooperation between anthropology and health workers received special attention. Questions that were addressed during the course included: Why do we need theory? Which theories are relevant? How can we link macro, meso en micro theories with practical work?

'Theory and Action' constitutes both medical anthropology's ambition and its weakness. The frequent criticism that medical anthropology receives from those who work in the heat of the day confirms that, unfortunately, much academic work remains largely or totally useless to 'actors' in health care. Nearly every contributor in the book struggled in one way or the other with this dilemma and with the challenge of proving the practical relevance of theory.

When her condition became critical, we decided to tell her about the book and gave her the list of authors and the titles of their contributions. She was overwhelmed and deeply moved when she saw the list of so many friends. She gave us one of her paintings for the cover of the book and allowed us to include one of her last essays that dealt with her own illness and the way people express

their connectedness in times of suffering and uncertainty. Four weeks later we brought the book. I held a short speech and she responded directly and with humour. She was almost too weak to open the paper wrapped around the book. We drank a glass of wine and had a lovely lunch while she observed us from the sofa. She read the essays and reacted personally to many of the authors. Ten days later she died. On the 9th February we said farewell to her in a ceremony full of music and words of comfort.

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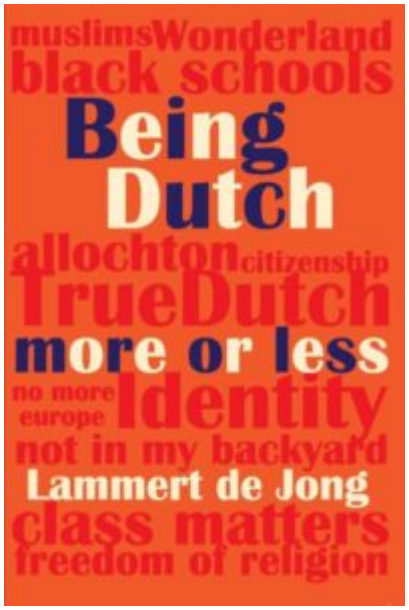
# The Dutch Black School: They Are

# Not Us




*Lammert de Jong – Being Dutch. More or less. In a comparative Perspective of USA and Caribbean Practices Rozenberg Publishers 2010. ISBN 978 90 3610 210 0 – The complete book will be online soon.*

*'An Inconvenient Truth'*
In the Netherlands, 'black' is *not* black; it is 'non-western', including Moroccan, Turkish, and people of Caribbean origin, lumped together as allochtons. In government statistics, schools with more than 70% allochton pupils are generally classified as a black school; schools with less than 20% allochton pupils are graded as white. The *black school concept* is also used in relation to the surrounding neighborhood. Schools with more pupils of non-western origin than expected in view of the composition of the neighborhood are labeled blacker or, in the case of an over-representation of white pupils, whiter. A deviation of 20% or more between neighborhood and school population classifies a school as *too white or too black* (Forum, 2007). The number of primary schools with more than 70% allochton pupils is increasing; in Dutch nomenclature: the schools are becoming blacker.

The *Dutch black* school is a perfidious contraption that locks in children of non-western origin, while its black label flags an underlying *apartheid syndrome* to underscore for the *True Dutch* – intentionally or not – how different these allochtons are. Yet the black school touches an open nerve in the Netherlands, a

sensitive reality that surpasses its statistical definition. On the one hand the black school reeks of *apartheid*, which the Dutch so bravely contest when occurring elsewhere in the world. On the other hand the *True Dutch* are well aware that their entitlement and unencumbered access to white schools is at stake when school *segregation* is tackled in earnest. So far Dutch counteraction is limited to research and some experimental desegregation projects.

The Dutch black school is embedded in the particular Dutch school system that funds public-secular as well as private-denominational schools. Once, the Dutch school system was driven by the accommodation of different beliefs. On the strength of their belief – church-religion or secular ideology – parents wanted a school for their children that adhered to the values, doctrines, and rules of their faith, and paid for by the state. *[Note: In 2009 the Netherlands' Council of State pointed out that publicly financed orthodox religion-based schools may refuse teachers who identify with a particular gay life style. The fact that a teacher is gay is not sufficient to deny a position, but if he or she is in a same sex relation and married in church or city hall, that may suffice, as such contravenes the orthodox rule that marriage is a holy sacrament between one man and one woman]*

Denominational and non-religious schools emphasized particularity, a distinctiveness that corresponded with religious doctrines or ideological orientations. The principle of *Freedom of Education* (Onderwijsvrijheid) is enshrined in the Netherlands Constitution, art. 23. Over the years parents have come to believe that they are entitled to choose a specific school for their children, which is a travesty of the freedom to choose a particular type of school, based on denominational or secular definition.

Dutch politics wavers when coming to grips with the effects the black school brings – quite literally – home. Most parents don't set out intending to discriminate, which makes a noble difference, and legally enforced segregation is not on the books. Nonetheless a segregated white-black educational system has become a reality, with most True Dutch children in better schools and having better school careers, and children of allochtons at the other end. And that with long lasting effects after the school years have come to an end. This type of school segregation stigmatizes New Dutch children for life, while reinforcing an allochton footprint that will divide the nation for years to come. Although most political parties assert that integration is the major social issue of our time, they

fail to confront the black school with a sense of urgency. Dutch politics still has to acknowledge that the black school emblematizes the allochton population in the Netherlands with an explicit signature: *They are not Us.*

Black schools are a common feature in most major Dutch cities. So far the black school does not stand out in Dutch politics as a problem that must be solved urgently by law, regulation or in the courts. The black school seems more of an inconvenient truth than a critical social or political issue. To an outsider this must be surprising, given that the Netherlands is known for its rock-solid liberal reputation. How come then that the Netherlands has become a segregated nation? And do they discriminate against people of color? Do the Dutch not know how to handle the ethnic complexities of today's multi-cultural society? Or is it a lack of compassion for those who do not belong to the white Dutch tribe: *Discrimination or not, my children first*. Or is it merely a matter of social-economic stratification, a distinction between advantaged and disadvantaged children, so that the Dutch black school is just a *myth* (Vink, 2010)?

*The Dutch Black School*

The Dutch black school has come into existence at the intersection between non-western immigration and the particular Dutch history of a nation that until the 1950s was separated by religion and ideology. The Dutch were used to the idea of organizing themselves along the lines of church religion and secular ideology, in schools, politics, libraries, and on the social parcourse. This divide partitioned marriage and friendship, sports and universities, and shopping for groceries, milk and meat. So when immigrants flocked into the Netherlands and concentrated in certain neighborhoods, thus becoming physically separated from the True Dutch, this division fitted into a historic pattern of a segregated nation.

The immigrants were administratively grouped together as allochtons whose children went to black schools.*[Note: According to the Netherlands Statistitical Office, Japanese and Indonesian immigrants are classified as western-allochton because of their social-economic and social cultural position. Japanese immigrants and their families are defined as economically incorporated, Indonesian immigrants are mostly born in the Dutch East Indies, which became independent in 1949]*

School segregation was already mentioned in 1971, especially with regard to

immigrants from Suriname (Karsten, 2005). Most of the immigrants from Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles are classified as racially black. Concentrations of Surinamese immigrants gradually changed the character of the white neighborhood schools into black schools. Where guest workers settled, schools in their neighborhood became populated with children of Moroccan and Turkish origin. The idea of particular schools for foreign children who eventually would be returning home to Morocco and Turkey (but did not) was not too farfetched. These children had different educational needs, which could be best addressed by schools that also taught the language of origin, though only a few hours per week. At a later stage Muslim schools were established as a logical extension of the Dutch particularistic school system. Occasionally these Muslim schools were challenged as holdouts of backwardness, or not in line with the historic Christian-Judeo cultural signature of the Dutch nation, but overall these schools fitted the Dutch concept that religion merited a particular school, paid for by the state. The concept black school covered all these varieties in school population, which became a distinctive category for schools with a majority of pupils of non-western origin, irrespective of its racial make-up. The use of a black label simplified a more detailed allochton classification. Black is not just a word; it comes with gargantuan amounts of racist baggage, which is included in the True Dutch perception of these schools. White parents do not send their children to such schools, however liberal minded they might otherwise be.

*School segregation in Amsterdam (DOS, 2008)*
*Many children in Amsterdam attend white or black schools. A study 'Segregation in Primary Education in 2008 in Amsterdam' comprised 203 schools of which 86 are black (over 70% allochtons) and 31 white (less than 20 % allochton); 86 schools have a balanced ethnic composition. So over half of all primary schools are either white or black*.[Note: Zwarte scholen steeds zwarter. In: Trouw, 19 July 2007] *Against the background of the composition of the neighborhood population, 29 schools are too black and 31 too white, calculated on a deviation of 20 % or more. When counting pupils, 11% of a total of almost 60,000 attend a 'too black' school and 9% a 'too white' school. 'Too black' schools count on average 222 pupils, which is less than 'too white' schools (311). This study points out that segregation also exists in terms of schools being overcrowded with children whose parents have little education, and schools where such children are few.*

*School segregation follows residential segregation, but is reinforced by parental*

*choice. The Amsterdam study indicates that many children attend schools outside their own neighborhood: 43%, while 57% attend schools in the neighbourhood. Children – black and white – from relatively black neighborhoods, who are going to school elsewhere, attend more often a white school than would have been the case if they had attended school in their residential neighborhood. The difference for white children is 62 against 26%; for black children 17 against 5%, which indicates that parental choice goes for white. That parental choice favors white is also shown in the choice of a school that is further away than three other schools, and is at the same time whiter than those neighborhood schools: 40% of the white parents choose the whiter schools, and 14% of the allochton parents. These parents do not mind their children biking or walking an extra mile to get to a relatively whiter school.*

*What's Wrong with the Black School?*

Is the black school really that bad? Doesn't the black school perfectly fit into the Netherlands' live and let live tradition? Are black schools a form of discrimination? In quite a number of cities, a black school in a predominantly allochton neighborhood is not perceived as a problem. School governors do not feel pressured to take action, as such schools are a reflection of the (allochton) neighborhood (Forum, 2007, 18). As long as the school population is in line with the ethnic composition of the neighborhood, the composition is attributed to residential segregation, which is beyond the school governors' control. This black school is considered inevitable and a priori fated not to become desegregated. A black school in an allochton neighborhood is 'at home' as it were, and segregation is not judged to be an issue.

This calculation is disingenuous, as it does not acknowledge the double bind of these children, living in a segregated allochton neighborhood and attending a black school. Residential allochton segregation is topped with black school segregation. The double bind segregation of school and neighborhood is generally overlooked. An exception was an advisory council on Integration and Diversity in Amsterdam that condemned all black school segregation, also the black school in the black neighborhood, because of its adverse effects on the development of common Dutch citizenship (Adviesraad, 2009).

Assuming that the black school cannot be eradicated, perhaps this school should be accepted as such, and be dealt with realistically. Doubt is cast on the received opinion that black schools obstruct social-cultural integration and citizenship

participation. Furthermore the practicality of reducing high concentrations of underachievers in allochton neighborhoods is questioned. *'Making the best'* of the *black* school is put forward as a realistic alternative. Specific support programs for black schools must be developed (Karsten, 2007, 19). Additional programs and specific efforts must elevate the black school. Provided that pupils get the same opportunities as children at other schools, the black school should not be considered a problem per se. Black schools must be reformed when they are stagnant schools which do not serve their students upward social mobility (Gramberg, 2005, 189). According to this reformist view, separate but equal is the next-best thing for educating allochtons to proper Dutch levels, a reality that must be accepted. Considering all impediments to a better integrated school system, the black school must become an end in itself, something to be accepted, and where necessary, improved. In the USA the case of the black school has been turned upside down. Movements of *Black Power* and *Black is Beautiful* have encouraged African-Americans to endorse black school segregation, as legal action had for decades not succeeded to end school *segregation*. In the slipstream of this separatist argument, integration of allochtons by means of school desegregation is no longer seen as a feasible option (Karsten, 2007, 19).

Obviously, *black* schools in the Netherlands have created an issue that must be dealt with, if only by listening to the plenitude of statements on most political platforms: we oppose school segregation, and we oppose the black school. But it seems that, first of all, a multitude of research projects must be undertaken before the problem can be outlined in full. Too white or too black schools are focused on as a problem that can possibly be tackled by manipulating registration and reigning in parental choice. Research is called for to determine the black school plusses and minuses; the effects of the black school. On social integration, and society in general; on immigrants' social-economic advancement and mobilization; children's educational success or failure; and civic participation of the allochton in adult years. It seems that research is called for as a way out of a problem that a priori is deemed intractable, because all parties realize that when white parents have a choice, they do not send their children to black schools, nor do they allow too many allochton kids into the school of their choice. Studies from both the USA and around the world have shown that parental choice often leads to more segregated schools: 'Unless policy makers actively intervene in the choice process, parental choice of school is very likely to make schools more segregated than they would otherwise be' (Fiske & Ladd, 2009, 3-5).

*Class Matters-Classmates Count (Paulle)*

Efforts have been made to take the black denomination out of the black school. From that angle the question is raised whether it is strategically right to focus on the black school, as race (or ethnicity) is not the principal denominator of educational failure or success. Doesn't the social-economic status (SES) of parents correlate more strongly with the school scores of their children? In a study of two schools, one in the Bronx, NY, and one in the Bijlmer, Amsterdam, Bowen Paulle quotes a generally respected research finding: '*Educational research suggests that the basic damage inflicted by segregated education comes not from racial concentration but from concentration of children from poor families*' (Paulle, 2005, 276). Pupils from disadvantaged milieus are more sensitive to the quality of teaching. He points to the success of experiments with economic desegregation programs: schools statistically dominated (70% or more) by youth from middle- or high income families can successfully absorb youth from low-income families (Paulle, 2005, 277). Yet this self-evident argument needs further confirmation. The right proportional mix is still a subject of research and debate: what is the actual tipping point for high SES parents, and what is the turning point in absorbing disadvantaged children in a school dominated by advantaged children? These experiments have built a strong case for mixing school populations according to parental SES in a win-win proportion, yet it does not exonerate the existence of the black school.

The *black* denomination is also taken out to explain differences in school careers of allochton children. *Allochton* children are especially disadvantaged when being tested for further education. In the Netherlands parents are counseled early – at a child's age of 11, about follow-up education, the options being various types of high school, which lead to university education, or a range vocational training alternatives. At this age, many allochton children lag behind *True Dutch* pupils because of a language disadvantage, due to the language of origin often being still spoken at home. They tend to be steered toward vocational training, based on non-biased scores, but perhaps also on a teacher's subtle bias that blacks tend to fail academic education. Quite a number of these students do reach university level, but only after having made a detour of several years on vocational and high school training circuits. This has caused a debate on postponing the age of decision on a child's high school academic or vocational training options, especially in view of the detour black children are making. Though the Dutch may be relieved that also in this case ethnicity can be taken out of the black school,

the black school is still there, in actual reality and very much so as a stark image in the Dutch mind, especially because the black school legitimizes *True Dutch* entitlement to white schools.

Dismantling the black school by social-economic stratification and the effects of early decision on secondary education both serve Dutch enlightenment. Social-economic stratification is of course not as bad as a simmering ethnic taboo that allochtons are underachievers from birth, justifying white flight and so creating the black school. Others argue that when segregation is exclusively defined as a black-white issue, the problem of white underachievers in the rural areas is overlooked; the big-city bias of ethnic *segregation* had created a blind spot for white underachievers (WRR, 2009, 162). The SES argument relieves Dutch uneasiness about the black school, because the high rates of underachievement are not a black issue anymore but rather an issue of a forgotten underclass, which includes whites as well. The changeover from black to social-economic class was welcomed as a clearance from the probability that Dutch school particularity had lubricated racial discrimination and ethnic segregation. What a relief. What good news exclaimed Wouter Bos, the labor party leader, when hearing about the near perfect exchange rate between black and underclass scores.*[ Note: Aleid Truijens, Klasssen met louter dezelfde kindertjes. In: De Volkskrant, 27 January 2009]* He may have thought that having an underclass is something to be sorry for, but certainly not as annoying as white-black apartheid. It just ain't that easy.

The black school denomination is whitewashed by research indicating that class matters in explaining achievement scores. Yet this does not change the fact that differences of underachievement continue to be registered in terms of autochthon and allochton scores. The drop-out rates in vocational training schools during 2006-2007 – 27.5% for autochthons, and 50.1% for *allochtons* – testify to a divided reality that, according to Dutch parlance, is a black school issue (WRR, 2009, 27). Given the reality of the black school in Dutch politics, cities, media, conversation and statistics, it is cynical to argue that a black school does not matter much, because SES and class matter more. This class difference does not make the black school disappear from the parental radar that is set to be sensitive for color. Besides, for the most part SES and non-western origin (if you want, race) walk hand in hand in Dutch society (DOS, 2008, 22*).[Note: It is often assumed that allochton children are equally disadvantaged in terms of the low level education of their parents. Amsterdam's segregation study indicates that allochton children*

*vary in being disadvantaged. Half of the Surinamse children (54%) and 62% of the Antilleans are educationally disadvantaged while much more Turkish and Moroccan children are disadvantaged (85 and 86%) (DOS, 2008, 22)]*

The Dutch black school collects children of an underclass, mainly of non-western origin or, according to a fashionable non-class jargon, disadvantaged youth. Yet some critics believe that since the breakdown of bloc-based segregation Dutch society is classless, and its educational system as well.*[Note: Frans Verhagen, De eerste Italianen van Amerika. 'Hun geloof is vreemd en bedreigend.' In: De Groene Amsterdammer, 6 June, 2009]*
Obviously the very existence of the Dutch black school contradicts the assumption of a classless *Dutch Wonderland*.

*Awkward Family Ties*
The *Dutch black school*, and its underlying residential segregation, inevitably reminds one of *racial discrimination* elsewhere, in South reason, the Dutch black school is whitewashed by SES and cultural disadvantage, and shrouded in black power mystification. In these countries, whites and blacks were kept apart, based on the believed superiority of white over black. Separate educational structures were to safeguard the superiority of the white race: *slegs vir blanke, or whites only.* South Africa's apartheid came to an end in 1994 when the first elections with universal suffrage were held. The USA's Supreme Court ruled in 1954 against the separate but equal doctrine. Institutionalized and legally enforced separation of white and black education was outlawed. Yet in 1957 the Arkansas Governor called in the National Guard to prevent a group of African-American high schools students to enter the white Central High School in Little Rock: '*Blood will run in the streets if Negro pupils should attempt [to enter] Central High School*' (Ogden, 2008). The struggle of the Little Rock Nine was caught in stark pictures of white hatred and newspaper headlines all over the world. And so was Governor George C. Wallace of Alabama in 1963 when he announced that he would defy the federal court order and block the door of the university's main building to keep the black students out. Eventually President John F. Kennedy managed to resolve the ominous standoff without bloodshed.*[Note: Fred Kaplan, When the Kennedys took on Wallace over Integration. About the television documentary (1963) "Crisis: Behind a President's Commitment." In: The New York Times, 18 January 2009. ]*

The Supreme Court ruling did not make the black school disappear, nor did it

make much difference to the inferior quality of *black* schools. But the USA upholds the principle that separate but equal is against the law. Transgressions are continuously fought out in court to determine the constitutional options and limits of (affirmative) action to further desegregation.

White hatred and staunch segregationists are rarely to be found among the Dutch. These extreme phenomena are also petering out in the USA; overt bigotry has become risky and unpopular: 'today most racial conflicts involve ambiguous facts and inscrutable motivations' (Ford, 2008, 263). Even so, Richard Ford maintains: 'Today's racial injustices are, in many ways, as severe as ever. But these injustices now stem from isolation, poverty, and lack of socialization as much as from intentional discrimination or racism' (Ford, 2008, 307). Though the Dutch black school does not fit the historical origin and the exact definitions of school segregation in the USA, quite a few characteristics overlap. The vernacular of Dutch school segregation is framed in ethnic and racial definitions.

Most True Dutch parents are liberal enough that they do not mind allochton children in a white school, as long as it remains a white school. After all, a bit of color adds an interesting touch to a cosmopolitan Dutch self-image. But not too many allochtons should have this privilege. White parents do not want their children in black schools, for sure. Black schools are seen as inferior to white schools; they have become distinctly separate institutions, which offer inferior school careers when compared to white schools. Even when black is taken out of the equation by class and cultural disadvantage, the black school remains firmly rooted in the actuality of Dutch education.

The decisive argument against the black school is not that it scores relatively low on educational benchmarks – an occasional white school may score even lower, but that it is a particular school populated by children of non-western origin, being separated from their white compatriots. The *black* school constitutes de facto a new Dutch reality: a particular school for Dutch children because of their non-western origin, and with a second rate classification. Nomen est omen, the name says it all. The *apartheid* label does apply. In the end, True Dutch parents do not send their children to a black school if they can help it. *True Dutch* parents who insist on a white school for their children are exonerated from being xenophobic or racist; they simply look for what's best, and don't have the intention to discriminate. From their point of view this cannot be wrong.

*Particularistic Dutch School System*

In the Netherlands, a group of parents is free to establish a school where their children are educated in line with their religion or belief, to be funded with public monies. As such the Dutch school system is rather particular; it is based on intentional segregation according to privately held religious beliefs or secular orientations. As a result, there is no tradition of what in the U.S.A is called a 'common school' that serves the entire community and promotes a common sense of civic and other values (Fiske & Ladd, 2009, 8). The USA public school is a melting pot of differences with a communal public orientation. The concept public school as known in the USA does not make sense in the Netherlands. The USA public school fosters 'the foundation for good citizenship', which necessarily implies that public education is an instrument of public socialization to common values and a common national identity (Ford, 2008, 206). Americans are free to send their children to private schools, for which they pay themselves. A small minority of private schools are prestigious non-religious institutions, but the vast majority of them are operated by religious organizations, predominantly Roman Catholic, but also Jewish and others. A combination of parents, private and religious institutions, funds these schools, while government finances the public schools. Only 11.5 % of all pupils in primary and high school attend private schools. Income plays a role of course, but also 80 % of the children of families with an income of > $ 75,000 per year attends a public school (Council for American Private Education*).[Note: Council for American Private Education: http://capenet.org/facts.html ]* The British public school is a different species going back centuries, where admission was restricted for children from a particular aristocratic class. Nowadays the term refers to fee-charging independent secondary schools.

In the Netherlands, the government funds almost all schools, also denominational schools which would be labeled private schools in the USA. The Dutch *Freedom of Education* induced a widely held belief that parents are free to choose the school they want for their children; this has become identified as a constitutional right. Parents can chose schools of a particular religious denomination (Roman Catholic, Protestant, Christian, Jewish, Muslim) (*bijzondere scholen)*, or secular schools (*openbare scholen*), which do not claim a particular religious affiliation. All schools have to meet centrally set educational standards and goals. They are supervised by the Inspectorate of the Ministry of Education, and financed out of public funds. Only a few schools are privately funded. What stands out is that

denominational schools enjoy full financial support from the state. This has not always been the case.

The Education Act of 1878 reflected the established practice of the day: not one penny of public aid to denominational private schools (Lijphart, 1975, 106). In the second half of the 19th Century, more than three quarter of all pupils attended public (non-denominational) elementary schools, which were paid for by the state. One century later, in 1957, the situation was completely reversed. Only 28 % still attended public-secular schools (non-denominational) and 72 % were in private-denominational schools (Lijphart, 1975, 52). In the second half of the 20th Century, these figures have not changed much. In 2006 31 % attended public-secular schools and 69 % private-denominational schools; 34 % Catholic; 24 % Protestant; and the remaining 11 % include Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Evangelical, Catholic-Protestant-Combined schools.*[Note: Trends leerlingen aantallen 2002-2006. Bron cijfers: Cfi/OCW]* All these schools are financed with public monies.

A decisive moment came at the end of the 19th Century when the ruling political parties recognized that the unequal financial treatment of private-denominational schools and public-secular schools fundamentally divided the Dutch nation. Around 1900 both the Catholics and the Protestants had grown into strong blocs, each with a principled desire to have their own school financed by the state. The State's regents could no longer overlook these aspirations, all the more so as demands for universal suffrage had become a burning issue as well. Especially the Protestants' kleine luyden (little people) acquired strong leadership demanding that also their schools must be financed out of public funds. Voting rights were part of the power struggle in which the kleyne luyden also triumphed. The first elections under universal suffrage (according to those days: male only) were held in 1918. Just before, in 1917, the Dutch legislature enacted a law that guaranteed government funding (Lijphart, 1975, 110).

*all elementary schools, public and private, were to get the same financial assistance from the government in proportion to their enrollments.*

The equal financial provision by central government guaranteed the schools an even financial foundation irrespective of denomination, or locality – rich or poor – and so added real value to the doctrine that all men are created equal. Rather interestingly it was assumed that this financial equality would help to consolidate

the cultural unity of the nation.*[Note: A proposal to decentralize the financing of schools to municipal and provincial authorities was contested in 2008 for this reason. Jaap Dronkers, Zo verbrokkelt Nederland als cultuureenheid. In: De Volkskrant, 9 December 2008 ]* While in the USA the public school was assigned the task of uniting the nation, in the Netherlands equal funding for public-secular and private-denominational schools had to serve the same purpose. Ever since, the parents' freedom to choose a school has become carved in stone in Dutch national consensus. That is, until the Dutch Muslim community claimed this freedom to set up Muslim schools.

In the Netherlands parents do not have to balance their choice by cost considerations; they can simply opt for what they think is best. From an American point of view, such freedom sounds too good to be true. In the USA private schools are not financed by the state but out of the parents' pockets; and they are very expensive.[*Note:* Charter *schools are a recent phenomenon in the USA, and can best be defined as a hybrid structure of a publicly financed school – often initiated by philanthropic monies – that is independently operated on a specific charter. Examples include schools dedicated to Arabic language and culture, or those dedicated to the Hebrew language (e.g. the Hebrew Language Academy Charter School]* No wonder that the USA Brookings Institution came to visit the Netherlands to find out how this freedom works. Could it be of use across the Atlantic? Alas, the USA concept of separation of church and state forbids the use of public monies for religious causes, although there are numerous exceptions.

School choice based on church religion lost its momentum after the strong wave of secularization passed through the Netherlands. Likewise ideological contestants such as socialism and liberalism had lost much of their imaginative hold by the end of the 20th Century. The formative and behavioral appeal of church-religion and ideology no longer suits the individualized mind. In the meantime, specific pedagogical platforms, also called signatures, such as Dalton, Montessori, Jena, and Waldorf School (Vrije School), have become strong competitive factors in determining parental choice. Although Protestant and Catholic families are still likely to enroll their child in a school with the corresponding religious orientation, a recent study shows that 29 % of Protestants and 23 % of Catholics attend either a non-religious school or a school of another religious persuasion (Fiske & Ladd, 2009, 9). For many parents school choice is no longer determined by church religion or ideology; yet the particularistic school

system remains in place, and conveniently accommodated a new phenomenon, the *black* school, which had come into being by default of the *True Dutch* white choice.

*Freedom of Education's Travesty*

The principle of *Freedom of Education* is meant to guarantee that education is provided and can be accessed according to one's belief (*overtuiging*; Government Paper, 2008, 5). Nowadays *Freedom of Education* has been manipulated to become a choice that takes into account a school's excellence, reputation, and ethnic composition (black or white) as well. Religion lost much of its impact with regards to the choice of a school. Perhaps with the exception of some Jewish, Hindu and Muslim parents, parents now balance their choices between a school's denomination, proximity, ranking and status, and color Parents generally prefer the best school, which must also be within close range of their residence. These days the choice of a particular school has for many parents little to do with its denominational or secular definition.

Residential patterns and parental school choice determine school segregation. When residential patterns are segregated the schools become segregated: white neighborhoods produce white schools, allochton neighborhoods *black* schools. But parents are not inhibited from looking over the neighborhood boundaries.

White parents do not normally send their children to a black school, as their choice for a white school is a matter of course (with a few exceptions). Not only because of the assumed better education but even more so with regards to school culture and after-school contacts. A black school is perceived to be not as liberal as a white school, especially in case of a dominant Muslim presence. These parents perceive a miss-match between school and home (Karsten, 2005). They contend that white children in a black school have difficulty making after-school friendships. When such white parents live in a predominantly black neighborhood, they look elsewhere, or they move home and hearth to find a white school that fits their aims. This is known as *white flight*. However, a grey flight is formed by allochtons who have progressed on the social-economic status (SES) ladder, and opt for white schools as well, often in suburbia.

White schools are sought after, and thus become overbooked and tend to expand.

On average, half of the white pupils attend a school *outside* their own neighborhood, while 80% of the allochton children are at a school within their neighborhood. Allochton parents are less inclined to travel an extra mile to the

school of their preference than white parents. If *allochton* parents prefer a white school, they must compete with white parents. At the same time, Muslim parents may prefer a Muslim or another black school, as they perceive white schools out of step with the traditional upbringing they hold dear. For them, white schools are too liberal.

Parents who insist on free school choice cling to the constitutional provision of *Freedom of Education* as a roadblock against regulating school admission. Though parents' school preference may be directed by a consumer mindset to pick the best school, the *Freedom of Education* still serves as a strong rallying principle. An improbable alliance of disparate activists has gained leverage to block school desegregation, not bonded by principle or intention but by happenstance. Parents that are directed by denominational-choice found a partner in large numbers of enlightened best-school-choice parents to safeguard a principled *Freedom of Education*. Best-school-choice parents now include a rising number of allochton parents who do not want their children in an inferior black school. This rather respectable combination happened to connect with an increasing number of equally principled parents who pursue a True Dutch cause that forbids their children to be mixed with allochton kids: *Not In My Backyard (NIMBY).* This alliance of motley adversaries considers desegregation an infringement upon the *True Dutch* right to *Freedom of Education*, based on denomination, best-school, and NIMBY preferences. Invoking a hard won constitutional right of *Freedom of Education* of more than a century old, this alliance is hard to beat notwithstanding the fact that many of these crusaders harbor a motivation that is irrelevant to the constitutional clause of *Freedom of Education.*

Dutch media have finally begun to picture the black school as an *integration* problem. But as long as the extent of the Dutch principle of *Freedom of Education* is not critically questioned in parliament and courts, all attempts to counter segregation are bound to remain tokens of goodwill without real impact. What are the limitations of this *freedom*? Does this freedom include a choice for a *specific* school, as such has become received opinion and customary practice?

Or is a parent's choice limited to a type of school in terms of religious and ideological orientation? Can this *freedom* be controlled by *positive discrimination* or *affirmative action* to secure equal rights of children who otherwise would not stand a chance? These questions must be raised before they can be answered.

Benevolent good-will initiatives are fine, but remain doomed without national, political and legal backing. The Netherlands' minister for Integration absolves himself of the responsibility for the ever-deepening process of school segregation by leaving the problem to municipalities, parents and school boards to deal with, and sits back in anticipation of the outcomes of a few goodwill pilots (Integration Brief, 2009, 22-23). Apparently the black school is too sensitive an issue to be tackled by national politics and parliamentary action. Exactly for this reason, it cannot be solved locally. The stakes are too high for *True Dutch* parents to lose their right of school choice while *Allochton Power* to change this course has yet to be mobilized.

*Regulating Parental Choice?*

Changes in the playing field are beginning to desecrate the sanctity of parental school choice as an absolute right. Against the backdrop of deepening ethnic school segregation, school choice has become a contentious issue. Critics point out that parental choice has all along been conditioned by availability, zoning of school catchment areas and the discretionary powers of school authorities.

Parental choice has never meant that parents could pick a *specific* school. If schools are full, then parents must look elsewhere. However, the way the system was organized allowed savvy parents to jump the queue, suggesting that actually the parents called the shots. Growing concerns about the divide between white and black schools in the Netherlands are now causing some people to call for a re-interpretation of *Freedom of Education*. A tentative critic merely suggests that a critical debate on the Dutch particular education system must continue (Scheffer, 2007, 422). A more imaginative approach is proposed by an expert on educational inequality in the Netherlands, who recommends a distribution of pupils based on an all encompassing score system for each local authority (municipality, city), allowing children from lower SES parents to register at a good school. Parental preference does still count but is balanced by a range of other scores and considerations (Dronkers, 2007, 76). An interesting twist in the logic of parental choice is that school segregation actually limits the choice of parents; especially those who do not want their children to attend a white or a black school. These parents prefer the blessings of mixed schools so that their children become aware and accustomed to the habitat of the Dutch multicultural society; a kind of multicultural citizenship training: 'more mixed schools, more choice' (Adviesraad, 2009).

There is even a suggestion that the time has come to replace the Dutch particular *Freedom of Education* system with a general structure which aims at public education for all, while allowing latitude for cultural and religious diversity (Pels, 2008, 170). Ahmed Marcouch, a prominent politician, and ex-mayor of Slotervaart, one of Amsterdam's Burroughs, Muslim, of Moroccan origin, supports an overhaul of the system: 'I believe that Muslims should integrate along with their religious identity. We must create Dutch Muslims. You can't just put children from religious families into separate Muslim schools. That adds to segregation. By teaching different religions in public schools, you encourage children to think critically.' *[Note: Ian Buruma, Letter from Amsterdam. Parade's End. Dutch liberals get tough, pp. 36-41. In: The New Yorker, December 7, 2009]* Such a radical departure from Dutch *particularity* however would entail for a politician – even in these secular times – a guaranteed electoral downfall.

Kees Schuyt, an esteemed sociology professor, questions whether the particularity of Muslim schools must be encouraged in view of the demands of a multicultural society: *'One can argue that pupils from the first school day must be confronted with each other's different religion and cultural behavior*' (Schuyt, 2009, 123; Translation mine). However, Schuyt warns, this common school may turn out to be a rough encounter with discrimination and humiliation in classroom and schoolyard. So it may be better to let Muslim children grow up in a protected school environment, namely a Muslim school that scores high on good teaching and postpones the confrontation with a tough outside world to a later age, similar to the way Roman Catholics and Protestants operated. He emphasizes that Muslim schools are in line with the Dutch segregated school system, and that blocking them would be extremely hypocritical. Yet in the end Schuyt doubts whether the present Muslim schools meet the terms of educating children to become free citizens (burghers) in a modern society, just as some other religion-based schools fail to do (Schuyt, 2009, 124). As late as 2010 orthodox protestant schools claim the right to keep their schools free from homosexual teachers and students who live by their sexual identity. Schuyt's argument comes close to a declaration that the Dutch particular school system does not fit the demands of a modern multicultural society, which is held together by a commitment to democracy, personal freedom and the rule of law.

The pressure is mounting to combat school segregation by legislation. At first, in 2009, only one of the political parties publicly recommended legislation to force

schools mixing their population.*[Note: Agnes Kant & Sadet Karabulut, Bevecht Segregatie. In: De Volkskrant, 3 October 2009]* A few months later, the governing socialist party (PvdA) also called for legislation to mix schools according to high and low parental SES.*[Note: PvdA: Wet tegen segregatie onderwijs. In: de Volkskrant, 19 January 2010*]
These political suggestions were answered in Parliament by a Christian-Democrat Pavlov reaction, throwing together all possible disagreements to forestall hands-on action: No way! Parents won't support this mixing […] The effect of mixing white and black schools is not evident: the opinion is still out […] A child's school success is determined by neighborhood, parents' education and income […] A black school is not per se a bad school, nor a white school per se a good school […] Instead of mixing schools, the quality of schools must be raised […] The preliminary outcome of pilot-projects looks promising.*[Note: CDA: mix zwart/witte scholen vrijwillig. In: NRC, 21 January 2010]*

This reaction makes a travesty of the Netherlands' *Freedom of Education*. Knowing that school segregation deepens, whether defined by white/black color, high/low class parents, or advantaged/disadvantaged youth, the problem is obfuscated to forestall regulatory change. Foreign experts conclude that the segregation of disadvantaged immigrant pupils in the four major Dutch cities exceeds that of black students in most major American cities: 80 % of ethnic non-white Dutch students attend a black school, while in the USA 50 % of non-white students attend a black school. They are pessimistic about change: 'Thus any efforts to reduce segregation will have to reflect the voluntary commitment of a substantial number of stakeholders for whom private interests in maintaining the status quo may well exceed the public benefit to them of reducing segregation' (Fiske & Ladd, 2009, 25-32).

*Extras, Goodwill and Projects*
Additional support, private goodwill and benevolent activism help to soften the edges of school segregation. Schools receive extra money for catching-up purposes. Until recently the allocation of a school's budget was apportioned on the basis of a pupil's origin and the level of education of parents: 1.0 for autochthon pupils at the right level, 1.25 for autochthon pupils with parents' of a low education level, and 1.9 for allochton pupils. In 2006/07 the ethnic component was abandoned and since then only the level of education of parents defines the number of disadvantaged pupils (*achterstandsleerlingen*), irrespective of their

origin. The net result of this change was that the additional budget was spread thinner over the cohort of *allochton* pupils (Aboutaleb, 2005, 130). Yet a black school's extra budget allows for programs that aim specifically at allochton pupils, which naturally attract allochton parents. Notwithstanding this benevolent purpose, these subsidies in effect ease the way for even more segregation. Some have argued that extra finances should be poured into an integration budget that sets a premium on schools that have achieved a mixed pupil population.*[Note: Jan Marijnissen, Gemengde school bevordert integratie. In: Algemeen Dagblad, 23 December 2003. Weblog Jan Marijnissen]*

A variety of initiatives and agreements have spontaneously sprung up to contest school segregation. Numerous schools use double registers, which temporarily give priority to allochton pupils to a *too white* school and vice versa. A *too white* school will first admit *black* pupils if there is a *black* waiting list.[*Note: Dubbele wachtlijsten tegen zwarte scholen. In: Trouw, 23 november 2004]*

These double ethnic registers are contested – though not in court – as they supposedly disrespect the freedom of choice. *The Council for Education* and the *Commission for Equal Treatment* have spoken out against a distribution based on ethnicity, but support a distribution that aims at parental SES variance. In thoroughly segregated residential areas, a white-black pupil mix is not attempted. Instead *friendship schools* are formed to stimulate (mostly after-school) interaction between white and allochton pupils. Since 2006-2007 the Ministry of Education obliges an Agenda on Local Educational Affairs (*Lokaal Educatieve Agenda*), to spell out the action taken to counter segregation. These deliberations between school boards and municipal authorities are binding (*bindend; niet vrijblijvend*) but according to how the Dutch phrase these things, this binding does not mean a legal or moral obligation without any possibility of withdrawal or avoidance. What it boils down to is that the parties are obliged by law to report once a year what has been done about school desegregation. Reporting that nothing has been achieved, or even been undertaken, perfectly fulfills this obligation.

At the request of the four big cities, the Ministry of Education has given municipalities a helping hand by establishing an *Expertise Center for Mixed Schools* that provides assistance to pilot programs, publishes about trials and errors, and evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of actions taken (Kenniscentrum, 2008). This expertise center is an extension of the Ministry of

Education. At the end of 2010, reports of several pilot projects to combat school segregation, in total 12 municipalities, will be communicated to the Ministry.

An *Agreement* between the City of Amsterdam, Burroughs and School Boards to counter segregation is a case in point. The idea was a departure from idealistic white parents who register their children at a black school. In this *Agreement* the School Boards proposed that popular white schools, which had a waiting list, become mixed with more black students. Neighborhoods were chosen with schools that were too white and too black in comparison with the color composition of the population. In theory this color mismatch made a redistribution of pupils a possibility. The waiting list of the white school was forked into an individual registration, and a twinned registration – a combination of white and black pupils. At the moment of registration white parents who were accompanied by an allochton couple were given priority, which would result in a more mixed school population of the too white school.
The *Agreement* included a cap on school size to prevent that expanding white schools would attract white pupils from mixed schools. This *Agreement* had been almost three years in the making.
When *the Agreement* was signed, Amsterdam's Deputy for Education called this a historic moment.

The project failed before it even started. The white-black combos were criticized; instead combos of SES variations were proposed, as these would be more in tune with the latest academic results. The high correlation between these entries was deemed irrelevant, and the fact that SES would be more difficult to apply was ignored. Second thoughts sprung up about the political correctitude of the project: 'What's actually wrong with black schools?' Another complication was thrown in by questioning how to deal with brothers and sisters of those who are already at school? One of the initiators scornfully reported that the white Dutch elite idolizes Nelson Mandela, South Africa's anti-apartheid hero, while being persistent in placing their children in white schools, no apartheid questions asked.*[Note: Pieter Hilhorst, Apartheid. In: De Volkskrant, 17 December 2008]*
The Agreement was shelved and the historic moment forgotten. The *Agreement* did not include any instrument to enforce the agreement. A well-positioned initiative, which was highly publicized and backed by local authorities and school boards, came to naught because as it was lacking formal regulation to keep the parties on task.

Nijmegen, a medium size city, announced in February 2009 a new trial along somewhat different lines than the Amsterdam attempt. In order to pre-empt *white flight* from the inner city, children are obliged to enroll in neighborhood schools. On a preference list of 6 schools, parents may include schools outside the neighborhood. Only if a preferred school outside the neighborhood has vacancies, enrolment may be accorded. Parental preferences are played out against factors such as: the school of brothers-sisters, an equitable distribution of children from parents with little or no education, and a fixed enrolment number per school. Popular schools are not allowed to expand, as this would create a pull-away effect that blackens neighboring schools. Parental religion or political leanings are not factored in, nor a prefered educational platform. All parents receive a binding enrolment advice, which can be appealed and reconsidered by an administrative body. According to a municipal council member, the principle of Freedom of Education is fully respected, but 'full is full'.*[Note: Nijmegen zet het mes in witte en zwarte scholen. In: De Volkskrant, 11 February 2009]* Of course, others disagree.*[Note: Vrije schoolkeuze bevordert segregatie. In: De Volkskrant, 11 February 2009]*
Nijmegen's Deputy for Education expects that 95 % of the parental choice will be honored, that is one of the six schools on the preference list, which may not be exactly the first choice. The city and school boards are convinced that this project will hold out in court if challenged.

In Utrecht, one of the four big cities, parents and students opted for better schools outside the city of Utrecht, causing the inner city schools to deteriorate even further, and eventually to shut down.[*Note: "Dwang nodig bij schoolkeuze." In: De Volkskrant, 5 February 2009]* The problem was to stop the flight of the best segment of secondary education pupils, both autochthon and allochton, to schools in the surrounding municipalities. Provincial authorities pursued the city of Utrecht and the surrounding municipalities to come to an agreement on stopping this flight; to no avail. Utrecht's Deputy for Education complained to the Ministry of Education that school integration was sabotaged on several fronts: by schools, school boards, as well as parents.[*Note: Wethouder Utrecht: sommige scholen willen gewoon wit blijven.'Integratie op school gesaboteerd'. In: De Volkskrant, 29 September 2009]* The Deputy argued that voluntary agreements with school boards in the surrounding municipalities had not stopped the grey flight out of Utrecht, and pushed for central government intervention to come up with enforceable regulation.

Parental goodwill is not lacking, but is mostly incidental or unsubstantial, on paper only. Some politically correct white parents do purposely send their children to *black* schools and try to convince neighbors and friends to do so as well. A poll in a neighborhood with an equal share of autochthon and *allochton* children indicated that over 90 % of the parents preferred two mixed schools over one white and one *black* school. Segregation is generally deemed bad, and desegregation as something that must be pursued, but it is not felt as a personal issue when one's own children are involved. Very few feel a personal motivation to actually pursue desegregation (Karsten, 2005). In addition, enlightened white Dutch politicians set a poor example by not sending their children to black schools if they can help it. Why would they, as nobody questions a parental choice that aims at the betterment of their children? A conspiracy of silence seems to prevail in media and politics that a politician's parental white choice has nothing to do with school segregation. Politicians and media-makers generally do not differ in their parental choice.*[Note: The media silence about the Obamas' private school choice for their children after they moved to Washington is a telling mark, especially when compared to the media frenzy about their choice of a White House puppy]* And some racially black parents at the high end of the social-economic status (SES) distribution have stated that school choice is a very complex personal matter, which means that they either regret their choice for a black school, or have chosen differently.*[Note: Personal statement of a black father, with a PhD, and his wife, a prominent Dutch politician]*

Good intentions are not enough as long as the political will to change course is lacking. Regulating school enrolment in order to attain a mixed school with regards to parental SES or children's origin is only at an experimental stage. Although the Netherlands government declared in 2007 to impose a school registration policy (*aanmeldingsbeleid*), nothing has come about as yet. Without formal regulation most initiatives to seal loopholes used by savvy and creative parents fall by the wayside (Karsten, 2005). Apart from a few pilots and goodwill experiments, desegregation runs into a pro-choice wall, built upon the constitutional Dutch *Freedom of Education* and paid for by the state. Thus Dutch particularity is engraved in stone, one of the sacred cows of Dutch politics. A school board director stated that he would rather resign than initiate action to engineer a mixed school population (WRR, 2009, 251). Recommendations given to the Netherlands government on how to create mixed schools of various grades of (under-) achievers receive negative press. One editorial outlined how badly

underachievers must feel when they were going to be mixed with high achievers.*[Note: Een gunst is geen recht. In: NRC Handelsblad, editorial. 27 January 2009]* Does it really feel so much better in a black school? In *Today's Youth. One Year in a Black Class*, Kees Beekman, a teacher, depicts in detail how stigmatized these *allochton* children feel; they feel worthless and no good because they attend a school for *Dummies* (Beekman, 2006).

*Equal Rights, Integration and Diversity*

The Netherlands' rather recent experience with black school segregation and the experimental efforts to do something about it, inevitably invites a comparison with the USA's long history of principled school segregation, and equally principled desegregation. While in the Netherlands *Freedom of Education* set out the course, in the USA the Civil Rights Movement took on school desegregation as a major challenge, culminating in a range of unending USA court battles over equal rights, states rights, racial integration and ethnic difference.

The *Civil Rights Movement* in the USA in the 1960s testifies to the strength of civic activism to pursue codification of rights that were once denied. At that time, people were killed while securing civil and voting rights for African-Americans: *Civil Rights Act* (1964 and 1965), and the *Voting Rights Act* (1968). A long and bitter fight over equal education rights culminated in a legal victory in 1954. In a now famous case, *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka* (1954) the separate but equal doctrine of the segregationists in the Southern States was overturned. The Supreme Court decided that separate black schools, even when offering quality equal to white schools, trampled upon the principle of equality. The Court ruled that it was unconstitutional to institutionalize education along color lines: 'The unmistakable promise of Brown was that primary education could and should coax children away from the racial and ethnic solidarities of their parents and supplement those affiliations with a sense of common citizenship that could, at least occasionally transcend racial differences' (Ford, 2008, 306). The Brown case inspired African-Americans in the Southern states to demand their rights as they never had before, without waiting for lawsuits: 'Black college students began sitting in at drugstore lunch counters to demand service; Rosa Parks and countless others suffered hardship to protest the humiliation of being forced to sit in the back of the bus.' *[Note: Anthony Lewis, A New National Scripture. A literature professor analyses the origins and meanings of Martin Luther King's famous speech. By: Eric J. Sundquist, King's Dream, Yale University Press. In: The*

*New York Times Book Review, 18 January 2009]*

And yet, however victorious this outcome had been, the fight over the black school had just begun. Since the Supreme Court's decision, everything imaginable has been undertaken, either to keep desegregation in place, or to undo it. The boundaries of school districts have been manipulated in order to keep schools white. Elsewhere, courts have ordered busing to transport black children to white schools. In the face of unrelenting obstruction to desegregation, the Black Power movement came to the conclusion that black parents' best choice was a black school for their children.

Notwithstanding fierce opposition and confusing choices, institutional discrimination is not allowed. Legal codification, court orders and activists have changed the tide. Thompson Ford proudly summarizes the achievements in fighting discrimination (Ford, 2008, 27):

*Schools once accepted racial integration only under court order, the armed forces only under executive order, private enterprise only under congressional mandate. Now universities, the military, and private business combine forces to defend integration and race-conscious affirmative action. Officially sanctioned racist propaganda has been replaced by multicultural sensitivity training.*

Yet affirmative action has followed a twisted trajectory in the USA. Over a period of years affirmative action served different goals and used a variety of vehicles, some of which have been declared illegal; it is a policy with a history that is loaded with contest. The American civil rights movement initially argued that affirmative action must achieve racial integration, setting quota aside for African-American students in order to attain a racially mixed school or university population. America's Ivy League elite universities embraced racial affirmative action for a mixture of reasons. On the one hand, it was driven by idealism: 'it would be better for this diverse country if there were a diverse elite.' On the other hand, minority recruitment of the white Ivy League universities was based on more practical considerations. In order to control such a diverse country as the USA 'it would be better to socialize the best and brightest of the minorities and make them more like us.' *[Note: Helene Cooper, Meet the new elite, not like the old. In: The New York Times, 26 July 2009]*

Racial affirmative action caused many students, especially at primary and high school level, to travel larger distances than would have been the case when attending school in their white or black neighborhood. School busses and *busing*

became iconic and contested emblems of this way of integration. Eventually the highest USA court did not agree with racial quota. The court ruled that such would violate the equal rights of others, the rights of white children. Student assignments based on race could no longer be used to keep public schools from re-segregation after finally having achieved a measure of integration. In the end a most familiar civil rights concept of integration as racial balancing was rejected. Chief Justice John Roberts recently summarized once more his rather uncomplicated opinion: 'The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race, is to stop discrimination on the basis of race.'*[Note: Lida Greenhouse, Two Stars, meeting across a Bible. In: The New York Times, 18 January 2009]*
This one liner does not acknowledge the perpetual character of established privilege, nor does it distinguish between the intentions behind race discrimination on one hand and *affirmative action* on the other. *Affirmative action* is designed to bring underrepresented minorities in, not to keep whites out. Diametrically opposite Justice Robert's view stands the observation that *You can only fight discrimination with discrimination*, arguing that the amount of injustice in the world cannot be totally solved or even alleviated but at best be redistributed (Wijnberg, 2006, 216-220). *Affirmative action* in the USA had to find another vehicle.

Thompson Ford analyzes in *The Race Card* how *affirmative action* meandered through the courts over the years. For *affirmative action* to be legal, a 'compelling interest' must be argued: 'This means that in practice, the legality of affirmative action depends on whether or not it's a good policy' (Ford, 2008, 248-249). Several arguments to build a case for affirmative action flourished, and subsequently foundered: (white) bias in grades and test scores; bigoted teachers; social discrimination; racial stratification; diversification of the nation's well-educated elite; and familiarity with underprivileged minority communities. Only one policy goal got an unambiguous thumbs-up from the Supreme Court: affirmative action that furthers the compelling interest in a 'diverse' student body. The court endorsed the right to select those students who will contribute the most to the 'robust exchange of ideas': to *differ* and *to be different* became an educational asset. The rationale for *affirmative action* became the pedagogical benefits of diversity. Critics argued that racial and ethnic difference rather than racial integration became the orthodoxy of necessity; supporters of affirmative action now needed to shore up racial difference and diversity, which were once fringe positions taken by black nationalists and white supremacists (Ford, 2008,

251).

The Civil Rights Movement became a house divided. On the crest of the *diversity* creed, the drive for integration was turned upside down. *Integration* had failed to improve the education of black children, and *integration* had also manifested itself as whitewashing minority cultural norms and practices. Segregation and separation, which were once the marrow of civil rights activism, now gained legitimacy as a guardian of multiculturalism revisited that glorified the virtue of racial difference. Once forceful arguments are now contested: 'For every argument that racial justice demands integration, there is now a counter argument that it requires separatism […]' (Ford, 2008, 305). Colleges and universities must now advance a questionable and convoluted justification for affirmative action – diversity – when the more sensible one – integration – is a better fit. Thompson Ford deplores that the strongest arguments for affirmative action have been ruled out by judicial fiat (Ford, 2008, 262-263). The different faces of *affirmative action* over the years are an indication of its political and judicial sensitivity: at first racial integration was the defining metaphor while now *diversity* and *difference* frame the compelling interest that legitimizes affirmative action. All along through its turbulent course, affirmative action in the USA exercised strong agency to combat school segregation.

*Positive Discrimination and Affirmative Action*

*Positive discrimination* has become a contested issue. Discrimination literally means recognizing or identifying a difference, or to pay attention to subtle differences and exercise judgment and taste. But the term has gained wide currency as unfair treatment, usually because of prejudice about race, ethnic group, age, religion, sexual preference or gender. In most countries discrimination is unconstitutional; it is against the law. How then can discrimination be positive? The term must be applied to measures that do not have the intention to discriminate but instead to affirm options of people who otherwise would not stand a chance. Positive discrimination allows one to have precedence over another, not on the basis of merit, educational score or performance, but for other reasons. For instance, in order to prevent black-white school segregation, entry quotas have been imposed, which have given black children with lower school scores precedence over white children with an equal or higher score. The student with the higher score is 'discriminated' against to make room for the next best, or even the next-next best applicant. In America's

equal rights parlance, the better scoring student's *equal rights* are violated. Much more than in the Netherlands, USA parents and school boards tend to go to court, one day to contest *segregation* by requiring positive *discrimination*, and the next day to protect the principle of equal rights against affirmative action programs.
In the rubrics of positive discrimination and affirmative action an ever-progressing range of legal cases has clarified what is legally permissible, and what is not, when pursuing policies of school desegregation.

*Positive discrimination* and *affirmative action* are used interchangeably, but it makes sense to point out a difference. *Positive discrimination* confuses because of its suggestion that discrimination can be positive. Isn't that a contradiction in terms? It also confuses by implying that one's status has been earned at the expense of someone else. Quite a few oppose *positive discrimination* because it supposedly violates equal rights. When one is enlisted at a good school, the best university, or a top position with the help of positive discrimination, these entries have not been earned on the strength of merit and ability, but simply by having been given precedence. Though this is a gross simplification of a day-to-day reality that is replete with glaring inequalities, a bias of being *second-rate*, or not being as good is always in the air. In spite of *all born equal rhetoric*, people are not born equal, and after being born they are embedded in disparate settings. The social-economic status (SES) of parents, especially their educational level (Dronkers, 2007,14), determines to a large extent the chances their children have, starting from first grade to university, and subsequently in the careers that follow. Children from parents on the high end of the SES scale usually attend better schools, and do better at school, than students born to low SES parents. Ivy League parents tend to create Ivy League access for their children.

In reality, the Dutch *Freedom of Education* has become an advantage to children surrounded by social-economic privilege, and thus not available to everyone. Schools do not intentionally discriminate between students of different background, but it turns out that the school choice of parents firmly correlates with where they come from. Parents who are well off themselves, especially in respect to education, insist on – and often succeed in putting their children in better schools. They know how to maneuver through the registration bureaucracy; they encourage their children to do better, and will step up their own or additional extra-mural efforts when necessary. Not all, but many True Dutch children come from the 'lucky sperm club' *[Note: Michael Young, The Rise*

*of the Meritocracy, 1957. In: De Volkskrant, 4 July 2009],* and are better off when starting their school education compared to most allochton offspring.

Positive discrimination has been disqualified as giving precedence at the expense of others who are discriminated against. Many a critic emphasizes that positive discrimination is an infringement on the equality principle. For example, Paul Scheffer, an *integration* pundit in the Netherlands, underscores that this may cause conflict, violence, or even war (Scheffer, 2007, 423). He is prepared to make an exception for the black population in the USA because of their history of slavery and forced segregation, but warns against extending this way of thinking to immigrants who don't need recompense for any historic wrong doing. Scheffer narrows the idea of positive discrimination to compensation for wrong doing at some stage in history, giving advantage to descendents of those who have been done wrong. But why does Scheffer exclude asylum seekers? And why exclude immigrants who have suffered from the Netherlands' immigration policies of the *live and let live era*?

The party wings of the Netherlands' 'Young Socialists' and 'Young Liberals' oppose *positive discrimination* of allochtons and women being recruited by the Police Force, which was recently prescribed by the Netherlands' Interior Department.[*Note: PvdA Nieuwsbrief 31 March 2008, OPINIE Geen positieve discriminatie, Niet gebaat bij positieve discriminatie]* To bolster their opposition the usual arguments were aired: quality deficiency, substantiation of the second-rate level of the target groups, problems on the shop floor, and negative discrimination of capable men and autochthons. They suggest that quality control is blown out of the window with a pro-active recruitment procedure that intensifies the search among the target groups. They do not account for the negative effects that a *True Dutch* white-male dominated Police Force has in cities with a high degree of diversity, populated with groups of people from all corners of the world.

*New York Police Department: Diversity matters*
*The ethnic diversity of the New York police that beats the streets correlates securely with the diversity of the millions who occupy these streets every day. The New York Police Department has never been so diverse, a result of quality control indeed. A majority of the cadets in the last rookie police class were members of ethnic and racial minorities, offering a rainbow cross-section of the city itself. Over all, 47.8 % of the city's officers are white, 28.7 % Hispanic, 17.9 % Black and*

*5.4 % Asian.31 This is not a matter of course, or Darwinian selection, but of creative design, aka affirmative action by New York City authorities who know that diversity matters in keeping order and peace.*

Of course, there is resistance to this kind of affirmative action. An editorial in *De Groene Amsterdammer* on positive discrimination aired that first the mentality within the Netherlands' Police Force needed to be changed before regulation should be imposed.*[Note: Margreet Fogteloo, Blauwe Vrouwen. In: De Groene Amsterdammer, 5 June 2009]* How is this done? Precisely, by departmental regulation to intensify recruitment from these target-groups! *[Note: Lammert de Jong, Blauwe Vrouwen. In: De Groene Amsterdammer, Letter to the Editor, 17 June 2009.]* This is exactly what the women's Quota-Manifest in 2009 proposed, an initiative that sprang from the supposition that the rise of women to top positions required time and patience, just as was required all along. The Quota Manifest's signatories had lost their patience, and pushed for legally backed quotas to increase the number of women in public and private top-positions.*[Note: 'Geen zeurkous, ze steekt haar nek uit.' In: De Volkskrant, 20 October 2009]*

*Affirmative action* to attain a desired order, at school or university, nation-wide or social-economic, or even international, is an alternative to *positive discrimination*. *Affirmative action* aims to include those who otherwise would not stand a chance; *affirmative action* aims at building bridges between diverse populations. These actions are legitimized by farther reaching political goals, such as having more people participating in the national economic commonwealth; or to widen the recruitment reservoir of talent to be tapped; or to bring apartheid to an end. Where Scheffer's *positive discrimination* is limited to recompense for wrongs done to the African-American or American Indian population, *affirmative action* is a more productive concept because it aims further than compensation to particular groups. Affirmative action is concerned about the disorder of racial segregation, or of a class-riddled society; or the imbalance between disparate regions; the *divide* between rich and poor countries; or the diversity of the nation.

*Affirmative action* basically aims at correcting the damage done to the nation – and the world for that matter – by gross inequality. In the USA *affirmative action* was always meant to be a temporary remedy. Some argue that the policy should be based on 'the situation on the ground,' rather on some arbitrary timeline: '… reasonable people may disagree how much remedy is enough, and how much is too much but … no reasonable person can look at our society's disparities in

income, employment, education and incarceration rates and argue that the job is done.' *[Note: David Berman, New York, July 20, 2009. In: The New York Times, July 26, 2009]* Another commentator adds: 'I too hope that affirmative action will, at some point in the future, not be needed. However, it is not *affirmative action* that corrupts and condescends and corrodes, but rather a society in which unequal educational and economic opportunities are provided to some of its citizens because of the color of their skin. *Affirmative action* is a necessary corrective for our imperfect society.'*[Note: Cathleen Barnhart, White Plains, July 20, 2009. In: The New York Times., July 26, 2009]* Affirmative action is testimony to the belief that the state must level the playing field. [*Note: Josef Joffe, The Worst of the West. Reviewing Tony Judt's 'Ill Fares the Land'. In: The New York Times Book Review, 2 May 2010]*

Much government policy, especially in so-called welfare states, can be measured as affirmative action: subsidies for a more expansive family re-production, or producing *affirmative action babies [Note: These subsidies produce affirmative action babies in the truest sense of the word. See also Stephen L. Carter, Reflections of an Affirmative-Action Baby. Basic Books,1991]*; extra development funds for backward regions (European Structural Fund); preferential tariffs for elderly and disabled people; or facilities for enterprising initiatives of economic starters.

These programs and funds serve a purpose and intentionally target regional areas or specific groups of people. Under most fiscal regimens, taxpayers are not treated equally, but are treated according to income and wealth instead, in order to finance – among other things – welfare state policies. In the USA this redistribution of wealth is perceived as coming dangerously close to socialism, or even communism, while in the Netherlands a wide consensus endorses the Dutch welfare state as a telling expression of social solidarity.
Government practice is to make policy choices that often have disparate impacts on different (groups of) people. The intention of these pol*icies to make a difference* is totally different from discrimination as unfair treatment rooted in prejudice with regard to race, sex, origin or other wicked inclinations (Scheffer, 2007, 423).[*Note: Scheffer misses this point when he equates 'negative' discrimination with 'positive' discrimination]*
Therefore positive discrimination does not fit as concept; this term can better be ditched as a contradiction in terms, and exchanged for affirmative action defined

as political engineering to attain specific societal goals, not only in the realm of undoing historic wrongs but also with regard to today's mundane government affairs. *Affirmative action* is essentially in the interest of good governance; it is regular government business to keep the nation together, or to elevate the underclass, or to regulate immigration. 'In a sense, all law is social engineering' (Ford, 2008, 226). *Affirmative action* is designed to enroll children of non-western immigrants and disadvantaged whites in good schools; this action is not designed to keep advantaged pupils or advantaged colors out (Ford, 2008, 260). And in the case of the Netherlands' job market, affirmative action must help law study graduates of non-western origin to find a place in the law firms and professions, and so combat discrimination (Schuyt, 2009, 132-133).

*Eyes Wide Shut*

'Relax, it will happen' concludes Frans Verhagen in '*The American Way*': *do not accelerate an immigrant's advancement in the Netherlands by assistance and positive discrimination; that's counterproductive* (Verhagen, 206, 244; Translation mine). Does this mean that the slippery palisades surrounding Dutch school segregation must be left untouched? Has the Dutch disposition to immigrants nothing to want for? Is there no ethnic discrimination to fight? Weariness rather than activism prevails these days with regards to the *black* school. Even among activists a fighting spirit is absent and political leadership to tackle the Dutch black school is limited to secondary adjustments. Some Dutch integrationists argue that ethnic discrimination is a matter of mentality that must be changed, not by laws but primarily by instilling the awareness that discrimination is wrong. Instead of regulation, everybody must come to an agreement that ethnic discrimination is immoral, and must be made aware that it is against the nation's self-interest as scarce talent may be lost in the process (Scheffer, 2008, 424).

How do we arrive at this agreement? Voluntary initiatives, *binding* agreements and lots of goodwill have not substantially changed the segregated school scene; mainly because white parents do not want to risk what they believe to be in their child's best interest. Only one out of six parents and just a quarter of all citizens are willing to consider a next best choice if that would challenge the formation of black schools. The majority does not feel motivated to jump the color line. They are insensitive to arguments of a possible white school bias, which overestimates the quality of the white school, neither are they concerned about the apartheid and out-of-touch white schools in otherwise predominantly multiethnic cities

(Aboutaleb, 2005, 133). An *Eyes Wide Shut* attitude negates the effects of school and neighborhood segregation on generations of Dutch children. Against better wisdom!

In 2007 the Scientific Council for Government Policy pointed to *school* and *work* as essential vehicles in the process of an immigrant's identification with the Dutch nation, while criticizing school segregation. The Council observed that school segregation was increasing in terms of *black* schools as well as too *black* schools.*[Note: In the period 1985-2000 the share of 'black' primary schools (with more than 70% pupils of non-western families with low education) rose from 15 to 35 % in the 4 big cities in the Netherlands. In 2002 of all the primary schools 33% were 'too white' or 'too black.']* Reviewing the actions to fight this segregation, the Council concluded that such depended to a large extent on local activists (parents, schools, boards, municipalities) who must navigate the rigidity of the constitutional *Freedom of Education*, and the sanctity of parental school choice (WRR, 2007, 119-125). The Council recommended that Dutch parliament legalize a *Connection Through Education* (Verbinden) principle that would assign school authorities the obligation to pursue a policy of connecting disparate groups. This would provide a legal basis for school desegregation projects and experiments (WRR, 2007, 205). However laudable in its intention, this recommendation was too general to stand a chance to be implemented.

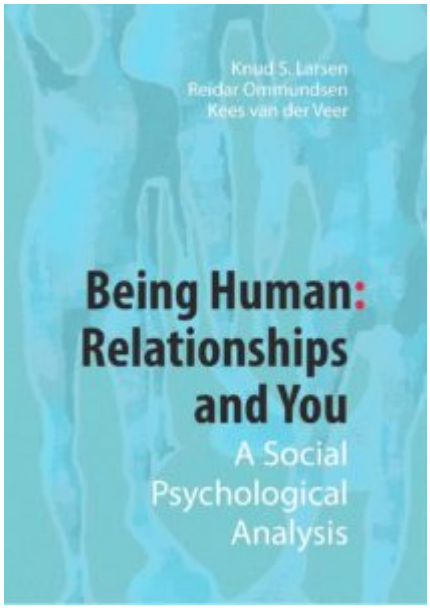
Legalizing a *Connection Through Education* principle was presented as a *must* without a persuasive reconnaissance of its practicalities or an implementation strategy. Being well aware of the problem of school segregation as well as the sanctity of parental choice, the Council made a perfunctory gesture.
In its reaction, the Netherlands' government merely took note of the Council's recommendation; and left it there. Government took a benign stand and declared that everybody should have access to high quality education, which should not depend upon the composition of the school. Government saw no need to amend the constitutional *Freedom of Education* and emphasized that investment in school quality must have priority, as well as combating residential segregation. Government expressed its unwavering support for school desegregation pilots (Government Paper, 2008, 13-14). By failing to be more specific, the Council missed an opportunity to elevate the Dutch black school to the top of the *integration* agenda.

School *segregation* in the Netherlands carves out multiple negative distinctions.

First, an immigrant's ethnic group distinction is invalidated by the conception of the *allochton*, denying immigrants the advantage of a hyphenated identity. They are marked *not-Dutch*, while in the same breath their origin is obscured; as *allochton* they are in limbo. Furthermore, the schools their children attend are labeled black schools. This makes Dutch black school segregation essentially different from ethnic school segregation in the USA. In New York, Chinatown in Manhattan, around Avenue A in Brooklyn and in Flushing, Queens, Chinese-American schools abound as a reflection of the Chinese-American neighborhood population. This hyphenated identity does not negate American citizenship; on the contrary, it adds an interesting twist to the roots of these American parents and their American children. Obviously a Chinese-American school testifies to ethnic school segregation, but this school is not painted black nor considered a school for *Dummies*. On the other hand, black schools in Harlem, Manhattan, or Brooklyn, New York, carry a real history of institutionalized racism. White schools were once *Terra Prohibita* for Negroes, as African-Americans were called those days. They had to attend separate black schools, until 1954 when the Supreme Court ruled that even if these black schools were equal to white schools, this separation was against the law, which eventually inspired a powerful movement for change, though with limited results.

The Netherlands' black school is an expression of how the Dutch position non-western immigrants. The nomenclature of the Dutch integration discourse reveals a curious contradiction in terms. An immigrant's introduction to Holland is marked with segregationist road signs. As soon as non-western immigrants enter the Netherlands they become *allochtons*. They and their children carry this label for the remainder of their life, *undutchable* (White, 2006) as it were. When these children attend a school that is populated with other immigrant children of non-western origin, they find themselves in a Dutch *black* school, to be distinguished from a white school, which adds a connotation of the racist history of white over black. When income rises, allochton parents attempt to get away from the black school, just as autochthon parents have done all along. According to the lingua franca of educational platforms the black school eventually becomes a cesspit (*afvalputje*) with ever more children from underclass families only – in other words, a school for *Dummies*.
The Dutch black school is not a myth; on the contrary, it is a stark expression of *They are not Us.*

# Being Human: Relationships And You ~ A Social Psychological Analysis – Preface & Contents




*Preface*

This book represents a new look at social psychology and relationships for the discerning reader and university student. The title of the book argues forcefully that the very nature of being human is defined by our relationships with others, our lovers, family, and our functional or dysfunctional interactions.

Written in easy to follow logical progression the volume covers all major topical areas of social psychology, with results of empirical research of the most recent years included. A common project between American and European social psychologists the book seeks to build a bridge between research findings in both regions of the world. In doing so the interpretations of the research takes a critical stand toward dysfunction in modern societies, and in particular the consequences of endless war and repression.

Including topics as varied as an overview of the theoretical domains of social psychology and recent research on morality, justice and the law, the book promises a stimulating introduction to contemporary views of what it means to be human.

A major emphasis of the book is the effect of culture in all major topical areas of social psychology including conceptions of the self, attraction, relationships and love, social cognition, attitude formation and behavior, influences of group

membership, social influence, persuasion, hostile images, aggression and altruism, and moral behavior.

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*"Therefore this reading has a rare and valuable feature, that of making a link between American and European social psychology: "Being human: Relationships and you" is an excellent example of how the two lines of thought are actually articulated…it is clearly written, using a professional yet assessable language and therefore easy to read by even the non-specialist public…always pointing to the fact that social psychology is not "just a science" but it deals with issues that constitute the substance of our existence as humans".*

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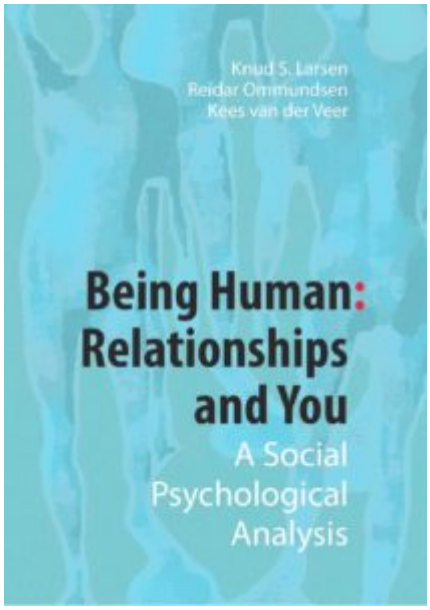
# Being Human: Relationships And You. A Social Psychological Analysis ~ Introduction




The roots of Psychology are international, but so is psychology. A major figure in the history of psychology was the Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov. The premier pioneer in the study of childhood development was the Swiss biologist Jean Piaget. The father of the psychoanalytic movement was an Austrian medical doctor Sigmund Freud. Modern European social psychology has made major contributions, for example in the field of social categorization theory. Henri Tajfel and his collaborators made signal contributions to the understanding of group behavior during his tenure at Bristol University, as did collaborators from other European countries.

However, Moghaddam (1987; 1990) described the United States as the "superpower" of academic psychology. In support of this claim he cites the volume of resources available to American scholars. Other observers have also described the US as the major source of academic social psychology, and the "center of gravity" for professional development (Bond, 1988). It would not be inaccurate to state that the vast majority of social psychological research is conducted in North American settings, including Canada. This might therefore be described as the "first world" of social psychology in terms of production and influence on the world scene.

Europe, with Great Britain and France leading in social psychological research, may be considered the second world of social psychology. Generally the university settings are smaller, and funds available not as large as those in the US, but social psychologists in Europe have made distinctive contributions of their own in the development of theory. In particular European scholars give more attention to intergroup behavior (e.g. Doise, Csepeli, Dann, Gouge, Larsen, & Ostelli, 1972), and the wider social context like social structure, and culture (e.g. ideology)

(Jaspars, 1980; Doise, 1986). European and some American colleagues tend to criticize American scholars as being too individualistic (e.g. Sampson, 1977) and culture-blind in their orientation, having mainly developed theories that reflect the salient values, goals and issues of the United States that may not be equally valid in other societies, and neglecting other social phenomena like minority influence and social change (Moscovici, 1972).

European social psychologists have developed unique laboratory methodology, the minimal group situation to study the effects of social categorization on intergroup relations (Tajfel, Flament, Billig, & Bundy, 1971), along with observation studies of how people communicate attitudes in natural settings and create shared social representations (Potter and Wetherell, 1987; Van Dijk, 1987; Moscovici, 1981).

The third world of social psychology is found in the developing nations. Psychology in these countries is greatly hampered by lack of funding, and therefore has to rely to a large extent on psychology developed in other countries and cultural settings. There are many problems in these countries, which could benefit from a mature research based social psychology. The social problems of developing countries are to some extent distinctive as they involve issues of poverty, ethnic conflict, and lifestyles very different from the urban lives of the western world (see e.g. Kim, Yang and Hwang, 2006).

In the future we must look to the development of social psychology from all three worlds. There is much in the human experience that we have in common. We are all born into the world as dependent beings, all have to face developmental tasks, including forming families, and finding our social niche. We all face the great existential issues including the transitory nature of life. World psychology can provide insights that are helpful to all societies on these and other problems we all face. There are also specific problems unique to each society and culture. This is where the third world must make its contributions based on patient theoretical development, and empirical research. Reliable and valid empirical findings are superior to any armchair theorizing, regardless of the quality of the theoretical ideas. Only by empirical means can we eventually develop a significant world social psychology. Such a social psychology would describe the processes of social relations, thinking and social influence which would be common to all human beings. May this book be a step toward that noble quest, and stimulate the next generation of students, scholars, and all those interested in the field.