
Clio's Psyche

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Unintended Genocide: Alcohol and Trauma in the Second Esopus War, 1663

Andrew Brink
The Holland Society of New York

Throughout my life I have been a passionate advocate of peace and opponent of war. Consequently, researching and writing about Roeloff Swartwout, Schout [sheriff] of Esopus, was most upsetting.¹ I discovered that this seventeenth-century ancestor of mine played a key role in starting a war and that another ancestor, while a child, was taken captive by the Indians. Had Huybert Brink not been released unharmed after months of captivity in the Catskills, my family history would have been

The Diplomacy of Vamik Volkan

Peter Petschauer
Appalachian State University

Vamik D. Volkan, MD, was born in 1932 to Turkish parents in Nicosia, Cyprus. He came to the US in 1957 and attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill from 1958 to 1963, where he received his psychiatric training. His psychoanalytic training was completed at the Washington Psychoanalytic Institute. He has worked at the University of Virginia Medical School, Charlottesville, since 1963 and is now a professor of psychiatry and the Director of the Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction which he established in 1988. Dr. Volkan is also a founding member and a former president of the International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP) and an editor of ISPP's journal, Political Psychology. Since the late 1980s, he has been involved with bringing together ethnic groups in conflict, especially in the Middle East and the former Soviet Union. He is a member of the International Negotiation Network (INN) of the Carter Center in Atlanta, Georgia.

Dr. Volkan is the author, co-author, or editor of twenty-seven books. Among the best known and most recent are: The Immortal Atatürk: A Psychobiography, with Norman Itzkowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); The Need to Have Enemies and Allies: From Clinical Practice to International Relations (New York: Jason Aronson, 1988); Turks and Greeks: Neighbours in Conflict (Huntingdon, England: Eothen Press, 1994); Spektrum des Narzi8mus, with Gabriele Ast (Vanderhoeck and Ruprecht, 1994); and The Three Faces of Richard Nixon, with Norman Itzkowitz and Andrew Dod (forthcoming). This interview was conducted in March, 1995, in Dr.

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Unintended Genocide: Alcohol and Trauma in the Second Esopus War, 1663

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entirely different. I therefore try in this essay to examine the moral meaning of the Second Esopus War for settlers and natives alike.

To what extent did seventeenth-century New Netherland settlers at Esopus in the mid-Hudson region intend to destroy, rather than displace, the indigenous people?² Is there evidence that extinction rather than relocation and co-existence was intended for the Esopus Indians? According to nineteenth-century historian Jonathan Hasbrouck, these Indians were “naturally warlike,” yet they appear to have been an agricultural people who did not fight unless provoked as happened when disputes arose over Dutch and Huguenot settlers’ methods of acquiring lands. Early settlers reported seeing frightening ritual dances, but they probably misinterpreted seasonal observances connected with crops. The Warranawonking group of the Esopus Indians were primarily farmers inhabiting the fertile alluvial lands along the Hudson River where corn, beans, and squash would grow more abundantly than anywhere else in the valley.³ This group had much to lose by war, as had Dutch and Huguenot settlers who, I am convinced, had no stated intention of exterminating their predecessors. What settlers thought about their hosts is not a matter of record, but the meeting of these very different peoples proved fatal to natives and morally damaging to settlers. If there was no overt genocidal intentionality among Dutch and Huguenots, racism surfaced in supplying alcohol to the Esopus Indians. Alcohol released the irrational forces of fear and mistrust that proved mutually destructive, but with far worse results for the natives. Reflected in the following quote from Hasbrouck is the denigration and objectification of the Indians — the dehumanizing of them — that expresses attitudes going back to the lore of the first European encounter.

The great drawback to intercourse with [the Esopus Indians] was their excessive fondness for rum

and filthy, lascivious habits. Warrior and squaw got drunk as certainly as they got liquor, and were then mad. Both were also nasty in their habits — so much so that their presence was offensive to the nostrils. Then, to make matters worse, there was little virtue among the women, who debauched the sons of the boors [Dutch farmers] with harlotry. These facts should be kept in mind, when we read of the Esopus wars, in palliation of the wrongs done by [our fore] fathers. [Moral] sentiment sounds well when the Indian is far away, but it disappears when in contact with him.⁴

Evidence is lacking as to harlotry and miscegenation, but it abounds for alcoholism induced in natives.⁵ In addition to the struggle to possess lands, sexual anxiety may have led settlers to promote intoxication among natives. It undoubtedly aided seductions, but it also

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Telephone: (201) 891-6866

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Editor: Paul H. Elovitz, PhD

Associate Editor: Bob Lentz

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other intoxicants among natives was the result of traumatization and complete cultural dislocation. With proliferating fear and mistrust, both groups suffered irreversible trauma. Flight into alcoholic stupor only released inhibitions to overt hostility and aggression between cross-traumatized groups. For “driven” European migrants, alcohol was a mood regulator controlling highs and lows, while for non-driven natives, alcohol disorganized controls by removing inhibitions. So dramatic was this disorganization in natives that they spoke of alcohol letting in “evil spirits.” In both groups high stress, exacerbated by acts committed under the influence of alcohol, impaired immunological fitness as we will see. European diseases, including those sexually transmitted, devastated entire native populations when natural immunity was lacking and new stressors were added.⁶ As the historians Henri and Barbara Van der Zee write:

before the arrival of the Dutch, the Indians had never touched a drop of alcohol.... And Adrian Van Der Donck reported ... that the “common drink is water from a living spring or well.” The juice of grapes they drink fresh, and “drunken men they call fools,” having no word for drunkenness. Thanks to the Dutch traders, they made a rapid conversion to liquor, which unfortunately had the effect of making them “insolent, troublesome and malicious.”⁷

Responsible people in the Netherlands, such as Admiral Piet Hein, warned: “If we treat the Indians savagely and harshly we will give them cause to hate us. Let us make sure we do not offend God through any unfair dealings....”⁸ But good intentions could not reduce the fears of Dutch adventurers when they met “heathens” in a far away land.

Sales of liquor to natives quickly outran official attempts to prevent them. *The Laws and Writs of Appeal 1647-1663* records seven strict ordinances against open or clandestine sales of beer and brandy to natives. An ordinance observes:

that many Indians are daily seen and found intoxicated, and while drunk

they commit many serious acts of insolence, not only in the countryside ... but also ... many and diverse Indians are almost daily seen drunk and intoxicated within the city [New Amsterdam] and whereas up to this time the persons who sell, furnish and give the natives drink cannot be discovered; however, in consideration of the needs of the country, together with the danger that is to be expected therefrom if such selling ... of strong drink to the Indians is not prevented, [the malefactors are to be] discovered and punished.⁹

Clearly the immigrant society was divided against itself in the matter of selling intoxicants to Indians, and the legislation proved unenforceable. An unconscious wish to subvert natives may be detected in the hidden agency of those who sold liquor against the law. How serious were attempts to find and apprehend law-breakers? We do not know, but after 1656 legislation slackened.

Alcohol increased the exploitability of natives. Traders tricked them into selling pelts cheaply by “debauching” them with strong drink. Land sales were often lubricated with rum and beer, despite legislation of July 1, 1652 to insure fairness in land transactions with natives. Drunk and disorderly conduct in Manhattan, as well as Beverwyck, was a chronic problem anyway, and it is hard to see how natives could have been spared the effects. Many Calvinists were intensely moralistic people whose ministers and teachers urged sober, orderly conduct; but settlers’ and especially soldiers’ rebellious wishes for anarchic outbreaks found alcohol a convenient releaser. Fear of the Lord was never enough to stop bingeing and brawling on Sundays and festival days; while courts handed out fines, leniency was common. Distress was voiced over the number of pubs and tap rooms in New Amsterdam and Beverwyck, but little was done to stop their proliferation.

Some native leaders saw the destructive pathway their people were taking. Shirley Dunn, an historian of the Mohicans, writes that:

In 1653, the Indian chiefs near the Esopus Creek begged Kit Davits, a trader who visited the

Catskill Indians as well as the Esopus, not to sell any more brandy to the Indians, “as they got into serious fights with each other and made trouble.” Despite the well meant ordinances and placards of the Director General and Council of New Netherland and in violation of the orders and directions of the commissary and magistrates of Fort Orange forbidding such sales, illegal tapping went on.¹⁰

Envy and malice toward native peoples was thus not expressed directly by their European conquerors, but it filtered through Calvinist-influenced consciences, for which alcohol was the releaser and hoped-for palliative. Certain unscrupulous fur and land traders deliberately made natives “crazy” so that they could be vilified and exiled or killed. If alcohol-addicted Indians could be induced to destroy themselves, so much the better, cynical rationalizations may have run. On the surface the Dutch practiced fair dealing, scrupulously paying Indians for all occupied lands and buying pelts at a fair price. A few Dutch and Huguenots admired native culture, learned languages, and took native wives. Nonetheless, the scourge of alcohol spoke of unconscious genocidal wishes against natives on the part of enough settlers that a serious threat to native culture arose almost immediately.

Dutch relations with Indians became increasingly wary, ambivalent, and pragmatic, although there were regional variations. My argument is that there developed an unacknowledged genocidal wish to persuade natives to destroy themselves with liquor and guns. Perhaps as a Calvinist “chosen people” the Dutch assumed a superiority over pagan natives that further assumed their eventual extinction. Unlike the Jesuits of New France, Dutch Reformed ministers made little or no attempt to evangelize Indians, suggesting aversion to their integration with settlers. Provocation of Indians by settlers was at first more insidious than open, but with advantages gained, pressures upon them intensified. The Dutch were too trade-minded to be openly genocidal, and their leaders would have repudiated such an accusation. But feelings of deep aversion grew, as the quotation from

Jonathan Hasbrouck illustrates. Cautious diplomacy gave way to confrontation and armed conflict in the mid-Hudson, this time more decisive than Kieft’s wars of the 1640s and the so-called “Peach War” of 1655-1656 had been.

The two Esopus Wars of 1659-1660 and 1663 were unnecessary and could have been avoided. But it was as if settlers’ latent expectations of treachery were always ready to be inflamed by some small incident. The odd feature of these incidents was that Europeans insured them by compulsively supplying alcohol to natives, as happened at Esopus despite the law. Provoked by the excessive rate of Dutch and Huguenot settlement, which pushed them off their best agricultural lands, young Esopus Indian warriors turned violent. West India Company directors in Amsterdam thought Stuyvesant too lenient with the fractious Indians, writing: “We are by no means willing that these commotions, robberies, and violent proceedings of the barbarous tribes [at Wiltwyck] should be submitted [to] any longer.”¹¹ The Directors considered a war of extermination, though a less violent war was indeed begun by Dutch militia against “de Wilden,” or wild people, as Stuyvesant defamed the Esopus Indians. Having superior fire-power, the Dutch won the First Esopus War, thereby securing more land for settlement. In the triumph of the day, eleven Esopus “ringleaders” were unwisely banished from the colony — a major grievance leading to the second, and much bloodier, Esopus War.

An unspoken genocidal dynamic was building. It involved the collusive destructiveness of alcohol, with natives becoming projective recipients of European fears and mounting antagonism. By accepting alcohol both to self-medicate for depression and to embolden their desperation, the Esopus Indians became the dangerous demons the settlers feared they were. “Great trouble has arisen here through the fearful intoxication of the cruel barbarians,” wrote Thomas Chambers, an Englishman who was probably the first white settler in 1652.

I myself with Pieter Dircksen and Hendrick Cornelissen came today to the tennis court and saw the savages had an *ancre* [about 10 gallons] of

brandy lying under a tree.... They got madly intoxicated and about dusk fired [guns] and killed Herman Jacobsen."¹²

A farm was set ablaze and other native atrocities were reported by Chambers to the Director. When called to account, Esopus Indian *sachems* [chiefs] told Stuyvesant that "they were not able to control their youngsters after [the Dutch] sold them 'strong water.'"¹³ But it is not a Dutchman who comes down in the records as having supplied alcohol to natives but Chambers himself. The Second Esopus War was provoked when 'savages,' given brandy by Chambers in return for helping with the harvest, became obnoxious and disturbing before falling asleep in some bushes. There the Indians were attacked as they slept, one being killed, another wounded. The next day 500 or more armed Indians ran over the community destroying the harvest, burning barns, and killing livestock. Dutch prisoners were taken, tortured, and burned alive at the stake — among them Jacob Jansen Stoll who had been a provoker. When word reached Manhattan there was panic, but soon enough militia was organized for a reprisal, which was successful because of the greater strength of the Dutch.

By summer of 1663 native unrest in the mid-Hudson had reached a breaking point. It had become clear to the original inhabitants that they were being permanently displaced by Europeans and that their way of life was about to be lost. Thus traumatized, they turned to the very objects of capitalist enterprise that were undoing them, alcohol and guns. Indians had always traded among themselves but never on the scale, or at the hectic pace, demanded by Europeans in the insatiable fur trade. In the summer of 1663 the Esopus Indians exploded in an orgy of destruction, and war with settlers and soldiers ensued until the spring of 1664. As could be predicted, barbarities on both sides were increased by the use of alcohol. On September 6, at the height of hostilities, Captain Martin Cregier, who commanded forces sent from Manhattan to save the settlers, ordered Schout [Sheriff of Esopus] Swartwout to prohibit sale of strong drink to both militia and Indians.¹⁴ But the order was hardly enforceable, as such orders never had been. Alcohol removed inhibitions on committing atrocities, turning

organized fighting into promiscuous destructiveness.

The slaughter of settlers by natives was unimaginably brutal, and while the story has been told many times, the best description is still that of Reverend Hermanus Blom, an eyewitness. Blom reported to Amsterdam that he had tried to console the wounded and dying settlers.

There the burnt, the killed bodies, the hurt were lying. The agony of the many and the wailing and moaning was unbearable to hear.... We had to look on how God's herd was taken away as prisoners of the heathen and how death snatched away the children from their cradle, the young men on the streets. The dead bodies of men lay here and there like dung heaps on the field and the burnt and roasted corpses like sheaves behind the mower.¹⁵

The attack had devastated both stockaded Wiltwyck and the comparatively unprotected Nieuwe Dorp where most of the recent settlers had started farming on Indian corn lands.

In Wiltwyck nine settlers and three soldiers were killed, along with four women and two children. Five women and four children were taken prisoner. At Nieuwe Dorp three farmers were killed, with one taken prisoner. Eight women and twenty-six children were taken away as prisoners. There were numerous wounded in both settlements.¹⁶ While all women and child prisoners were freed unharmed after many months captivity, the uncertainty of their whereabouts and condition (together with wives not knowing which husbands and fathers were dead or alive) must have produced traumatic separation anxiety. After release of the captives, the effects on the reunited community were profound and lasting, with evidences of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) throughout.

It is surprising to find PTSD, now a well-recognized syndrome following natural or man-made disasters, so vividly portrayed as long ago as the seventeenth century. The evidence is just as clear as it is for the psychosomatic effects of modern wars and disasters. The syndrome

consists of alternation between hyperactivity (increased startle reactions and explosive angry outbursts) and recurrent intrusive flashbacks, nightmares, and morbidly detailed recollections. There is also psychic numbing to ward off these phenomena, constricting affect and social function, as well as a profound sense of loss of control over one's destiny. The epidemiology is 50-80% of survivors, and the latent period can be from one week to as much as thirty years.

The social disruption attending the war focuses on the July 1663 trial of Tryntje Slecht for slandering the Worthy Gentleman Johan de Decker. She pleaded that "she spoke while depressed and discouraged because of the many misfortunes that had befallen her through the savages...", but this is just one of several evidences of eruptions of irrational behavior surrounding armed conflict.¹⁷ Every man, woman and child survivor among settlers (not to mention the natives themselves) must have suffered some degree of lasting trauma. While many manifestations are invisible now, there is some remarkable evidence for collective disorder best described as PTSD.

Judging by a report of January 4, 1664 by Ensign Niessen to Director-General Stuyvesant in Manhattan, PTSD was having an effect during an uneasy armistice between 'Christians' and 'heathens' on the Esopus frontier. Niessen wrote: "There are many sick among the military as well as the inhabitants of a strange disease." A week later Niessen again wrote Stuyvesant, saying: "Our condition has not changed; the disease doe[s] not diminish, but increases daily; it is a strange disease; but the Almighty's will be done." By this time the war had been going on for eight months, with many deaths to be mourned, much destruction of property, and the uncertainty of when and how captive women and children might be recovered. Few, if any, involved had ever lived with so much anxiety and despair, though all knew of the dreadful outcomes of earlier wars with Indians. The "strange disease" was evidently not entirely physical as a spiritual remedy was attempted: Bacchus, the pagan god of "wine and drunkenness," was renounced in the name of Christ, hoping that God's harsh judgment might be lifted from the community. From our perspective it is possible that adrenal exhaustion

had set in, aggravated by guilt at the violence being perpetrated and by fear of sudden death. The "strange disease" may indeed have been caused by stress-induced immune system depletion that allowed infection to spread, giving flu-like symptoms that settlers took to be divine censure for being at war with Indians. They naturally linked this suffering to the use of alcohol, by which hostilities had been unconsciously facilitated, and tried to make a guilty bargain with God to bring relief. As to the Esopus natives, their *sachems* [chiefs] reported that they were "tired out" and "sick," undoubtedly from more than hardship and starvation.¹⁸ Thus both sides suffered a mysterious psychological nemesis but, even with a peace settlement, destruction of the natives continued.

In 1665 a peace treaty was signed between Col. Richard Nicolls, Governor of New York, and the Esopus Indians by which they agreed to refrain from any more killings and damage to settlers' property and livestock. The Esopus *sachems* agreed to return each year to renew the treaty, while all were to suppose that "past injuries are buried and forgotten on both sides."¹⁹ But it was a one-sided bargain favoring the settlers with permanent land occupancy. It was wishful thinking that all would be forgiven and forgotten. The language is legalistic with few concessions to natives' rights and privileges.²⁰

Most family lore surrounding European incursions into the mid-Hudson wilderness has been lost, but it may well be guessed at. The earlier quotation from a descendant, Jonathan Hasbrouck, shows both guilt and avoidance of the issues. The Esopus Indians are defensively denigrated and objectified, illustrating the lingering uneasiness that most involved families must have felt. The treaty attempting to enforce forgetting of past injuries rings false as no amount of legal advice could remove the effects of trauma. Evidence is lacking to show whether the stricken settlers sufficiently mourned their losses, as was needed to clear the way for better relations with the natives. More likely, permanent ~~fearfulness~~ and defensiveness resulted, only to be reinforced by later lethal encounters with Indians as family members migrated into new territory. Alcohol abuse

remained a scourge, making the remnants of displaced Indians more vulnerable to depression and the white man's diseases. True, there had not been a Hudson Valley Holocaust, driven by overt racism. Nor did Dutch and Huguenot settlers organize anything like apartheid. What happened was, however, just as effective in extinguishing an entire people by unconscious genocide. Never planned, or intended as a clear-cut policy, what happened appears to happen whenever disparate cultures, unable to communicate as equals, contact each other. Our seventeenth-century forebears appear not to have reflected much on this, but history prompts us to do so now, leaving a very uncomfortable feeling. To atone for past guilt we must try to see social justice more clearly in the present.

¹ See my "The Ambition of Roeloff Swartwout, Schout of Esopus" (*De Halve Maen*, LXVII, 3, Fall, 1994, 50-61). I am descended from three daughters of Eva Bradt: Elenora by her first husband Anthony de Hooges, Secretary of the Colony of Rensselaerswyck, and Hendrickje (Brink) and Cornelia (Van Schoonhoven) by Roeloff Swartwout, first sheriff of the Dutch settlement at Esopus.

² The Esopus settlement was comprised of Wiltwyck and Nieuwe Dorp [new village], present day Kingston and Hurley, New York.

³ According to E. M. Ruttenber, *History of the Indian Tribes of Hudson's River* (1872) (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1972), 45 and 94-5, the Esopus Indians belonged to the Warranawonking, one of five chieftaincies of the Minsi tribal division of the Lenni Lenape confederation. This confederation's territory extended from the Catskills south to the Potomac, including the watersheds of the Hudson, Delaware, and Susquehanna Rivers.

⁴ Quoted in Nathaniel B. Sylvester, *History of Ulster County, N.Y.* (1880) (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 1977), 22. Information about treaties with the Esopus Indians also appears in Part I of this volume.

⁵ I have found no reports of settler sons being seduced by Indian women; for reports of daughters' sexual involvements with Indian men, see Marc B. Fried, *The Early History of Kingston & Ulster County, N.Y.* (Marbletown, NY: Ulster County Historical Society, 1975), n. 8, 107.

⁶ For discussion of how disease, exacerbated by introduction of European tools, food, clothing, and liquor, destroyed Indian morale and the will to live, see Alfred Bailey, *The Conflict of the European and Eastern Algonkian Cultures, 1504-1700*, 2d ed., (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 85.

⁷ Henri Van der Zee and Barbara Van der Zee, *A Sweet and Alien Land: The Story of Dutch New York* (New York: Viking, 1978), 101.

⁸ Quoted in Charles Wilson, *The Dutch Republic* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968), 225.

⁹ *Laws and Writs of Appeal, 1647-1663*, Charles T. Gehring, trans. and ed., (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1991), 47-48.

¹⁰ Shirley W. Dunn, *The Mohicans and Their Land, 1609-1730* (Fleishmans, NY: Purple Mountain Press, 1994), 143. See also page 254.

¹¹ Van der Zee and Van der Zee, 320.

¹² *Ibid.*, 321.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 322.

¹⁴ Fried, 86. The main providers of liquor to Indians appear to have been Aeltje Sybrants and her husband, the soldier Matthys

Roelofsen.

¹⁵ Quoted in Van der Zee and Van der Zee, 405.

¹⁶ Augustus H. Van Buren, *A History of Ulster County Under the Dutch* (1923) (Astoria, NY: Fawcett, Inc., 1989), 65f.

¹⁷ Andrew Brink, "The Ambition of Roeloff Swartwout, Schout of Esopus," *De Halve Maen*, LXVII, 3 (Fall 1994): 57f.

¹⁸ Fried, 106f.

¹⁹ Quoted in Sylvester, pt. I, 59f.

²⁰ I find my ancestor Lambert Huyberts Brink among the signers when the treaty was renewed in 1677-1678 and later in 1681. It was to his advantage to assure that no family member would again be snatched away and taken hostage. He was making certain that, where others had been snuffed out, his line of farmers would continue down the generations, which they have. By the 1830s when the Esopus Indians are said to have vanished, the Dutch agricultural communities of the Hudson Valley were prospering. They continued to do so until the Industrial Revolution again changed social patterns.

Andrew Brink taught at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, and later headed the Humanities and Psychoanalytic Thought Programme at the University of Toronto. He serves as a trustee of the Holland Society of New York. Andrew is the author of Loss and Symbolic Repair (Hamilton, ON: Cromlech Press, 1977), Creativity as Repair (Hamilton, ON: Cromlech Press, 1982), Bertrand Russell: The Psychobiography of a Moralizer (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1989), and Obsession and Culture: A Study of Sexual Obsession in the Modern Novel (forthcoming, Cranberry, NJ: Associated Universities Presses, 1995), numerous articles, and is the editor of a variety of books. □

American History and Culture: In Sickness and In Health

James R. Huffman
SUNY - Fredonia

Psychological thought that goes beyond biology-based psychology (i.e., Freudian psychoanalysis) and takes environment and cultural influences more strongly into account can be applied psychohistorically to many cultures and eras. This is particularly true of the personality theories and insights of Karen Horney (1885-1952), especially as updated and applied to the study of American history and culture. The personality disorders described by Horney have affected not only individuals in the United States in the twentieth century, but also

the course of American history and culture. We analyze a nation's cultural history in sickness and in health with the hope of diminishing the illness and enhancing the recovery.

From the first, the American nation perceived itself as threatened and its culture maligned by Europe as inferior. The struggle against the fear of inferiority led to some healthy responses but also to some unhealthy reactions, including a tendency toward violence. To counteract feelings of anxiety and inadequacy, Americans developed an idealized image of American character and engaged in a search for glory. They began to believe that America had a "Manifest Destiny" to be the greatest nation on earth. Soon they believed that it *was* the greatest and always would be — and that they were, in Lincoln's words, an "almost chosen people." But they became caught in a vicious circle: fearing inferiority, they had to prove themselves superior; when they failed to achieve the perfection they required, they felt inferior once again.

All the major defensive strategies show up in Americans, from isolationistic withdrawal and self-effacing compliance to expansive dominance. Some studies suggest that the detached or resigned personality may now be common. But most notably, Americans use aggression. In terms of what dominates, the United States is expansive both in psychological foundation and in cultural style. Immigration and the westward movement exaggerated expansiveness in many Americans. Several Presidents, including Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon, show strong symptoms of mostly expansive personality disorders. Unhealthy personality styles such as expansive disorders have affected government, religious movements, ethnic groups, corporations, popular culture, and much of the American public.

For example, it is enlightening to look at what I call The Wonderful Wacky World of Walt Disney — how Disney the man was unhealthy, why his films and Disney World are so popular, and what these reveal about American culture. Marc Eliot, in his unauthorized biography *Walt Disney: Hollywood's Dark Prince* (1993), does a good job of showing the Walt Disney that the corporation wants to hide. Instead of the

congenial "Uncle Walt" from the television series, Eliot shows a controlling perfectionist filled with inner conflicts, many of which deeply affect his work. Disney is both Mickey and Donald, congenial mouse and irascible duck. Eliot approaches Disney mainly from a Freudian perspective which misses some of the more important elements of his psychology which are culturally-based.

Walt Disney grew up in a very threatening environment. As a result, he learned to fight failure and the fear of inferiority by creating an idealized image of himself and embarking on a search for glory to compensate. He created animated worlds that reflect all these elements, and which appeal powerfully to people with similar inner conflicts. Some of the scariest scenes in animated films occur in Disney, from the pursuing woods in *Snow White* or the fire in *Bambi* to the monster in *Pinocchio* or the many danger scenes in *The Lion King*. Yet these scenes take place in almost ideal worlds with characters that are either already ideal or soon learn to be: Snow White rescued to happily-ever-after with her prince; the forest of Bambi, with his saintly mother and father; a wooden puppet who becomes a real boy with a perfect loving father; and the callow cub with a low self-image, Simba, who becomes the ruler of Pride Rock like his father-in-heaven Mufasa. The films resolve psychological conflicts by creating unrealistically idealized characters and worlds, an unhealthy but very popular solution. If you are good, as so many Disney songs say, fate will intercede and your dreams will come true. Wouldn't it be nice to think so?

Disney idealized American history and the image of America as well. His personal search for glory is matched by his sense of America's destined glory, as in the re-creations of Lincoln and Clinton at the Hall of Presidents in the Magic Kingdom and in "The American Adventure" at EPCOT. Disney World presents an idealized microcosm of America, whitewashing American history, insisting on a melting pot instead of cultural diversity, and glorifying the capitalistic heaven of technology and progress and control of nature. As a result, Disney World is a Mecca that Americans must visit, the epitome of American values trying to evangelize the world, the most popular man-

searches for glory, and leads the country away from a much needed sense of community. Similarly, goals and achievement create feelings of competence but unreasonable goals can lead to over-achievement and obsession. American emphasis on freedom should be an empowerment of persons and not a way to exercise control over others or to avoid connection and commitment.

The United States is obviously neither completely healthy nor totally sick. But Americans need to recognize and admit which is which, a healthy first step to recovery.

James R. Huffman is Professor of American Studies. This article is adopted from the abstracts of the overview chapter of the book he is writing, In Sickness and In Health: A Psychological Approach to American Culture, and of another of its chapters, "The Wonderful Wacky World of Walt Disney." Jim will present and discuss these topics at the November 4 Psychohistory Forum meeting. □

Widespread Cult Abuse: Where's the Evidence?

David Lotto
University of Massachusetts

There has been a good deal of interest lately among some psychohistorians about the controversial subject of cult abuse. The Spring 1994 issue of the *Journal of Psychohistory* was devoted entirely to this topic as were three of the six papers in the Winter 1995 issue. There are numerous reports that cult abuse is widespread. For example, Gould wrote in the Winter 1995 *Journal* that over twenty-five thousand incidents of ritual abuse have been reported in the United States alone.

Cult abuse, ritual cult abuse (RCA), Satanic ritual abuse (SRA), and ritual abuse are equivalent terms referring to acts such as animal and human sacrificial killing; forced cannibalism, sexual relations with animals, ingestion of feces, urine, blood, or drugs; and torture or extremely brutal acts of violence. Most often there are said to be multiple

perpetrators committing these acts as part of some type of ritual. These bizarre and unbelievable phenomena need to be differentiated from other kinds of sexual and physical abuse which we know exist in reality including brutal intrafamilial abuse; sadistic acts by individual pedophiles; violent sexual crimes by serial killers; the infamous crimes of Charles Manson and his "family" and the murderous drug dealers in Matamoros, Mexico; the non-criminal activities of religious and Satanic groups such as Santeria, the disciples of Alistair Crowley, Anton LeVey, the Church of Satan of the Process Church; the acts of petty vandalism committed by "Satanic dabblers;" and the activities of those who engage in child pornography for economic gain.

If cult abuse occurs at anywhere near the frequency indicated by most of the authors who write on this topic one would expect that there would be a great deal of evidence available to confirm it. This would include forensic evidence (bodies, bones, blood stains); eyewitness and third-party accounts (other than from alleged survivors); and testimony from ex-participants and ex-perpetrators who have had a change of heart and are willing and eager to relieve their guilt by confessing what they have done. Given the current immense media interest in this topic, anyone who could provide convincing evidence that corroborated the details of any of the fantastic stories told by the alleged survivors would stand to make a great deal of money. Newspapers, magazines, and television would all be willing to pay large sums to anyone who could provide solid evidence that these bizarre acts had actually occurred. Finally, if cult abuse is as widespread as is claimed, one would expect that the probability of evidence surfacing would steadily increase as time passes. The fact that no convincing evidence has yet appeared adds further plausibility to the hypothesis that we are dealing with a contemporary group fantasy, and not a piece of historical reality.

Some authors have attempted to deal with the lack of evidence by arguing that the cults are highly sophisticated organizations whose members are prominent people of power and influence in the community who are in a position to control and manipulate information so that the damning evidence never surfaces. They are also

experts in brainwashing and traumatizing their victims, deliberately producing dissociation and amnesia and thereby preventing their nefarious acts from being discovered. The problem with this argument is that it leaves out the universal human reality that most people feel guilty when they participate in brutal and sadistic acts and, over time, tend to try to rid themselves of these guilty feelings by talking about these acts.

If cult abuse is widespread with many individuals over significant periods of time having been involved as perpetrators it is just not believable that no one has come forward to confess and to supply evidence of the cults' existence and activities.

David Lotto, PhD, is a psychologist and psychoanalyst in private practice in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, as well as an adjunct professor at the University of Massachusetts. He is an active member of the Forum's War, Peace, and Conflict Resolution Research Group. □

The Diplomacy of Vamik Volkan

(Continued from page 1)

Virginia Medical School by Dr. Petschauer ("PP").

PP: What do you define yourself as professionally?

VV: I am a physician. All my professional life, after I trained in psychiatry, I have worked in university medical schools as a professor. Now I wear different hats. I am a professor and practitioner of psychoanalysis, a theory-builder and practitioner in the psychopolitical arena, and a writer on psychohistorical and psychopolitical topics. Recently, most of my work has focused on psychopolitics.

PP: You seem to be using your medical and psychoanalytic training to find solutions to ethnic conflicts.

VV: "Solutions" is a strong word. What we are really interested in is reducing ethnic tensions. If you want to use a medical model, you could say we are trying to vaccinate the

process to prevent the spread of further disease. Because of past historical markers, the psychological dimensions involved in ethnic or other large-group conflicts tend to promote rigid barriers. If we can somehow modify these barriers, we can "immunize" against future conflict and open doors to communication between opposing groups by eliminating the poison in their respective relationships

PP: How do you define psychohistory?

VV: For me, psychohistory is a comprehensive way to find out how historical events have become mental representations for a person or group. In the clinical setting we learn about the individual's mind, which doesn't necessarily correspond with the psychology of large groups, but does give us some clues. And psychoanalysis, while there is very important work in it on the psychology of small groups, also falls short of illuminating the psychology of large groups. So, for psychohistorical or psychopolitical works, the psychoanalyst has to cooperate with others, such as historians and political scientists, because no one discipline can have the answer.

PP: In what way does psychohistory play a role in theory-building in psychopolitics?

VV: In my international work, there are two major focus areas. The first one focuses on the rituals between two large groups that guide them in peace and war. What are these rituals? What are the principles that govern them? The second one focuses on the leader-follower relationship.

Imagine many individuals under a tent representing an ethnic group. Each individual wears his or her individualized garment that fits him or her snugly (their personal identity). All individuals under the tent are linked by the tent's canvas (their group identity) which envelopes them and serves as a caregiver, a mother. For a tent to stand up, however, it has to have a pole, the leadership. Now imagine two tents side by side, two neighbors. There is a ritualistic relationship between the peoples in these two tents that governs their behavior. The psychology of international relationships comes from the psychology of neighbors, and in the psychology of international relationships, two

phenomena converge: tent-to-tent and leader-follower interactions.

However, to understand an ethnic group and its motivations we need to know what the canvas of the tent is made of, and this is where reliance on other disciplines is required. The canvas itself is covered with cultural and religious symbols: songs, language, dances, foods, and tools. These are observable things that are painted on the canvas, and they are important, but what is more so is what they are painted on. What is the fabric of the canvas made of? Is its texture tight and coarse or smooth and loose? To know this, you have to know the story of the tent (its history) and, more importantly, its version of history: the shared mental representations of history which pass from generation to generation and become ethnic markers within the fabric. I call them "chosen traumas" and "chosen glories," and this is where history becomes psychohistory.

Chosen glories are those historical references that bring glory to an ethnic group, such as a victorious battle or a famous leader. They serve to bolster a group's self-esteem, but in large-group psychology, they are not as important as chosen traumas. When an event occurs in an ethnic or large-group's history in which a severe loss of people, prestige, or land is suffered, the extreme humiliation associated with the event prevents the group from successfully mourning its losses and resolving conflicts associated with the trauma. Because they cannot be mourned, they are passed on from generation to generation in many different ways, not just through story-telling, in an unconscious fashion. Chosen traumas are one of the cornerstones of psychopolitical theory, inasmuch as they are the main barrier to successful negotiations between opposing groups.

PP: I know this very well from Austria and Italy. I grew up in South Tyrol. There was the conflict between German-speakers and Italian-speakers. Every time we got together, and the question came to ethnicity, the same things were repeated over and over. One of those markers was Andreas Hofer, a significant figure during the Napoleonic wars, who the French were able to capture and execute. But since the 1950s the economy has been very good

in the area. Maybe more importantly, the Italians decided to leave the Germans alone. In the ethnic consciousness Hofer has ceased to be a significant person.

VV: The ethnic poison in South Tyrol is going down then. It is important to note how this has been achieved. At other places in the world chosen traumas are reactivated to poison ethnic relationships. A good example comes from the former Yugoslavia. When the big Yugoslavian tent disappeared, groups under the smaller tents, i.e., Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims, asked, "Who are we now?" "How are we different from our neighbors?" Slobodan Milosevic took advantage of the uncertainty, went to Kosova, and gave an inflammatory speech about the Serbs' major chosen trauma: six hundred years ago, Serbian King Lazar's army was defeated by the Ottoman Turks at Kosova and King Lazar was killed. Now, six hundred years later, the Serbian leadership dug up King Lazar's grave and put his remains — whatever was left — into a coffin, and the coffin made a year-long pilgrimage to Serbian villages. Serbs then began to call the Bosnian Muslims "Turks" since they had converted to Islam during the Ottoman period. In effect, the time span between the defeat in Kosova and the present day collapsed for the Serbs, and protection of their "new" ethnic identity became more important than maintaining their individualized identity. Psychohistory allows us to understand how these historical events became mental representations for large groups which should help us to explain and understand their collective behavior.

I am not involved in the Yugoslavia of today. But I hear from some good friends who have been involved. When things are so hot and bleeding, you need to create a power which we do not have. My methodology requires power. Power is what you need in Yugoslavia, and I don't mean military power. There is no power in Europe or in America to say to these guys, "Stop it!" Nobody made a moral issue of it and got support for intervention. There is a constant helplessness and the Serbs, step-by-step, get away with their aggression. Even now, war atrocities! It has been three years and just last week they decided to have a trial. If they had done it in two weeks, it would have shown

power.

PP: What led you to study and work in this field?

VV: Being from Cyprus! In 1969 the Brookings Institution held a meeting for government officials and scholars in Washington, DC, that was convened to study the political situation in Cyprus. They wanted to know why the Turks and Greeks on the island could not get together as one nation, and I was invited to offer my views. A young psychoanalyst at the time, I went to Washington to talk with this group, and all I could offer was stories from my childhood that underscored how I was different than my Greek neighbors. This is how my career in the psychopolitical and psychohistorical fields began.

PP: So, you had to reveal yourself — your past — in public, and then analyze it.

VV: Yes. Soon after and because of it, I was asked to become a member of a task force on psychiatry and foreign affairs of the American Psychiatric Association (APA). At the time, it was a small group of American psychiatrists who were interested in international conflict; but none of us knew much about it. One committee member had worked with a Presidential candidate and was supposed to think politically and inform the committee. But from 1969 to 1977 we met every six months for cocktails, but did no substantial work whatsoever. Then in 1977, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat went to the Israeli Knesset and said, “70% of the trouble between Arabs and Israelis is psychological.” Because of his political prominence, we suddenly received funds to study his statement. We went to Egypt and Israel, interviewed influential Egyptians and Israelis, and brought them to Washington to start a series of meetings between the two groups. For the next six years, we conducted some of the first unofficial meetings between Egyptians, Palestinians and Israelis — way before the events in Norway.

PP: Did you meet in Washington?

VV: Yes, but we also met in Switzerland, Egypt, and Austria. We had six major meetings and many, many minor ones. They were highly noted in the Arab and Israeli

worlds. I just had a call from General Shlomo Gazit, an Israeli hero who masterminded the Entebbe raid. He told me that he wants to raise some funds, after all these years, for the veterans of the Arab-Israeli meetings to have a reunion in May.

PP: So, the committee is still functioning in a way?

VV: Not formally, but I still see many people from this group every now and then at various functions. Upon reflection, it was in these meetings that I had the opportunity to observe and to formulate many of the theories that I explained in my book, *The Need to Have Enemies and Allies*, which, in part, recounts the Arab-Israeli relationship.

PP: More recently you’ve been involved in the former Soviet Union?

VV: Well, we originally went to discuss the larger problem of Soviet-American relations. (That is how I eventually met Mikhail Gorbachev.) When the Soviet Union collapsed, our Center here in Charlottesville became involved in reducing tensions in the newly-independent Baltic Republics. Because of their history, we felt that they would be able to separate from the Soviet Union in a more effective and adaptive way than other former Soviet Republics. But problems do exist there, such as the fact that large parts of these republics consist of Russian-speaking communities that need to be integrated into the Baltic societies. Needless to say, there is a great deal of friction in the integration process.

PP: I have read that some Baltic individuals have made genuine breakthroughs by recognizing that their parents or they themselves had done something very specific that could be interpreted as an atrocity.

VV: Yes, in the Baltic communities, at various times in history, there were German sympathizers, Soviet sympathizers, and ultra-nationalists, and now that the ethnic tent has been shaken they are asking, “Who are we now?” In Estonia there was an anniversary celebration, the rescue of Tallinn, or something like that, and former Soviet sympathizers and former German sympathizers could not get together. As recently as a year-and-a-half ago,

most Estonians were literally turning purple when they talked about Russians in Estonia. The general wish, though unspoken perhaps, was to get rid of them. But just this past month we had a meeting in Estonia among Estonians, Russians, and Russian-speakers in Estonia, and the Estonians were able to talk about their present fears of integration (of the Russian-speakers in Estonia with Estonians) instead of their desire to deport the Russians. Estonians are much better than Latvians in that respect. They're doing a lot of soul-searching. I've seen dramatic changes in Estonia in the past two years. I think they're going to make it.

PP: Latvia is different?

VV: In Estonia about 35% of the population is Russian-speaking. However, in Latvia the percentage is even higher. In every large city in Latvia, including the capital of Riga, the percentage of Russian-speakers is higher than Latvian-speakers. The Russian-speakers seem to have no incentive to learn the Latvian language. So the Latvians in the major cities are in the minority in their own country. There is greater fragmentation within Latvian society in spite of the physical changes within Latvia — they are making Riga beautiful and building hotels. But again you have the emotional problems which are not settled. There has been no initiation of in-depth discussion on ethnic plurality in Latvia. The issue seems to be avoided through the creation of more and more legal requirements for issues such as Latvian citizenship.

PP: Do you think an outsider can play a moderating role much more easily than an insider?

VV: There is always initial distrust of outsiders, but a third and neutral party helps to facilitate dialogue and can serve as a positive catalyst. They say, "Why do you do this?" There was no community service in the Communist world. In Russia this time, just before our farewell dinner, the Russians — the highest one was the Vice Chairman of the Committee on CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) Affairs — called me and said, "Let's have a secret talk." So, three Russian parliamentarians and I went to a sauna — you know, Russian-style — because we could not get another place. We had four hours and

talked; everybody sat in front of me. They had gone to see the Estonian president and he had told them that we were okay. Now, the Russians in turn wanted to make sure that we were okay. Again, personal contact! This was an extremely important meeting to have the Russians commit to what we were doing.

PP: What comments do you have about the other Eastern European nations or other ethnically-divided areas, such as South Africa?

VV: I think it would be interesting to study the peaceful separation of Czechoslovakia into the Czech and Slovak states. I hear, however, there is still a lot of negative feelings between the two groups. But they succeeded in accomplishing something without bloodshed. If one were to study how they did this, I suspect you would find out that a lot of it is based on personal relationships.

I have never worked in South Africa. My experience in Africa, in general, comes from traveling to Senegal with former President Jimmy Carter and his International Negotiation Network (INN) a few years ago and getting some firsthand information from a lot of people from Zaire, Senegal, South Africa, and Nigeria. I met and traveled with an *Afrikaner* who secretly initiated the dialogue between Mandela and deKlerk when Mandela was in jail. In South Africa they did not force "togetherness." Most of the illusion in conflict resolution is that we force "togetherness" and that creates a mess sometimes. What Mandela said, in a sense, is, "We're black and they're white, we're not the same; but we want to live under the same tent with separate identities." That has helped so far; at least as long as Mandela is the leader. What happens when he is gone remains to be seen.

PP: I have just written a book about human space. What do you think about the spatial aspects of ethnicity?

VV: The two principles that govern ethnic relationships are: number one, thou shall not be identical to your neighbor and, number two, — and they are related — thou shall have a border (a psychological space) between you and your neighbor. All ethnic rituals are based on these two principles. If I am identical to you I cannot project things onto you in a stable fashion

because the same things will simply come back to me. Borders help to maintain these differences. In this respect, there are spatial aspects to ethnicity, psychologically speaking.

PP: What has been your most surprising finding?

VV: The most surprising finding was something that I probably knew, but hadn't realized: international relations include the most primitive mental mechanisms. Clinically, I've worked with some very regressed individuals, such as schizophrenics, and interestingly, those experiences have added a lot to my understanding of international relations. For instance, projections play a significant role in political decision-making. Even major decisions, especially those made in crises, are often made because of either realistic or fantasized personal beliefs or relationships among decision-makers of opposing groups.

PP: Let's turn to some more personal questions. Bill Niederland — he was your mentor?

VV: Oh, Bill. Bill was a poet of psychoanalysis. He was a German Jew who had no country during the Nazi period and because of this lived on a boat for a long time. Eventually he came to the United States. Early in my career, he took me seriously and was very kind. When we, Norman Itzkowitz and I, were writing the *Immortal Atatürk* book, I sent him some manuscript pages. He actually took the time to respond. I met him many times and thought very highly of him. I would not call him a mentor, however, because I never studied under him, but I would call him an older brother who took me seriously. It meant a lot to me.

PP: What influence did Erik Erikson have on you?

VV: Some years ago, I was awarded a six-year grant to meet Erikson and others in annual, week-long sessions at the Esalen Institute in California. There were about 20 of us. Most were well-known people in their respective fields, i.e., political science, diplomacy, philosophy, and psychoanalysis. We met with Erikson and his wife, Joan, but during this period he was slowly developing what was probably Alzheimer's disease. So in a sense

Erik could not contribute to these meetings because of his condition, but getting to know him as a person and witnessing the enormous amount of respect and adoration from those around him made me appreciate and study his writings carefully.

PP: None of us is safe from disease. Of which of your psychohistorical works are you most proud?

VV: Oh, I don't know about being "proud." Writing about Atatürk had the most impact on me. It was an emotional experience because I had to analyze my idealized father representation in Atatürk. When historian Norman Itzkowitz and I finished writing the book, the dean here at the medical school gave a big party to celebrate the publication of the book as a way of congratulation. That night I had a dream. In it there were newscasters from many different countries: Germany, Italy, France, Greece, Turkey — as if I knew all the languages! I distinctly remember hearing, "*Atatürk el morte*." In a sense, I had finished that part of my life and Atatürk died after the celebration for the book's publication.

PP: I wrote my first book about Northern Italy and when I finished with it, there was somehow an ease, a release.

VV: A release, yes! There is a danger in writing psychohistory. The danger is that you have transference toward your subject. Then, if you are not careful, fantasy and reality merge and you write bad psychobiography. So it's important to check your transference reactions. A good way is to work with a co-author so you have someone to talk with about personal feelings who can help to dissolve the fantasies.

PP: I had always thought that my group, the German-speaking South Tyrolians, were much better than the other group, the Italian-speaking residents of the area. Supposedly, they drank more, raped our women, and did all sorts of terrible things. When I wrote my first book, I did some statistics. What we said was not true! My group drank more and was just as "bad" as the other. Once I realized this, I realized also that all the hostility was just S

VV: Projection. Some of it may have been real, but not to the degree you had believed

it to be.

PP: Have all the travels and negotiations sidetracked you from your writings?

VV: Well, I've published many books. Writing is part of my life. When I was a teenager I wrote journals by hand, even illustrated them. It became my hobby. Writing is very personal. I write almost every day, even when I travel. My newest book is coming out this week. It is on schizophrenia and related clinical topics. But because I have been involved in psychohistorical and psychopolitical activity, I write a lot that is outside the field of clinical psychoanalysis, even though most of my books deal with clinical issues.

PP: What is your journal, *Mind and Human Interaction*, all about?

VV: It is envisioned as a window for interdisciplinary communication and has a psychohistorical bent. While we deal in theory, we try to avoid jargon in order to make it accessible to a wide audience. It is a quarterly journal, and because of a grant, we are able to mail about 2,000 copies around the globe, some to high-level officials in 20 different countries.

PP: Can you tell me a bit about strategies for funding applied psychohistory?

VV: The Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction is lucky in the respect that it has now attained a level of reputation where some key foundations communicate with us without our going to them.

PP: Did you ever teach psychohistory?

VV: No, but I lecture on it. I've also developed a methodology on writing psychohistory which I hope to publish.

PP: One of the great weaknesses of the field seems to be that there is not enough training.

VV: Yes, we must also come up with standards and a methodology of psychohistory. The difficulty is that the field includes contributors from various disciplines with their various professional languages. Itzkowitz is an historian, and since we've been working together now for almost twenty years we've learned each

other's language. Because there is competition between the disciplines, in order to develop a working relationship you have to break down the professional borders to some extent. This takes time.

PP: What do you see as psychohistory's future?

VV: We need more psychohistorians who are making names for themselves and getting attention because of the seriousness of their work. This would protect the field from "wild psychoanalysis." We need a journal, an organization, and a spokesperson. Those three will be a winning combination. And we need prominent academic centers to lend their prestige to psychohistory's serious work.

PP: How can we recruit new people to the field?

VV: By doing good work, we attract others to it.

Peter Petschauer is Professor of History and Chair of the University of North Carolina Faculty Assembly. □

Memory of the Holocaust

Flora Hogman
Psychologist in Private Practice

Holocaust survivors struggle all their lives with the issue of remembering or forgetting the traumatic events of World War II. Memory serves a conflicting function: it helps maintain an attachment to the people and the world they have lost and it also forces the survivors to re-experience the feelings which accompanied their losses — devastating feelings of depression, rage, and alienation. The conflict to remember or not to remember was dramatically exemplified in the first gathering of the Hidden Children of the Holocaust which took place in New York City in 1991. Present were people who as children during the war had been torn away from their parents. They were kept in attics, convents, and forests, and usually converted to Christianity. Many spoke for the first time about life-long fears of abandonment and experiences

of a lost childhood. Some had never revealed to anyone before that they were Jewish. Many still felt in hiding.

At the gathering there was an empowerment, an exhilaration in first affirming their right to exist as a distinct group. The Hidden Children there finally faced their own pasts and struggles, and thereby they felt connected and more nearly whole. The feeling of authenticity had been lost throughout their lives as they had buried the memories of the war while attempting to be like everyone else. While consciously trying to build their lives they unconsciously inclined to recapitulate their old war-related fears, humiliations, and other gut-wrenching feelings.

The gathering was the culmination of years of struggle to adapt to life. This had impelled in many survivors a heightened awareness of their pasts. They sought an identity (Jewish and otherwise), as they struggled with self-esteem and the building of their careers and personal relationships. Whether they knew it or not, in all areas memories of the war had influenced their lives. By the mid-70s, the new awareness about their pasts resulted in the beginning of writing of testimonies and the organization of Holocaust survivors' therapy and support groups.

When the separation and subsequent loss of parents was sudden, devastating, and never integrated, the search for memory could also gnaw at survivors throughout life. I will illustrate this with the story of Steve. It began when he was seven years old. Suddenly one night, the French police arrested his parents. He says, "I never saw the person who arrested them. I was in bed. I heard a loud knock, it woke me up. I was not prepared at all. [Yet] it was not a shock." He went on to say "It was outside the range of emotions: a choice I had. I stayed in bed. One just had a sense of chaos, madness, [and my] father [was] crying, [and my] mother [was] sitting quietly, inconceivable. I thought it was a dream, and for a long time after I thought I was going to wake up."

But the nightmare continued with the loss of his only brother two months later, again without warning in the middle of the night. Of seven Jewish boys hidden in a house, Steve was the only one who was not seized by the Nazis.

He says, "People said, 'poor child.' I never understood why. I felt normal on the surface. I didn't cry. I waited for them, but I knew they would never come back; I had a very good life in the orphanage, I was very happy. Everything seemed unreal: it was as if I were in a dream."

His self-denigration led him to empathize with his own plight as a child. This lack of self-love led him to assert, "The child that was me, I don't feel love for it, there is something grotesque about it; a freak, a monster is how I feel because of what I went through." The happy memories with his family are mere words with no affective connotations. "To have a father is unreal to me and I don't know how to be a father."

Although wishing for closeness, Steve alienated everyone by his negative, erratic behavior. His studies were chaotic, his relationship to women was disastrous and his contacts with me were troubled as well. When his second wife left him he decided to "go all the way" and confront his past. "I went back to the village where we had been hidden during the war. I talked to the people, and [while] taking care of myself there, I began to adjust to the reality of aloneness. I wanted to enter [into] the very thing I [previously] didn't want to face." He made two movies there. In one he interviewed a 92-year-old woman who had lost her children during the war, to find out how she coped with her losses. He has also written a story about his return to the village in which he describes his search for people who had known his parents. He is chasing memories to recover the affective connection. He would like to be able to mourn. This professor now wants to become a businessman, like his father. Steve has recently remarried — he wants to try again since re-experiencing his past has given him the courage and optimism to face the future.

The struggle to integrate the Holocaust experience goes on through the generations of families with different generations having different needs. The dialogue is ongoing between survivor-parents and their children about how to share the devastating legacy of the war. In a new research study, I asked children of survivors how they present the theme of the Holocaust to their own children and I also interviewed their children who were old enough.

How the second generation felt the Holocaust experience was conveyed to them by their parents, is echoed in the approach they take with their own children. The second generation have to deal with the underlying feelings of fear transmitted by their parents. They feel resentment and sometimes contempt towards their parents. There is sadness, a rejection of victimization, a love-hate relationship with Judaism, and sometimes the desire to avoid being a Jew. Their ongoing efforts are influenced by having to face the issues with their own children. A parent who wants to protect a child against the Holocaust memory may say, "It's not his own experience; there is a need to take distance." Another parent tells the child at length about the Holocaust, unconsciously transmitting to the child the task of mastering perpetual fear and perhaps a sense of victimization or dread. A third parent wants to close the chapter of the war completely.

Most parents express a need to own up to the memory of the experiences of their forebears. But how? The Holocaust cannot be dismissed without a sense of betrayal to one's people, but it cannot be presented in just its negative state; the conflict between dismissal and owning-up is uniquely resolved by each individual and family. It is reflected in telling about the Holocaust and about their ancestors, and in the values they teach their children. Some of the themes emerging in the study include encouraging activism and a strong sense of being Jewish; developing lore about ancestors as heroes, as people to be proud of (even by some parents who had expressed contempt for their parents); developing an interest in Israel; teaching values of tolerance and standing up for oneself; disentangling Judaism from the Holocaust and the tradition from the religion; finding ways to make Judaism a positive experience by creating their own brand of being as Jews; and, lastly, at times simply expressing a wish that their child will do better with Judaism than they have done.

These are ways that the often conflictual memory of the war appears to become integrated through the generations. The themes mirror the powerful struggle of the first generation to integrate their direct experience of the Holocaust. The issues are to remember or not to remember, how to remember, how to be a Jew.

Flora Hogman, PhD, a Research Associate of the Forum, was a hidden child during the Nazi occupation of Vichy France. She is in the private practice of psychology in Manhattan and conducts a Holocaust survivors support group. □

Sacred Spaces and Their Disruption

Peter W. Petschauer
Appalachian State University

All of us fill the world around us with our creations. We fashion at least two major categories of creations: those which originate with us as individuals and which are more specifically extensions of ourselves and our space, and those which we originate as a group, or as sub-groups.

One of our creations, one aspect of our being in space, may be associated with sacred space, its use and abuse. We "create" sacred spaces for the purpose of being "left alone," and for the sake of worship. They are the spaces which most of us hold dear in our own peculiar environments and which societies tend to honor and protect because of the assumed presence of supra-natural forces. I am thinking of a special corner in a house that has become off-limits because of fairly specific agreements among members of a household and of the sacred spaces outside of this setting that past societies have created and we continue to create and maintain. The place at which this essay was written may be as sacred to me as the place at which you are reading it. And the Pantheon in Rome was as sacred to many ancient Romans as St. Patrick's in New York City is to many New Yorkers. But as the Pantheon was displaced by a later religious affiliation of Romans, so the sacred area we create in our home or some other setting may be displaced or disturbed by others.

One can create a sacred space in many different settings. If one were to read this essay in the subway in New York, the S-Bahn in Düsseldorf, or the underground in London or Tashkent, then one would most likely have

created a sacred space. That is, the people who surround us for a time in one of these moving environments assume that we are reading intently and that we do not want to be disturbed. They accept this temporary off-limits space we have created for ourselves.

For me, one of the finest examples of the creation of a sacred space remains a performance of the St. Petersburg Philharmonic of Gustav Mahler's Second Symphony in C minor, the "Resurrection" Symphony, at the end of May, 1992. The splendid orchestra and choir were under the direction of Semyon Bychkov, a Russian Jew conducting for the first time in Russia since the break-up of the Soviet Union. A resurrection indeed! The cracks in the beautiful ceiling seemed to widen and lengthen whenever orchestra and choir shook the building to the foundations with their splendid rendition of the Bohemian's composition. As the temperatures were unusually warm that Spring, people sat in the sweltering heat in shirtsleeves and spring dresses. The heat may have intensified the common experience; the outburst of applause at the finale was overwhelming.

Another example of the creation of a sacred space, and its disruption, occurred a few years ago, when a number of students and a colleague of mine and I were traveling in a van from New York City to Boone, NC; we were all talking and singing. After being together for several days, we were able to create one of those traveling spaces in which people feel a sense of trust that resembles the feeling created in some sacred places. On this occasion, my colleague decided to turn on the van's radio "to help us with the singing." He may indeed have felt the need to assist us, but more likely he felt that it was time to become realistic once more about the world we were about to reenter or he felt uncomfortable about the sharing that had emerged in the back of the van as he sat in the front. To my surprise, the singing and the conversation stopped immediately; the sound from the outside had broken the atmosphere and with it the coziness. We were not able to recover the sharing and giving during the remaining seven or eight hours of the trip.

Still another form of disruption of a sacred space would most likely occur if one were

to take this journal into a church or temple and there peruse it instead of reading the intended materials; the resident minister or rabbi could readily interrupt our train of thought and enter our sacred space. He is allowed to do so not because he considered it inappropriate reading as such, but because we acknowledge that in that particular setting, a greater sacredness supersedes ours. The sacredness of certain places is agreed upon by communities in order to honor the presence of a God or gods and to permit worshippers of this presence the engagement in various rituals. In many communities in the past, locations sanctified and edifices constructed for these purposes often superseded all others in aesthetic significance and architectural importance.

Sacred spaces are, then, agreed-on spaces, wherever they might be: a cave in France, a swamp in Egypt, a mountain top in Greece, a crevice emitting putrid odors, a ravine at the foot of a mountain, an outcropping in Saudi Arabia, a splendid building, a wall, the corner of a subway, a superb performance, or the cozy compartment of a van.

By returning mentally to my boyhood village of Afers (Eores) in Northern Italy, I would like to highlight other points as well. Much like the sacred buildings of other places, St. Georg stood in the center of the village — at the center of its history, its mentality, its visual image, and its network of paths. It has ceased to occupy this center only recently. St. Georg is a baroque church that was rebuilt in the 1770s on the base of a Gothic church whose date of origin is unknown, but probably soon after the center part of the valley was settled in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. St. Georg became the focal point of the village not only because of its presence in the center of the village, but also because its priest kept the records of the villagers' lives. The key points of the villagers' lives — their beginnings and ends, and all the significant events in between — were not only highlighted with ceremonies like baptism, confirmation, marriage, and burial, but were also permanently captured in written form at the center of the village. That is, the lives of the villagers were made real and permanent at the center of the village through its traditions and its records.

St. Georg was the mental center in another sense as well. It was the most sophisticated aesthetic expression available to the villagers and they probably took from it their ideal of church, like I did. It was their center of aesthetic awareness and attainment. Wherever it could be seen, it impressed with its imposing presence and the associated knowledge of its interior. Where it could not be seen, it reminded of its presence through its mighty bells. Finally, all paths of the village lead to St. Georg. When my wife Joni and I walked all the paths that we could still trace after twenty years of neglect because of the establishment of a network of paved highways, we discovered that the focal point of them had been the church.

Some of the components to this centering were undermined within the last generation. Because of the decline of candidates for the priesthood in Northern Italy, the parish has been without its own priest since the mid-eighties. Villagers still associate the major events of their lives with the church, but changes in their work patterns have drawn them away from it for most other activities. Farming and the church seemed to go hand in hand; the rituals associated with farming and the church matched each other well. But the work outside of the village and in the skiing industry do not coincide. Both draw villagers away from the life and the rituals that was centered on the valley and the church. For example, villagers used to rise and go to bed based on imagery and reminders associated with the church, like the praying of the *Angelus* in the early evening. Now they rise with the modern clock on their night stands and retire after the last interesting show on Austrian, German or Italian television. The church has ceased to be the architectural focus because of the new elementary school which was completed in the early 1980s and the new activities center which was completed in the early 1990s. Both structures are in the contemporary style, compete with the Baroque of the church, and to some degree displace it. Because of these changes and because of the absence of a priest, the mindset also shifts gradually to the world beyond and the ways in which it functions and solves problems.

Afers is not the only place to have experienced a physical and visual displacement of religious focal points. All around the world,

cities have swallowed the churches which once were their focus. The Prince of Wales highlighted not too long ago what many had observed, namely that St. Paul's Cathedral has been almost overwhelmed by the buildings that surround it. Not only is Sir Christopher Wren's masterly design depreciated by the secular around it, but this encroachment also symbolizes the decline of the church as a center of the life of Londoners.

Throughout history, sacred spaces have been disturbed by persons who did not value a particular form of sacredness. Many of these disturbances were the consequence of war and robbery. One particularly striking disturbance may be seen at the Alhambra in Granada. A Catholic church was injected into this magnificent mosque upon the conquest of the city by the Spanish in 1492 under the leadership of the famous royal pair Isabel and Ferdinand. As a visitor, one has the sense that a foreign and obtrusive mass has been thrust into the heart of an elegant and uncooperative edifice.

The systematic destruction by various ethnic groups in the former Yugoslavia of the sacred spaces of other ethnic groups is an example of more recent and even more violent affronts. It is almost beyond the imagination to think that men (and women) would willfully destroy a church, a mosque or a temple because they want to swipe at a supposedly opposing ethnic group.

Just as disturbing, even if it originates with robbers and not combatants, is the disregard of the sanctity of Afers' St. Georg. One night in the mid-1980s, sophisticated robbers entered the church and made off with all the *putti* [statuettes and paintings of small angels] and the two life-sized and beautiful angels from the main altar. For two hundred and ten years these decorations offered their early-modern message and impact to the church and its visitors; they were part of its total image and religious function. I remain particularly offended at this sacrilege because it affects my perception of this sacred space and because these pieces were forcibly expropriated and inappropriately reassigned.

Urban restructuring, reassignment of traditional importances, combat, and robbery are ways in which sacred spaces are actively

reassessed; abandonment accomplishes the same end in passive fashion. Few experiences have influenced my thinking as profoundly as a visit to Chichen-Itza in Mexico, in particular the Castillo, or Pyramid. The Mayan and Toltec sacred structures were probably abandoned during the phase of wars that began in the eighth century and stand empty today for anthropologists, nationalists, and tourists. Unfortunately their original purpose is only partially understood. All the same, standing at the top of the Castillo, as one could in 1993, and looking down the extremely steep steps was one of my wife's and my most profound moments. It was like standing on top of one of the mountains in Switzerland or the Caucasus and looking down a five hundred meter sheer rock face. In a flat landscape, this Mayan structure is a

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monumental statement. What clarity of purpose and hierarchical thinking! What overwhelming sense of presence and power! What spatial sensitivity! Nevertheless, today nothing is left of that brilliant statement except its empty shell. What did the priests think when they stood at the top of the steps? What did the worshippers feel as they stood below observing the drama above? What did those who were about to be sacrificed feel as they climbed the mountainous steps? All that remains for us is an awe-inspired presence.

This short reflection on sacred spaces, one of our emotional, intellectual and physical creations, fits into the broader discussion of how we occupy and extend the space we are as human beings. The disturbances of sacred spaces we create also fits into the broader discussion of the many forms of violence toward both our physical presence and the extension of this presence. In the Russian city of Novgorod, medieval merchants connected their Hansa warehouses with churches so that robbers would not steal their trade items. These individuals extended their personal space into sacred space to enhance their need for security. When the city ceased to be a major trade center, the reason for

the churches ceased as well. Little did these early merchants know that later leaders of the city would not be merchants and also have no concern with their churches, except as museums.

A sacred space can only remain so if the individuals who created it either continue it themselves or have others do so for them. Thus one may discontinue a sacred space by getting off the subway or by abandoning the attachment to an icon that at one time or another turned a place or a building into a sacred space. But the sacred space may not have been abandoned and others may have seen fit to desecrate it. While the first is the choice of the individuals who created the space, or it simply came into disuse, the second involves others penetrating and thus desecrating the space. While selling a church and turning it into a home may exemplify a decision to abandon a sacred space, bombing or robbing a church exemplifies the desecration of a sacred space.

The eagerness to be abusive of the sacred space of others is precisely that it is an extension of those others. The very act of defiling the most valued space of others empowers the defilers. They gain strength through destroying what is most valuable to these others. For that very reason it is almost impossible to stop those who abuse the sacred space of others. □

Bulletin Board

NOTES ON MEMBERS AND THEIR RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS: A new edition of **Peter Loewenberg**, *Decoding the Past*, will be printed by Transaction Press in January. **Ted Goertzel** is currently down in Brazil researching the president of that developing country. **TRAVEL:** **Norman Simms** and his wife Martha have been touring the USA and Europe on their way from New Zealand to his new position at Ben Gurion University in Israel where he plans to spread psychohistorical knowledge this fall. **RECUPERATION:** We

Forthcoming Interviews

Look for insightful interviews with these influential psychohistorians in future issues of **Clio's Psyche:** **Robert Jay Lifton, Lloyd deMause, and Peter Gay**

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