A CALCULUS OF NEW REFUGEE CULTURE: IDENTITY, AFGHANS, AND THE MEDICAL DIALECT OF SUFFERING

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ABSTRACT

In recent decades the ongoing rise of refugee populations around the world has provided a unique opportunity to study the impact of forced migrations on the identities of individuals and collectivities. The simultaneous emergence of the novel social phenomenon of 'refugee societies' has captured anthropological interest in the way in which 'refugee identity' is currently imagined and represented. A useful entry point for exploring representations of 'refugee' identity within a new culture of refugees is found in the recurrent notion of suffering. 'Suffering' is conceptualized here as an ideological grammar that characterizes a variety of language games contained in a broader 'language of suffering'. Focus is directed towards the 'medical dialect of suffering' and its role in articulating the identities of refugees and representing their experiences of suffering. Medical discourse, practices, and technologies can drive the transformation of the categorical 'refugee' identity into a 'medicalized' and 'traumatized' identity: revealing how medicine not only reflects cultural meanings of suffering, but can also project new cultural meanings of suffering. The relevant case of Afghan refugees illustrates how cultural identities can be conceptualized as shifting, strategic, and multiplicitous—realities that can be a blend of both coherency and contradiction.

RÉSUMÉ

Dans les dernières décennies, la montée croissante des populations réfugiées à travers le monde a fourni une occasion unique d'étudier l'impact des migrations forcées sur la formation des identités individuelles et collectives. L'émergence simultanée de ce nouveau phénomène social que représentent les "sociétés réfugiées" a attiré l'attention des anthropologues qui se sont intéressés à la façon cette "identité réfugiée" est construite et imaginée. Une voie intéressante pour explorer ces représentations identitaires à l'intérieure d'une nouvelle culture pour les réfugiés est celle de la notion récurrente de "souffrance". La "souffrance" est ici conceptualisée comme une forme de grammaire idéologique qui caractérise une variété de "jeux de langages" contenus dans un "langage de la souffrance" plus vaste. L'accent est porté sur le "dialecte médical de la souffrance" et son rôle dans l'articulation des identités des réfugiés ainsi que dans la représentation de leurs souffrances. Les discours, pratiques et technologies médicales mènent à une transformation de l'identité du réfugié en une identité "médicalisée" et "traumatisée"; ils révèlent également la façon dont la médecine, en plus de refléter les significations culturelles de la souffrance peut aussi en projeter de nouvelles. Le cas des réfugiés afghans illustre la façon dont les identités culturelles peuvent être conceptualisées comme changeantes, stratégiques et multiples, réalités qui peuvent être à la fois cohérentes et contradictoires.

INTRODUCTION

I have organized the following contents into four main parts. These are as follows:

Part I, *Identities*, aims to provide the theoretical backdrop for the subsequent chapters. Chapter 1, *Notes on Identity*, deals with the subjective and social conceptualizations of individual and collective identities. Chapter 2, *Politics of Identity*, is intended to emphasize the ways in which identity concepts such as ethnicity, nationality, and religious identities are ideologically connected to relations of power and strategic memory practices, or a politics of memory. Chapter 3, *Afghan Identity*, introduces the subject of Afghanistan and Afghan identity. I have given emphasis to Pashtun identity concepts due to their historical and political salience in Afghanistan. The emergence of the revivalist movement of the Taliban will also be discussed.

Part II, *Refugee Identities*, presents a discussion of the concept of refugee as a social category of person. Chapter 4, *The Category of 'Refugee'*, traces an historical development of the 'status' refugee. Chapter 5, *The Concept of 'Refugee'*, focuses on the ambiguities and limitations associated with the concept of refugee. Chapter 6, *Afghan Refugees*, resumes a particular ethnographic glance at the Afghans who have primarily been displaced to refugee camps in Pakistan. I will focus on particular transformations and representations of Afghan refugee identity, and aspects of their relationship to migration and everyday camp life.

Part III, *Suffering Identities*, concentrates on the notion of 'suffering' as a useful entry point for exploring identity concepts. Chapter 7, *'Suffering'*, outlines the terminology and concepts that are inherent to 'a language of suffering' that characterizes a calculus of new refugee culture. Chapter 8, *The Medical Dialect of Suffering*, describes how medical discourse, practices, and technologies are implicated

in the representations of suffering for refugees. The significance of medicalized and traumatized identities is presented. Chapter 9, *Afghan 'Suffering': The Mental Health of Afghan Refugees*, presents an overview of mental health and particular notions of suffering identities amongst Afghan refugees.

Part IV, *Conclusion*, describes how imagined 'identity' in the new culture of refugees is conceptually shifting, multiplicitous, and polysemic. The case of Afghan refugees shows the political polyvalence of identities, and the existence of cultural notions that encapsulate strategic practices of representation. The role of medicine in articulating the transformations and representations of 'identity' and 'suffering' for refugees is also elaborated.

PART I: IDENTITIES

"...to discover, not what the truth is, but what we believe."
—Derek Parfit, (1995:44)

1. NOTES ON IDENTITY

I wish to explain my reference to this section as 'notes' on identity. Mainly it is a consideration of the finite space that I am entitled to in attempting this section. The voluminous literature that exists alone on the subject has pressed me to contract the scope of my discussion, with a counter hope, of course, of attaining some success in the depth of inquiry[1]. I have also tried to simplify the task at hand by excluding the 'identity' literature that is available in gender studies, cultural studies, literary criticism, and psychoanalysis[2]. Thus, as a student of 'identity', I claim from the outset, with ceded dissatisfaction (mingled with some relief), that this chapter, somewhat like thoughts privileged in the wisdom of concise notes, is necessarily incomplete. In the light of the given limits, my intent, therefore, has not been to draft an exhaustive account, but rather to draw attention to, and to distinguish what to my mind are the salient ideas that pertain to 'identity' and the anthropological treatment of the concept.

As such, my interest is not restrained to mere concepts alone, but extends to how such concepts are used in everyday life, and how representations of life worlds reflect and inculcate the everyday experiences of people. The following discussion

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[1] During the preparation of this essay, the SocioFile index database alone contained over 15 000 entries on the subject.

[2] This exclusion does not apply to Sigmund Freud and a selection of his intellectual acolytes, as I intend to discuss the influence of their ideas on identity. My restriction pertains singularly to psychoanalytic discourse on identity, such as that of Jacques Lacan, or Julia Kristeva; For examples of commentaries on Jane Austen's or Shakespeare's addressal of identity issues, see Terence Cave (1995) and Richard Handler (1996).

attempts to establish both a theoretical firmament and springboard for unpacking the concepts of 'individual' and 'collective' identities.

The Concept of 'Identity'

The English word 'identity' derives originally from the Latin root, *idem*, meaning 'sameness'[3] (Handler 1996:28; Ricouer 1992:116). Bernard Williams (1995:2) has described how philosophical interest in 'identity' has tended to focus on "counting, either synchronic or over time," and is mainly concerned with a "criteria for the identity of particular things" and "the relation of particulars to types" such as "a person's social identity." The notion of 'individual identity' has philosophically implied an embodied unity through time, and distinctiveness from other individuals (i.e. objects or people). In contrast, the notion of 'collective identity' implies an aggregated unity through time, and the coincidence of shared characteristics with other individuals.

The philosophical preoccupation with 'sameness', and tacitly 'difference', is also seen in the manner in which identity has been distinguished in 'qualitative' and 'quantitative' terms. For example, a "numerically identical person" may be "qualitatively different" (1995:14). But aside from such philosophical treatments of *sameness* and *difference*, a uniform consensus is difficult to claim, as evident in the variegated perspectives that continue to mark treatments at unpacking the concept of

[3] Paul Ricouer (1992: 116) gives an interesting discussion of two 'confrontational uses' of personal identity, culled from two possible meanings: The first model is 'sameness' [latin: *idem*] (the context in which I use it here), and the second notion is 'selfhood' [latin: *ipse*], and its meaning is distinct from 'sameness'. The dialectic between the two models of personal identity is encapsulated by structure of narrative identity (see the chapter *Sixth Study*, pp. 140-168).

identity[4] (cf. Carrithers et al. 1985; Harris 1995; Jacobson-Widding 1983; Rorty 1976).

Philosopher Marya Schechtmann laments what she views as the philosophical proclivity to construe identity as a "general problem" of "how a single entity persists through change... [and] more [specifically]...how a single person does" (1996:7). She asserts that "there is no monolithic 'question of personal identity,' but rather a variety of identity questions arising in different contexts, bearing diverse significance, and demanding distinct kinds of answers" (1996:6). But even if one manages to eschew the monolithic conceptualizations, the waters are assured to remain muddy when we adjust our gaze upon the relationship between the notions of 'identity' and 'self'[5].

'Identity' and 'self', though distinct terms, they do share "the same conceptual territory" (Whittaker 1992:198). And this can lead to equations or obfuscations of their use and meanings (for example, cf. Baumeister 1986:40; Harris 1988; Levin 1992; Rorty 1976; Sokefeld 1999; Taylor 1989; Whittaker 1992). The relationship between 'self' and 'identity' warrants deeper analysis, but I pursue the matter no further[6]. I have constrained myself to the concept of 'identity', and define

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[4] For example, Derek Parfit, proffers that the concept of identity is rather 'unimportant' and 'derivative' (1976). Parfit shows through his thought-experiments that the cultural concept of identity is heavily "loaded" with the special beliefs (1995:44). He argues that it is psychological continuity that is the central issue of importance in any context for identity; Henry Harris emphatically advocates the "biological reality" of personal identity (1995:63).

[5] Schechtmann (1996:2) argues that there is a need to distinguish between questions of the "reidentification" and "characterization" of identity: the former "concerns the logical relations of identity", in other words, what constitutes identity; the latter pertains to how identity is characterized, i.e. the evidential criteria needed; Also beneficial would be Amelie Rorty's (1976:1-2) "Introduction" where she also discusses notions of 'differentiation', 'identification', and 'reidentification'.

[6] There is a vast literature that deals with 'identity' and 'self'. Martin Sokefeld (1999: 419) examines the ties between the concepts of self and identity as they have been used in anthropology. He argues that anthropologists either have tenuously addressed the links between the two terms at a distance, or unsuccessfully managed to address them together (see Sokefeld 1999). Still, various interpretations and applications of a self-identity relationship are in circulation. For example, identity has been defined as "an interpretation, of the self" (Baumeister 1986:4); or "individual identity" is defined as "embodied in selfhood" (Jenkins 1996:20). Some argue that the Western experience of identity presupposes the existence of a self, or that the individual and person are always defined in terms of the self, and vice versa (Harris 1988; La Fontaine 1985; Marsella et al 1985; Sokefeld 1999). One reason for the confusion might have to do with the way in which these terms eclipse in their reference to sameness.

as a culturally inculcated, subjective and social expression of the 'self' or "locus of experience" (see Harris 1988). This allows a purposeful retreat from having to elaborate upon the self-identity relationship (without dismissing its significance and without neglecting how the concept of identity still remains a 'question' or 'problem' (cf. Erikson [1950]1963:242; Hetherington 1998:21; Rajchman 1999).

The salience of 'identity issues' has made it increasingly clear that our "social maps no longer fit our social landscapes" (Jenkins 1996:9). As a focus of inquiry, 'identity' has not only become an attractive hunting ground for a variety of academic disciplines of study, but also holds currency in the media, advertising, governments, special interest organizations, social movements, and so forth. The polysemic nature of the term 'identity' renders it a fuzzy notion, and a moving target with respect establishing its conceptual worth (e.g. Handler 1996; cf. Parfit 1995). In the light of recent discussions of 'globalization' and 'transnationalism' the topic of identity is further poised to promise a challenging analytical excursion (see Kearney 1995).

I have operationalized the concept of 'identity' into four analytic fields that incorporate what Grace Harris (1988) classifies as *psychologistic*, *sociologistic* and *biologistic* characteristics of human beings.

The first two fields of analysis can be considered as *quantitative* interrogations: referring (biologistically) to 'individual' identity and 'collective' identity (Cf. Smith 1995:130). These are further divided into two *qualitative* fields of interrogation: referring to the 'subjective' (psychologistic) and 'social' (sociologistic) conceptualizations of the "experience" of identity (Cf. Mageo 1995:282-283). I would like to stress that these classifications are merely heuristic, and are not intended to

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Jenkins (1996:20) claims that conceptual parallels exist between self and identity when they are conceived in terms of similarity, difference, reflexivity, and process. But as we shall see ahead in a cross-cultural perspective, some argue that identity is uncritically "presupposed" to exist universally, whereas "self" remains contingent and particular (Handler 1996:30; Sokefeld 1999)

capture completely the complexities of the concept of identity. In addition, I should state that the fields of analysis I have employed also receive an uneven emphasis in my discussion of Afghan refugees[7]. This has not, however, prevented me from showing that a relationship exists between these fields. Nor does it diminish the thrust of the arguments made in this essay concerning the issues of identity politics, suffering, and mental health, as they pertain to the new refugee culture, and specifically Afghan refugees. I will begin by sketching a brief history of the salient ideas that have guided anthropological thinking on the subject of identity.

Anthropology's Search for Identity

Despite Elvi Whittaker's (1992:204) claim to the existence of a "prehistory for the concept of the development of the self", anthropologists were historically later arrivals to the table where philosophers, sociologists, and psychologists had been ruminating upon ideas about the 'self' and 'personal identity' (see Baumeister 1986; Carrithers et al. 1985; Gleason 1996; Jenkins 1992). Anthropology's presence has since become increasingly conspicuous. Ethnographic and theoretical contributions (i.e. Harris 1988; Jacobson-Widding 1983) have reestablished the discipline from an earlier position of seated guest to, in some ways, that of a serving host. In what follows, I shall attend to some of the salient ideas and thinkers that have influenced conceptualizations of individual and collective identities that anthropology.

Philosophical Ideas: Locke and Hume

Many discussions of Western ideas commonly involve the undertaking of an historical round-trip from the present to the time of the Hellenic godfathers of

[7] More prominence has been given to 'social' conceptualization of Afghan Pashtun identity since research materials gave descriptions which emphasized the social identity of Afghans and Afghan refugees.

Western intellectual thought. The philosophical pedigree of many significant ideas the West has inherited is after all Hellenic in origin. The concept of 'identity' and its Western genealogy should arguably be no different in our approach: it would be useful to unpack the Hellenic-Hebraic formulations of the self, or ponder the influence of St. Augustine's *Confessions*, or the role of the Church, the period of Enlightenment, or the Industrial Revolution upon the Western, 'expert' notions of 'identity' and 'self'. Since there are already numerous other works that deal in length with the subject[8], it will presently suffice to prescind most Great Men, save two, whom I hold as essential thinkers with respect to the topic. I am referring here to the Empiricists John Locke (1632-1704) and David Hume (1711-1776). These two came to inherit and revise much of the Rationalist philosophy which went before them, and kindled future philosophical thinking and Western notions of 'individual' identity[9] (Cf. Gleason 1996:461; Handler 1996:31; Levin 1992:31).

In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* Locke does away with the Cartesian notion of a mind that contains innate ideas, and instead, describes the mind as a *tabula rasa* (Levin 1992:17). He argues that our knowledge of the world, including our experience of personal identity, is not arrived at *a priori*, but rather, through sense perceptions, and reflective thinking. Locke's notion of 'personal identity', thus, defines the self as the *experience* of self-knowledge. It is a forensic concept based on ideas of 'particularity' and 'continuity': This means that the 'personal identity' of a human being depends upon the maintenance of a unique or

[8] See for example, Baumeister 1986; Cahn 1985; Johnson 1985; Levin 1992; Strauss 1959; Taylor 1989.

[9] I use the term 'identity' advisedly here. Both Locke and Hume discussed the 'self' and 'personal identity' as distinct in their meaning. Any resemblance to the notion of 'identity' that Erikson popularized in the 1950s and which entered the anthropological theoretical canon, is not straightforward.

particular (psychological) experience of sameness that is continuous with past states of being (Levin 1992:20).

One might challenge that since Locke's self can only be experienced in imminent moments of self-consciousness, any break in self-conscious awareness, i.e., during a state of drunkenness, would threaten the *experience* of continuous personal identity. But Locke argues that the experience of continuity persists, despite inevitable gaps in self-consciousness, because of the stored memories of past moments of self-conscious awareness. For Locke, the fundamental constituent of this continuous, personal identity, is *memory*. In other words, the experience of 'personal identity' is glued together by the memories of the experiences of self-consciousness, i.e. memories of various moments of 'self-experience'. Locke's description of personal identity, also implicitly contains the idea that there is an existence of many 'selves' (in different moments of self-experience, cf. James 1890). The reality of many selves may also disrupt the experienced unity of personal identity, but the process of 'memory' again serves to protect individuals from experiencing incoherence (Cf. Levin 1992:22). Following Locke, we find Hume tugging even harder at conventional notions of the self and personal identity.

Hume preserves Locke's distinction between 'personal identity' and 'self': personal identity is still conceived as a cognitive construct that is subjectively experienced through self-consciousness, or the 'self'. But Hume chooses to depart from Locke's idea of a forensic self. For Hume the 'self' is really not there—it is a "fiction" (Noonan 1999:189). Let me explain. Recall that in Locke's formulation, the self is viewed as *experienced* self-consciousness. This essentially means that an

'experiencer' is 'experiencing' himself[10]. Hume views this as silly. Although he accepts the phenomena of 'experiences', he rejects the idea that there is an actual "experience of the experiencer of these experiences" (Levin 1992:30). He confides:

> For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other...I can never catch myself at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception (cited in Noonan 1999:193).

Thus the experience of the self is merely a 'bundle of perceptions' (Noonan 1999:190) which are connected to "each other in certain ways so as to constitute a complex entity to which identity of one sort, though not of another, may be intelligibly and truly ascribed" (Biro 1993:49). For Hume, the self is an illusion, a misperceived reality arising from confusion. It is ultimately our 'habits of imagination' and memory that *make us believe* that we are actually 'discovering' our personal identity instead of synthesizing a set of perceptions (see Levin 1992: 39; Murray 1993:13; Noonan 1999: 190, 201, 204).

Psychological Ideas: The 'Inner' Individual

Psychological treatment of identity tends to focus on the individual, and the 'inner' workings and experience of (what has been historically described as) the 'soul', or the 'mind', or the 'self' (Cf. Baumeister 1986:246; see also Carrithers et al 1985, Whittaker 1992). The list of contributors is large, but for our purposes it is enough to mention the ideas of four figures from psychology: William James, Sigmund Freud, Heinz Kohut, and Erik Erikson.

William James[11] (1842-1910) was an American polymath: physician, psychologist, and philosopher. His ideas came to influence, among others, the likes of

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[10] My use of the masculine pronoun is intended as a device of convenience for both reader and author, and also complies with ethnographic descriptions of Afghan refugee identity, which in the literature were almost exclusively centred on men.

social psychologist George Mead (Posnock 1999:322) and sociologist Erving Goffman. Those familiar with *The Principles of Psychology* (James 1890:239) will recall James' discussions of 'stream-of-consciousness', 'experience', 'subjectivity', 'reflexivity', and 'multiple selves'. These concepts were vital influences on contemporary social anthropological thought on identity (see for example, Cohen 1994; De Vos et al 1985: 2-23; Ewing 1990; Mageo 1995).

James, unlike his predecessor Hume, emphasizes that the experience of the 'self' is analytic rather than synthetic (Murray 1993:14). In other words, while Hume views identity as "nothing but Diversity, diversity abstract and absolute" (1993:14), James declares, that "in truth it is that mixture of unity and diversity" (1890: 352). His emphasis on the subjective experience of the self, as "a ...unified thinking thing" (Flanagan 1997:35) gives an early psychological formulation of *reflexivity* and the *analytic experience* of individual identity (Cf. James 1890: 296). This is an idea that is relevant to the anthropological project of describing various realities of distinct cultural identities.

James elaborates on the concept of 'multiple selves': specifically the 'material', 'social', and 'spiritual' (James 1890: 292, 296; Spiro 1993:137). His notion of multiple selves points to a relationship between the *subjective* and *social* (Spiro 1993: 189). For instance, the 'material self', refers to the individual's body, including bodily products or adornments, the 'social self' refers to an ideal or public self (Cf. Goffman 1959), and finally, the 'spiritual self' which to James' belief in a

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[11] His informal association to the cultural pluralist movement is of significance for anthropology. James was a friend and mentor of Horace Kallen, [*Patterns of Progress* (1950) NY: Columbia University Press], and the progenitor of the term 'cultural pluralism'. Kallen was a colleague of Franz Boas, Melville Herskovitz, and also their student Alain Locke who claimed that "identity is an open process of reciprocal influence" (Posnock 1999:338). In 1925, Locke presented a seminal lecture, entitled, "[T]he New Negro" that called for the "defiance of categories, including separatism" (Posnock 1999: 335).

"pure self" or an "inner [perduring] principle of personal unity" (James 1890: 352), are all relational to each other[12]. Thus expressions of identity, such as the "me" and "I", and "myself" represent "different ways of the stream-of-consciousness appropriating itself from difficult vantage points" (Flanagan 1997:45).

Sigmund Freud's (1856-1939) ideas have been aptly described as "amongst the first victims of their success" (Wollheim 1971:9) but their strong impact on ideas of identity amongst the hosts of Freudian disciples, and apostates, is undeniable. His insights into the structure of the mind also provided entry points for others, such as Heinz Kohut and Erik Erikson—also significant for anthropological theories of culture and identity[13].

Freud set upon a collision course with Cartesianism (Flanagan Jr. 1986:66), and in the process revised traditional thought on the notion of 'self' by interpreting subjective and social experiences of identity via psychoanalytic theory. Interestingly Freud never explicitly discussed the 'self' per se. His deployment of 'self' typically took the form of *prefixes*, such as '*self*-deception, and he employed the term 'identity' only once in a psychoanalytic context (Grinberg and Grinberg 1989:129; see also Levin 1995:85-110). Thus Freud's 'self' can only be implicated or inferred. Nevertheless, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Freud 1913; see also Freud 1940:38-46)

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[12] When James says that "[t]he old saying that the human person is composed of three parts—soul, body and clothes—is more than a joke" (James 1890) he presages anthropologist Meyer Fortes' (1983:391) later observation that "identity, which is thought of as experience of the self, cannot be adequately experienced without being 'objectified' or put into social space, either in the form of products of my body ('natural products') or of my labour, skill, etc. ('cultural products') and with this is associated a drive to express identity, i.e. in 'identifying myself' with anything I produce."

[13] In North American cultural anthropology, Abram Kardiner, Ralph Linton, and Cora Du Bois were amongst the prominent figures who adapted psychoanalytic theory for anthropology and other social sciences (see Bock 1980 : Ch. 4, entitled "Basic and Modal Personality"). Another group of anthropologists, including Irving Hallowell, Margaret Mead, and Ruth Benedict drew extensively from psychoanalysis in their studies of the links between 'culture' and 'personality'.

can be singled out as a work of great importance for modern conceptualizations of the self and identity. In this monograph, Freud interrogates dreams as entry points to the 'Unconscious'. His theory of the 'Unconscious' not only implicates a 'self' that is vastly mysterious and unknown, but also presents a self that is conflicted and divided (see Rieff 1979: 65-101; Thalberg 1982:242).

For Freud, the self was also "not primordial" (Levin 1992:111), but rather a developmental outcome of 'hidden forces' in conflict. The 'latent' and 'manifest' features of Freud's 'dreamwork' indicate both the masked and revealed aspects of self-knowledge (Freud 1922:236-238; Wollheim 1971:66). Thus, according to Freud, discrepancies in an individual's self-knowledge were potentially existent between different states of consciousness (Levin 1992:91). This idea prompted new questions that pertained to the meaning of subjectivity, and to the relationship between the individual and society (Freud 1922): "To 'know thyself' is to be known by another" (Rieff 1979:69). Thus, primacy could not necessarily be given to the self-knowledge of the individual because this kind of knowledge could be a misrepresentation of the individual's experience. So just as we cannot precisely know the minds of others, our own minds can equally be elusive[14].

Distinct from a Freudian concept of 'self', the Freudian notion of 'identity' was a reference to something in "one's core" that was "crucial to the internal cohesion of a group" (Grinberg and Grinberg 1989: 130). Freud's relevant concept of

[14] Flanagan Jr (1986:72) writes about how Freud's ideas destabilized the Cartesian certainty of self knowledge: "What the mind's eye claims to be our real thoughts, motives, and wishes are not even probably, let alone, necessarily, our real thoughts, motives, and wishes. This is because the mind's eye is a rational, conscious, language-using part of the self and it lacks the desire, as well as the ability, to observe the irrational, unconscious, non-linguistic part of the self." He also asserts that although Cartesianism would "imply" that an individual self-knowledge might be reliable, "it gives no reason whatsoever for thinking that the reports people give to others accurately reflect that knowledge. To show this would require showing that people do not lie or misrepresent themselves, and that is impossible." This is certainly a relevant dilemma to ethnographic fieldwork and interpretation.

'identification'[15] was also a necessary precursor for precipitating the popularity of the term 'identity' (Gleason 1996:465). Psychologist Gordon Allport also later made a connection between Freud's concept of 'identification' and particular types of collective identity. In fact, Allport viewed *identification* as a kind of psychologic that underlay the notion of ethnicity and group membership, for "it conveyed 'the sense of emotional merging of oneself with others'"[16] (cited in Gleason 1996:465).

Following Freud, Heinz Kohut (1913-1981) and Erik Erikson (1902-1996) were influential through their 'expert' psychological theories of self and identity (Ewing 1990; Whittaker 1992:195). Through his concept of *self-psychology*, Kohut not only contributed the 'experience-near' and 'experience-distant' model, but also the concept of a unified, cohesive, bounded, and autonomous 'self'. This was adopted in anthropological thought and resonated with the anthropological conceptualizations of 'bounded' culture (see Ewing 1990:255; Geertz 1984:126; Kohut 1978: 449).

For Kohut, the 'self' was distinct from 'identity'. Identity served as a vessel for the 'developed self' (core psychic structure) and "the sociocultural position of the individual" (1978:449). Despite the importance of Freud's and Kohut's ideas, it was not later until Erik Erikson, and his interest in migration and identity, that the term 'identity' became prominent in lay and academic parlance[17] (Handler 1996:34).

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[15] Identification is a process by which "we reduce anxiety by modeling our behaviour on that of someone else. By assuming the characteristics of a model who appears more successful in gratifying needs, we can believe that we also possess those attributes" (Engler 1995:54).

16 Gordon W. Allport (1954:293-294), *The Nature of Prejudice*: "One of the areas where identification may most easily take place is that of social values and attitudes...Sometimes a child who confronts a social issue for the first time will ask his parent what attitude he should hold. Thus, he may say, 'Daddy, what are we? Are we Jews or gentiles; Protestants or Catholics; Republicans or Democrats?' When told what 'we' are, the child is fully satisfied. From then on, he will accept his membership and the ready-made attitudes that go with it." (cited in Gleason 1996[1983]:466). This idea is also resonant with anthropology of classification, labeling, or naming, and carries relevance for a discussion of institutional identities.

[17] Erikson's term 'identity crisis' is in popular usage even today. In a volume of collected essays edited by Jacobson-Widding (1983), Erikson presents a commentary on 'identity' in his *Afterword*: "...identity may well be gaining a significance beyond of an intrinsic aspect of the human life-cycle and its stages and crises. For in our time, the historical emphasis on the *difference* between *individual*, *national* and even *religious* identities must find a re-orientation that emphasizes that and cultivates the

In a chapter, entitled 'Reflections on American Identity', in *Childhood and Society* ([1950]1963), Erikson eclipses the meaning of 'American *identity*' and 'American *character*' in a discussion on 'Americanization'. His conceptual conflation of both 'identity' and 'character', during an historical period of America society when the structures and patterns of relationship between individuals and society are acutely being challenged, permits the salient cultural ascension of the 'identity' concept (Gleason 1996: 462,464,476; Jacobson-Widding 1983:13).

Erikson believed that the notion of identity "expresses 'the relation between an individual and his group' " (Grinberg and Grinberg 1989). But Erikson also viewed "[i]dentity [as] the vessel that held or contained the constant shifts of the self" (Friedman 1996:142). Echoing Locke, Erikson thought that shifts in the self, and multiple identities, were manageable by an individual, so long as a continuous experience of selfsameness ("I"), or continuity of experience was maintained by the 'vessel' (1996:141).

Sociological Ideas: Society and the Individual

In contrast to psychological theories that focus upon the 'individual', and emphasize *personal history* and *subjective experience*, sociological thought has concentrated upon the social and the collective, and how society relates to the individual. 'Identity' has "exclusively" reserved as a referent for "the social roles of the person" in the sociological arena (Baumeister 1986:153). *Pace* Durkheim, anthropological theories of identity have amassed an intellectual inheritance from

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essential unity of all human identities. By this, I mean the consciousness and ethical responsibility of being one species that must learn to orient its outlook and inventions toward the preservation and enrichment of all life, instead of a deadly extension of senseless, technical perfection and power"; Notably, Erikson's ideas were openly influenced by Margaret Mead's studies on American national character (see Erikson [1950]1963; Gleason 1996: 475, 485).

thinkers such as Henry S. Maine, Karl Marx and Frederich Engels, Marcel Mauss, and Erving Goffman.

Henry Maine (1861) was a lawyer and anthropologist, who demonstrated through his study of ancient laws that kinship relations had served historically as a basis for community life. Cultural laws prescribed social order, which in turn, determined *social roles*. Maine helped establish the idea that "social conduct [occurred] within structured relationships" and this generated "obligations other than those of individual existence" (Banton 1965: 24,23). He proposed that social identities had changed from a basis in social "status" to a basis in social "contract" (Bloch 1985:7). In other words, the existence of social relationships[18] between *persons* (personhood as *ascribed* status at birth, i.e. kin or gender), had historically shifted toward the existence of social relations between *individuals* (individuality as *achieved* through agreement or contract) (Banton 1965:12-13, 29-30; Maine (1861:141). Maine's ideas were suggestive of the institutional basis of identities, and also served as a template for 'role theory'[19] which was an alternative model for interrogating the structure of social relationships and social identities (Gleason 1996: 466). In role theory, 'social identity' encapsulates both "status" and "role": *status*, referring to a "collection of rights and duties"; and *role*, referring to "the dynamic aspect of status, the putting into effect of its rights and duties" (Goodenough 1965:2).

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[18] Banton defines that "[a] social *relation* exists between two or more *individuals*, but a *relationship* links two or more *roles*" (1965:127, my emphasis). In Maine's (1861: 141) own terms: "The word Status may be usefully employed to construct a formula expressing the law of progress thus indicated, which, whatever be its value, seems to be sufficiently ascertained. All the forms of Status taken notice of in the Law of Persons were derived from, and to some extent are still coloured by, the powers and privileges anciently residing in the Family. If then we employ Status, agreeably with the usage of the best writers, to signify these personal conditions only, and avoid applying the term to such conditions as are the immediate or remote result of agreement, we may say that the movement of the progressive societies has hitherto been a movement *from Status to Contract.*"

[19] In *The Study of Man* (Linton 1936, cited in Banton 1965:25), Linton states that: "A status, as distinct from the individual who may occupy it, is simply a collection of rights and duties...A role represents the dynamic aspect of status...When (an individual) puts the rights and duties into effect, he is performing a role..." Also, roles are subject to hierarchy or 'prestige'; the judgment of how an individual performs his role is an expression of 'esteem' (Banton 1965:37).

A limitation of role theory was that it reified social identities as 'static' phenomena (Strauss 1959) rather than processes that were in a "constant state of flux" (Blacking 1983:49). The locus of 'self-consciousness' or subjectivity was also neglected by the 'status' and 'role' model (Cohen 1994: 26,27). And finally, it did not offer any theory of motivation (that is, until the Freudian concept of *identification* was later attached)[20].

Karl Marx and Freiderich Engels were strongly influenced by Maine's ideas, albeit their interest was directed towards the social conditions that seemed to cultivate a sense of membership between individuals living in *industrial* societies (Bloch 1985:7). By arguing that the consciousness of the individual can only develop through social processes and exist within social realities (Whittaker 1992:194), Marx consolidated the social concreteness of the individual (Bottomore and Rubel 1961:92; cf. Cohen 1994:13). In other words, "[i]ndividuals only produce as individuals within existing social relations of production" (Archibald 1989:61).

Marx's models of a 'class-for-itself' and a 'class-in-itself' (Jenkins 1996:23) provided the basis for our conceptualization of the notions of 'group' and 'category'. An individual's "membership" in a class "determine[d] whether, and how much, one's most basic needs are gratified" (Archibald 1989:133). The notion of classes also highlighted the importance of social practices of 'identification' and 'categorization' (Jenkins 1996:88) that were applied to, and by, individual members of collectivities. As Archibald explains:

> [I]t is not enough that individuals come to experience themselves as *individuals*, with interests separate from those of the community as a whole. Rather they must come to see themselves as members of a separate sub-community within the community as a whole, a

[20] In 1951, Nelson N. Foote proposed that Freud's concept of 'identification' sufficiently provided a theory of motivation for why people performed social roles. One process through which 'identification' occured was through the activity of 'naming' (or categ orization). This "[a]ppropriation of [the named] identities by an individual transformed social ascription into elements of an evolving sense of selfhood and was experienced as a process of self-discovery and self-actualization" (Gleason 1996:466).

> *class*, who have interests in common which are opposed to those of another sector(s), but which are nevertheless coincident with the true interests of the community as a whole (Archibald 1989:64).

Since "all production by humans is necessarily social" (Archibald 1989:62), it is through such social practices that the "social bases for social relations" are generated (Cohen 1994: 7). The "*degree*" of 'social-ness' varies, for it is shaped by historical processes (Archibald 1989: 62).

A link between 'culture' and 'identity' was theorized by social psychologist G.H. Mead in his theory of 'symbolic interactionism' which postulated that the relationship between the individual and society was dialectical (See Mead 1934). The *social* ('me', i.e. role) and *subjective* ('I', i.e. consciousness) constituents of the self, were viewed as a creative, contingent, and improvisational process of symbolic interaction with 'other' selves (Cohen 1994:9,27; Jenkins 1996:21; cf. also James 1890). An individual's knowledge and experience of self only emerged, and developed, through social interaction (cf. Harris 1989:601; Goffman 1959). Mead's ideas helped to move anthropological thinking away from defining a person merely in terms of status and role, and injected the idea of self-consciousness back into the 'role' behaviour of the individual (cf. Cohen 1994:26).

Durkheim's student, Marcel Mauss, was no stranger to Mead's writings (Whittaker 1992:200). In a seminal essay published in 1935, entitled, *A category of the human mind: the notion of person; the notion of self,* Mauss (1985) provides an erudite comparative analysis of the 'social history' (Carrithers 1985) of the concept of 'person' from various cultures. He argues that the notion of 'person' is neither "universal nor immutable" (La Fontaine 1985: 138). Rather, he claims that it is a uniquely Western, sociocultural, and ideological, construct which evolved from the Greek idea of dramatic persona, to the "person-subject of rights and duties, and

[finally] to an autonomous self-centred individual" (Corin 1998: 83; cf. Mauss 1985: 22; Whittaker 1992:194).

Sociologist Erving Goffman (1922-1982) extensively studied the nature of human social interaction, and his ideas are umbilically tethered to aspects of Mead's thought. His ethnographically styled analyses of the social interactions between 'selves' provide an important bridge between the psychological and sociological insights to identity. Goffman took a dramaturgical approach to social interaction, and essentially described the Western self as a strategic performer of social roles (Goffman 1959). When his publication *Stigma* (Goffman 1963) appeared, the word *identity* was found in the subtitle, replacing the Meadian self to stand for "social relationship." Thus, he shares complicity with Erikson in the popularization of term 'identity' (Gleason 1996: 468).

Despite being critiqued as ethnocentric, theoretically hollow, and neglectful of human subjectivity[21] (see Lemert and Branaman 1997), Goffman's studies of 'identity' have been described as being "synonymous with the Western self" (Whittaker 1992:200). His influence is visible in the anthropological works of Frederik Barth and Pierre Bourdieu among others (Jenkins 1996:21,23). For instance, Barth argues that group (ethnic) *identities* emerged, and were maintained, through 'boundary processes': continuous social processes of dialectical interaction between 'us' and 'them' (see Barth 1969:14). Like both Mead and Goffman before him, Barth conceptualizes identities as *processes* that were "moderated and modulated by that of the other", and that were "articulated at the boundar[ies]" of social interaction (Cohen 1994:10). Bourdieu's notion of 'habitus', a concept that ultimately stressed how

[21] Ian Craib (1998:83) provides a critical summary of Goffman's treatment of subjectivity: "The stripping of the self of its dimension of lived experience leaves only a collection of fragments...The self becomes at most a machine for producing the appearance of reality....Goffman does not reduce the 'human' into the 'natural' as such, as do the more rigorous forms of positivism, but he reduces the 'human' to a material instrumentality."

social interaction is "improvisational"[22] (Jenkins 1996:21), is also cut from the same cloth as Goffman's ideas. We shall see further ahead how the notion of boundaries is crucial to conceptualizing identities, and particularly the identities of Afghan refugees.

Operationalizing 'Identity'

In the section above, I submitted somewhat of a bald, and uneven exposition of some of the salient philosophical, psychological, and sociological ideas and figures that have molded anthropological conceptualizations of identity. Since my aim was to give only a rough sketch of how these ideas are related, let us move ahead to touch upon their anthropological treatment.

Terms such as 'selves', 'persons', 'individuals', 'groups', 'categories', and 'collectivities' constitute part of the distinct, and as Anthony Cohen (1996:2) puts it, "arbitrary", anthropological vocabulary used to express or represent the experience of 'identity' (Cf. Carrithers et al. 1989; Harris 1989; Rorty 1976b). Though identity concepts are polysemic, and variant in usage, anthropology, for some time, has based its general understanding of 'identity' on seminal work that was done by Frederik Barth on ethnic groups (Barth 1969). For Barth, 'group identity' implied not only "selfsameness", but also a shared "sameness of the self with [other members of the group]" (Sokefeld 1999:422). It was from this notion, that anthropologists came to conceive 'identity' as something that is primarily shared. We shall encounter ahead how Martin Sökefeld argues that it might be profitable to recast identities as "markers of difference" (1999:422).

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[22] Bourdieu (1983) discusses the significance of Goffman, entitled "Erving Goffman, Discoverer of the Infinitely Small" *Theory, Culture, and Society*: 2(1):112-113.

For now, allow me to explain the structure of the discussion to be presently undertaken. Duly noting the caveat of Western epistemological and ideological biases[23], I have operationalized the concept of 'identity', as mentioned above, into two 'quantitative' analytic fields, that are further divided into two 'qualitative' analytic fields: thus giving the following identities, 1. subjective-individual, 2. social-individual, 3. subjective-collective and, 4. social-collective.

Individual Identity

In the conceptualization of the 'individual', Mary Douglas (1983:37) claims that anthropologists have historically taken either a Lockeian, or a rationalist-individualistic position. As we know, the former emphasized the continuity and personal accountability of an individual, and the latter, emphasized autonomy and independence of the individual[24]. Both views, however, rest on an ethnocentric surface, and some have argued that the distinctions made between the concepts of 'self', 'person', and 'individual' are not entirely clear (cf. Harris 1989: 599). For example, in contrast to Taita, or Tallensi societies, where "personhood is the fulfilment of a socially significant career" and "not all individuals [count as] persons" (La Fontaine 1985:136-139), the western individualistic conception of the 'individual' (i.e. the citizen) is construed as morally and socially synonymous to the

[23] Murray (1993:10) speculates that the "progressive individuation of moral responsibility in the Western legal system, and the accompanying principles of individualized orderly inheritance... served equally to promote a folk understanding of Western selves as continuous and bounded"; Charles Taylor (1989) argues that a 'moral vector' guided the development of the Western self towards 'inwardness' and that this ultimately fed the idea of an individuated 'modern identity'; Grace Harris also makes the point that societies simply do not contain singular conceptualizations of identity, but are internally marked with variations and competing identities (Harris 1989: 607-608). Spiro (1993:140) argues how western psychological theories, and the western conceptualization of the person are folk models.

[24] An extreme position was taken by Indologist Louis Dumont, who argued (by conflating *individualism* with *individuality*) that the notion of the 'individual' was unique to the West (Cohen 1996: 14; see also La Fontaine 1985; Schweder 1991:149). An 'individualistic' notion of person by default "implies a general moral status" to "individual human beings by virtue of their humanity" (La Fontaine 1985:133). The notion of individual, and the notion of person, are conflated from birth, and thus, to be an individual in itself is morally and socially consequent, e.g., abortion debate pertaining to the personhood of fetus is one area that the various moral, social, or biological arguments are inherent.

'person'. I hope to make clear that the comparative use of identity concepts, in general, is slippery, for conceptualizations may vary both intra-culturally and cross-culturally (cf. Harris 1988; La Fontaine 1985; Sokefeld 1999). Prompt clarifications of my own meanings and usage will be given during the discussion.

For my purposes, I have found it useful to biologistically frame 'individual identity' primarily in a 'quantitative' format. Thus, individual identity refers to the identity of a unique, indivisible, bounded, biological, "mortal human being" (La Fontaine 1985:126; cf. Rorty 1976:315). The individual is "a single member of the human kind" (Harris 1988:600) who is quantitatively distinct from a collectivity (Whittaker 1992:198)[25].

Subjective-Individual

The 'subjective-individual' refers to a qualitative field of analysis for the individual, and can be appreciated also as a psychologistic conceptualization of individual identity. In other words, it is a kind of personal identity, a self-conceptualization of the individual as the "owner of experiences" (Rorty 1976:314).

Subjective-individual identity is closely associated to the idea of the 'self' as a "locus of experience", and to other cognate concepts such as, the 'ego' ("I"), 'self-consciousness', 'selfsameness', 'reflexivity', 'subjectivity', and 'emotions' (cf. Cohen 1994; Erikson [1950]1963; Harris 1988:601; James 1890; Lutz 1988; Mageo 1995; Rosaldo 1984). These terms of 'selfhood' all "[concern] the similarity or consistency over time of embodied individuals" (Jenkins 1996:80).

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[25] Harris, and Taylor, both argue that *language* is also an essential characteristic of the individual, since it is what ultimately shapes the subjective and social representations of our life worlds (cf. Harris 1988:600; Taylor 1985:276). Their positions echo Wittgenstein's dictum: 'the limits of language set the limits of life', for it is through language that the individual grasps the 'outer' social criteria that will come to serve in the development of the 'inner' self-awareness, and inner life. I have precluded language from my definition, since it does not correspond to the quantitative criterion that I employ (there may, however, be arguments made for its biologistic relevance, i.e. Noam Chomsky).

Now, whether the 'self' refers to an 'inner' primordial object, and universal phenomenon (i.e. Erikson, Freud, Kohut, etc.) or, an 'outer' social process, and particular phenomenon (i.e. Mead, Goffman, James, etc.) is still debated amongst anthropologists of different stripes. Melford Spiro (1993:117) has sternly challenged the binary "typolog[ies]" that occupy anthropology's theoretical horizon. He says that they are simply "much too restrictive" for conceptualizing the self[26]. His view urges the formation of models that can better accommodate the cross-cultural nuances of identity concepts. Two recent viewpoints are available that may offer relevant and useful perspectives for conceptualizing individual identity, particularly, for Afghan Pashtun refugees. I am referring to the arguments of anthropologists Katherine Ewing (1990) and Martin Sökefeld (1999). Let me begin with Ewing.

Based on her fieldwork in Lahore, Pakistan, Ewing (1990: 251) argues that individuals "project multiple, inconsistent self-representations [selves] that are context-dependent and may shift rapidly." Arguing from the side of psychological anthropology, but in some ways, arguing against Kohut's 'cohesive self' (1990: 258), Ewing claims, that despite the inherent inconsistencies of 'shifting selves', there is a:

> universal semiotic process by which people manage [such] inconsistenc[ies]....People construct a series of self-representations that are based on selected cultural concepts of person and selected 'chains' of personal memories. Each self-concept is experienced as whole and continuous, with its own history and memories that emerge in a specific context, to be replaced by another self-representation when the context changes (Ewing 1990: 253).

Ewing, who in part, appears to be drawing from Locke and Hume, claims that a universal *experience* of a reified (Kohutian) self is an 'illusion of wholeness', derived from "cultural constructs" (1990:258), and organized on "a string of

[26] Spiro (1993:117) refers, for example to: Dumont's individualism versus holism, Schweder and Bourne's egocentricism versus sociocentricism, and Marsella's individuated and deindividuated self.

memories" (1990:267). Her arguments imply that it would be a mistake to rely on, or restrict ourselves to one model of person or self "for describing how selves are experienced or represented in any culture" (1990:257). Though Ewing does not use the term 'identity' *per se*, if we translate her analysis of 'shifting self-representations' to also connote *expressions* of an individual's subjective identity, Ewing's argument serves as a useful tool for exploring the ties between conceptualizations of refugee identities and rapid social change.

In addition to Ewing, Martin Sökefeld's ideas are also worth considering. Sökefeld's article, *Debating self, identity, and culture in anthropology* (1999), refreshes old anthropological arguments as it strives to spark new contest. Based on his fieldwork in Gilgit, also in Pakistan, but north of Lahore, Sökefeld (1999:417,418) argues that in social contexts where multiple and contradictory identities arise, an individual's actions (identity practices) are guided by a self that functions as a 'manager' of the individual's identities. He disapproves of the way anthropology has readily ascribed the (non-Western) Other as possessing (a shared) *identity* (cf. Barth 1969), but ultimately "denied" the same Other, the peculiarities of the Western *self*[27] (see Sokefeld 1999:418). Borrowing from Derrida's notion of *différance,* Sokefeld articulates a useful model for describing the constantly shifting, and often conflicting identities. He refers also to an *intersectionality* of plural identities, to emphasize how their meanings are contingent, processual, and relational to each other (see Sökefeld 1999:419-422). An identity cannot be understood without considering its relation to other identities.

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[27] It is interesting to note that the 'sociocentric' self that is used to describe the non-western 'other' (cf. Geertz 1984; Schweder and Bourne 1984) parallels the anthropological conceptualization of identity as something that is shared (see Barth 1969). Sokefeld argues that this is problematic. Not only does it 'deny' the Other a self, but in plural and rapidly transforming societies, people cannot simply be "categorized by shared identities"; rather, identity must also be addressed as "a collection of differences" (Sokefeld 1999: 419).

Sökefeld and Ewing would agree that plural, inconsistent, and conflicting identities, are 'negotiated' by people. But they are also marked by differences. I have quoted in length to allow for the nuances of Sökefeld's and Ewing's argument.

Sökefeld comments:

> My...[notion of] self obviously contradicts Ewing's depictions of such self-representations as illusory....Ewing concludes that the self-experience of consistency is an illusion based on the fact that ruptures and shifts in self-representation are not *recognized* by the individual as long as each representation fits appropriately into its particular discursive context. The (illusory) experience of wholeness and consistency of the self then rests on a supposed 'slicing' of (contextually different) experiences into disconnected segments....But this consistency-enabling slicing of experience is possible only as long as a level of *pure discourse* is not transgressed. Ewing's interlocutor can execute her shifts in self-representations without becoming aware of inconsistencies only so long as she is speaking with her anthropologist interviewer, dissociated from any social context *of practical relevance*....What I am calling for paying attention to in anthropological analysis is a representation of the self that emerges only *after* the conscious experience of such conflicts in social interaction (Sökefeld 1999:426, all emphases mine, with the exception of the last sentence).

Ewing responds:

> ...(though Sökefeld suggests that his evidence contradicts my conclusions) it does not illustrate any of the kind of *shifts in self-experience* that I have considered in my own work on Pakistani women. *It is a different level of analysis*....[W]e are simply not given any evidence that might suggest that [Sökefeld's interlocutor] does or does not have other self-representations or whether such representations of self and other did or did not shift during the episode or at any other time....Lacking such evidence, I am not convinced by Sökefeld's argument for a single underlying self, since the episode is not presented in sufficient detail to reveal shifts of positioning (or lack thereof) that might be seen in other situations and perhaps even detected in this one....[E]vidence of self-reflexivity in [Sökelfeld's interlocutor's] memories of the event is not the same as evidence for a single cohesive self... (Ewing 1999: 433, emphases mine)

Despite their disagreement, Sökefeld's view that Ewing's concept of "self-representation" is actually synonymous to his understanding of plural "identities" (1999:426), suggests that a complementary strand of thought exists between their contrasting levels of analysis. I believe that each model has something of value to offer to the study of identity, culture, and social change.

Social-individual

The 'social-individual' refers to a qualitative field of analysis for the individual. The term is a 'sociologistic' conceptualization of individual identity. Thus, the 'social-individual' is basically a 'social identity': a reference to the social meaning that infuses the concept of individual identity. The related terms of 'personhood', 'person', and 'persona', are examples of distinct conceptualizations of the social identity of the individual. Each of their meanings are generated through diverse "identity relationships" (Goodenough 1965:2-3; see also La Fontaine 1985; Mauss 1985).

According to Fortes, 'personhoood' is an identification that is "conferred by society on the individual" (La Fontaine 1985:132). Whittaker (1992:199) claims that personhood refers to an "elevated" designation from that of the individual. As such, a variety of social criteria (i.e. institutional practices) containing "defined roles and categories", can determine different kinds of personhoods of sociomoral significance for the individual[28] (La Fontaine 1985: 133,138).

Personhood means that, depending on the "given interaction" an individual may have several social identities (Goodenough 1965:7), and that these social identities contain a "temporal dimension" (Harris 1988:604). Thus, being a person has its own social lifespan. The ascription, assumption, or achievement of personhood is never permanent. Therefore, different 'moral careers' of 'persons' can characterize the meaning and composition of personhoods over time (Harris 1989 :604). For instance, in Western societies, an 'individual' is conceived of as a 'person' from birth.

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[28] Because 'personhood' insinuates a "clear legal and status position of being human" (Whittaker 1992:198) it is considered to be synonymous with 'status'. But although both concepts of 'person' and 'status' convey social significance, and both are temporal, the notion of 'person' implies that the individual is an "agent-in society" (cf. Harris 1988 :602 ; Strauss 1954 :124 ; Whittaker 1989 :199). Goodenough (1965:3) asserts that the 'person' is "an aspect of self that makes a difference in how one's rights and duties distribute to specific others" .

In Tallensi society, however, an 'individual' and 'person' are not identical. To become a 'person' involves a lifelong process, that is often achieved only at the end of a life (La Fontaine 1985:132).

There are various anthropological positions on how the Western cultural notion of personhood is interweaved with the Western cultural notion of selfhood (Harris 1989:602; Jenkins 1996: 30). For Mauss, the notion of person, like that anthropological 'self', was unique to the West. Mauss was mistaken. Fortes' study of the Tallensi gave support to the argument that non-Western societies also had a concept of person (cf. La Fontaine 1985; Spiro 1993). Also, Fortes' assertion that the experience of identity could not be "real" unless it was "shown" (Fortes 1983:401) further exposed the link between the concepts of 'subjective' self and the 'social' person.

More recently, Schweder and Bourne (1984:149-151) have presented a model of 'sociocentric' and 'egocentric' selves for conceptualizing persons cross-culturally. The 'sociocentric self' is ascribed to the non-Western Other, and defines an experience of personhood that is holistic, relational, and contextual. In this notion of person, social 'status' and the 'individual' are construed as indistinguishable, i.e. notion of personhood in Indian societies. The 'egocentric self', in contrast, is ascribed to the Western individual, and defines the experience of personhood that is individualistic, autonomous, and independent of social context, i.e. persons in North American societies. Compare this previous view with Geertz's definition:

> The Western conception of the person as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated, motivated and cognitive universe, a dynamic centre of awareness, emotion, judgement and action organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively against other such wholes and against its social and natural background is, however incorrigible it may seem to us, a rather peculiar idea within then context of the world's cultures (Geertz 1984: 126).

Harris (1988:607) has criticized Schweder and Bourne for promoting, in effect, an alternative psychological model for the 'self', rather than the 'person'. Anthony Marsella, George De Vos, and Francis Hsu (1985) also attempt to provide a relativistic perspective on Western and non-Western selves, but like Schweder and Bourne, they too seem to be advancing another kind of dualism (Murray 1993 :6). In dissension, Jeannette Mageo stands somewhere between relativism and essentialism. She argues that it can be useful to think of the sociocentric and egocentric selves as "ontological premises" for understanding different "cultural versions of what it means to be a person" (Mageo 1995:283-84, 291).

Collective Identity

I have operationalized 'collectivity identity' in the quantitative and biologistic terms similarly used above for individual identity. In this model, a collectivity is defined as an aggregate of 'individuals' that share distinguishing characteristics. And like the notion of individual identity, collective identity provides a field of analysis for processes of social interaction that are generated in "transaction and interaction and are...potentially, flexible, situational and negotiable": for example, *subjective-collective* 'groups', and *social-collective* 'categories' (Jenkins 1996:23,82;103).

Subjective-Collective

The 'subjective-collective' refers to a qualitative field of analysis for the collective : in other words—the 'group'. It is a psychologistic conceptualization of collective identity that informs the self-concept of individuals. Therefore, the 'group', as a subjective-collective identity, is a kind of personal identity that is shared amongst subjective-individuals who are able to establish and recognize what is shared between

them. (Recall, Marx's notion of a 'class-for-itself'). Examples of group identities include: 'national' identities, 'ethnic' identities, 'religious' identities, 'professional' identities, and so forth. To understand subjective-collective identity requires placing emphasis on the nature of the relationship between the 'subjective-individual' members of a 'group'.

A 'group identity' is not primordial or 'essential', but rather an interactive, symbolic process (Handler 1996 :30; cf. Barth 1969). Marx observed that "new members" were socialized into "groups culture" via "tradition" (Archibald 1989:141). An individual's personal knowledge of the existence of the other group members is not a pre-requisite either to be a member of a group. Instead, the significance for group identity lies in the consensus of symbolic criteria needed for self-identification, and the identification of other recognizable group members (cf. Jenkins 1996 :86).

Social-Collective

The 'social collective' refers to a qualitative field of analysis for the collective : in other words—the 'category'. It is a sociologistic conceptualization of a 'collective identity' that characterizes the social identity of individuals (i.e. personhood). A category, as a social-collective identity, can refer to the membership of social-individuals (persons) who have been ascribed (externally by others) with a particular identity (cf. Jenkins 1996:23). For example, categories can include: 'refugee' identities, 'patient' identities, 'oriental' identities, and so forth. What distinguishes categories from groups, is that categories do not assume that there is a known relationship that exists between the categorized members, nor does it presuppose that the 'categorizer' and 'categorized' are even aware of one another, or even of the category itself (Jenkins 1996: 82,86). This has implications for the

authorization and strategic deployment of identities, since the personae that may emerge through social categorization can be exploited by those members of society who perform the ascription of such collective identities. This is often unbeknownst to the individuals or persons who may be at the receiving end of such categorizations (Jenkins 1996 :86; see Zetter 1991). This social process is complicated by the fact that subjective-collective identities, or groups, can always become social-collective identities, or categories, but "[t]he reverse is not always true" (Jenkins 1996 :89).

'Identity' Dialectics

It may already be apparent from the above discussion that 'individual' and 'collective' identities, are best conceived as dialectical, rather than "axiomatic" in their relationship (Jenkins 1996:19-20). The dialectic interplay between collective and individual identities implies that they are mutually enforcing and challenging of each other. The 'subjective' and 'social' fields I have used to operationalize 'individual' and 'collective' identities, i.e. self and person, group and category, are all inter-relational, and inter-dependent. For instance, it is important to recognize that "the egocentric and sociocentric views [of social identity] are creations of the collective imagination" (Schweder 1991:153; cf. Schweder and Bourne 1984:194). Equally relevant is the understanding that the meanings of 'person' and 'individual' are conceptualized "in contrast to the self" (Harris 1988:608). Thus differences or tensions can exist in the way a unique 'individual' might view the 'collective' (group or categorical) identity.

Individual identity is constructed, in part, via collective identities such as ethnicity, nationality, or religious identities. (Jenkins 1996 :77). Thus, at any given time, an individual may inculcate several sets of collective identities which inform

both the social and subjective conceptualizations of that individual's identity (Smith 1995:130-131; Strauss 1959:153). Again recalling Marx, the relationship between the individual and society is ultimately established via "collectivities through membership and to other individuals through social relationships" (Goffman 1971:188; cf. Berger and Luckmann 1967:174).

Collective identities should not be construed as monolithic entities for they are always (re)constructed at the individual level. But this does not mean that collective identities are merely aggregates of distinct individual identities (Jenkins 1996:127; Smith 1995:130). As symbolic expressions, the apparent homogeneous collective identities allow for "heterogeneity to be preserved [within their membership], even while masked by common symbolic forms" (Cohen 1994:120). Just as individual identities cannot always fully express the collective identities that are attributed to the 'individual', collective identities are also constrained in what they are able to convey about self-consciousnesses or the self-concepts of the specific individuals who inculcate the collective identities (Cohen 1994:120; cf. also with Barth 1969). Ambiguous spaces may exist between a 'collective' identity (i.e. group or category) and the way an 'individual' conceives it.

An important social phenomenon that ideally captures the details of 'identity dialectics' is the 'institutional identity', which is generated via cultural institutions (Jenkins 1996 :24,127,134). Institutions can be defined as authorizing cultural beliefs and practices[29] that are reproductively transmitted through time. Marx was aware of the significant role that institutions could play in (re)organizing the individual and collective identities of people during historical moments of social change (Archibald

[29] As a point of interest, Bourdieu's notion of 'habitus' is relevant to the notion that "habit" is the "precursor" (Jenkins 1996:128) to institutional practices, and emphasizes the dialectical relationship between the social field of experience of the individual and collectivity (see Jenkins 1996:22, 35-36; Berger and Luckmann 1967:77). As Jenkins (1996:22) claims: "habitus is both collective and individual, and definitively embodied."

1989:62). For example, social statuses and roles, which include 'institutional identities' such as 'teacher', 'patient', 'daughter', or 'criminal', are institutionally ascribed to individuals, and subsequently determine the *personae* that can emerge in the social world. Dewey once said that 'meanings breed new meanings': the meanings that imbue the intersections of collective and individual identities within the 'institutional identity' contain the possibility for change (cf. Strauss 1959: 153). We shall learn ahead, how these ideas are relevant to the systems of social relations and institutional beliefs and practices that produce the categorical identity of 'refugee'.

2. POLITICS OF IDENTITY

The phrase 'politics of identity' can fit into a variety of meanings: *identity* is 'political'; *identity* is conceptually entwined in rhetoric or shaped through the arts of persuasion (Battaglia 1995); *identity* is linked to processes of power; *identity* 'implies' (Gillis 1996:4) unique social relationships, between individuals and individuals, individuals and groups, and groups and groups (Gleason 1996:478), that are negotiated through variably competing social practices and beliefs. But to navigate the terrain of the 'politics of identity' is not straightforward. Jonathan Friedman (1992:853) is fully aware that "the constitution of identity is an elaborate and deadly serious game of mirrors...a complex temporal interaction of multiple practices of identification external and internal to a subject or population". By what reason should one then enter, and by what means does one go about playing, this 'game of mirrors'?

A possible inspiration might be found through a momentary reflection: 'identities' as cultural concepts and as forms of social practice have consequences. This is because 'identity' always implies a "point of *view*" (Jenkins 1996: 27). For

instance, it is socially significant to conceptualize identity as primordial or essential, rather than something that is processual or constructed (Fischer 1999). Identities make a difference to whether you belong, to what your 'rights' are, to what you believe, or to how you should behave. "Social identities exist and are [also] acquired, claimed and allocated within power relations", thus, ultimately making "[i]dentity...[a] means and end in politics" (Jenkins 1996:25). To understand how we "locate ourselves in the world" (Preston 1997:17) we need to gain an insight into the kinds of social processes and identities that are to be found in 'politics of identity'. This means to at least try to draft the outlines of the way identities are 'imagined'.

Previously, it was noted that examining institutional practices can help clarify features of the dialectical relationship between individual and collective identities. Three particular group identities that are derived from salient cultural institutions, and that "have always exerted a special power" (Smith 1995:131) are *religious*, *ethnic*, and *national* identities. As master narratives, these 'ideological identities'[30] are ascribed to 'individuals', yet also imply a 'collectivity'. Querying religious, ethnic, and national identities provides a way to understand and describe the social processes that underlie how social and subjective identities are imagined and politically negotiated.

Exploring a 'politics of identity' also begs the question of how notions of 'memory' serve to creatively assemble and imagine social and subjective identities. Thus, after discussing the relevance of social movements, in particular 'ideological'

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[30] I do not wish to confuse the meaning of 'ideological' identity with my later discussion on ideology. For present purposes it is adequate to define 'ideological identity' as a set of sociopolitically consequential beliefs that organize collectively shared identity (i.e. group) practices in accordance with a particular cultural system of knowledge (see Apter 1964). Conceiving identity as an "ideology" may not necessarily be "an accurate reflection of psychological reality" (Spiro 1993: 134), but since ideological identities such as those derived from concepts of religion, ethnicity, and nationality, are based on shared beliefs and practices, it is reasonable to assume that the subjective (i.e. psychological) meaning of identity for a collectivity, may perhaps also be traced to the subjective meaning of identity for the individual.

identities, I intend to focus on the significance of a *politics of memory* to a *politics of identity*.

'Ideological' Identities:

'Marginalization' or 'resistance' can be employed as historically salient examples of concepts that are linked to social processes that have been relevant to a politics of identity (Hetherington 1998:21). Lorenz Von Stein first used the 19th century term 'social movement' as a referent to French labourers during the post-French revolutionary period. His description was intended to identify oppositional groups in a time when the political arena had become polarized into a planar field of only "left and right" (Hetherington 1998: 29,30). Since then notions of 'new' social movements such as the civil rights movements, revitalization movements, feminist movements, peace movements, environmentalist movements, and so forth have been declared and designated by observers and participants. Sociologist Kevin Hetherington prefers to describe so-called 'new' social movements as an "expressive politics of identity" (1998:39). He argues that strands of 'feminism' or 'pacifism', for example, can be found evident even prior to the 19th and 20th centuries (Hetherington 1998:30), and thus, their characterization as being novel is inaccurate. The true novelty of new or recent social movements, Hetherington claims, is that past political preoccupations with "justice" or "equality" have been eclipsed or subsumed by specific "issues of identity" that are deemed "more important and relevant" (1998:31).

For example, once the demand for racial equality and just inclusion within the established social system by Southern American 'Negroes' met with resistance, the same issues were re-encapsulated in the subsequent ideas of 'black power' that

emerged externally to the American South[31]. The issues of equality and justice were reconfigured by an emphasis on 'black' identity, and more recently, 'African-American' identity.

But to characterize the civil rights movement of the 1960s as a recent 'social movement' risks essentializing and reifying a process that is merely 'denotative' of broader social change; whereas, alternatively conceptualizing 'civil rights' as an 'expressive politics of identity' reflects the historical contingency of the social process of civil rights, and implies a connotation of broader social change. For example, the achievements of the black protest movement prior to 1960, also socially anticipated and conditioned the "central thrust" to "fundamentally transform American institutions" (Wynn 1978:208) after 1960. Hetherington's conceptualization places emphasis on the way identities and identification practices (1998:32,38) are consequential and historically emergent in a "lifeworld of uncertainties" (1998:31). This idea provides a relevant framework for conceptualizing 'ideological identities', since the changing patterns of their social relations are also contingent and determinative of subjective and broader social practices and meanings.

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[31] "The civil rights movement had won its victories because blacks had been able to assemble a coalition that altered the balance of power within the nation. That coalition had brought about structural change within the South; but that same coalition put limits on the extent of change it was willing to support. It had cohered around a specific program: abolishing the state-sanctioned forms of discrimination in the South, particularly those having to do with segregation and the right to vote...[S]upport was forthcoming, despite the intensive struggle for power that it entailed, because the social class being displaced from power was anachronistic to modern society, and because second-class citizenship for blacks came to be viewed as both morally unacceptable and as a political liability to the nation....[W]hat blacks were asking for in the civil rights movement was unthreatening to modern capitalism and therefore acceptable even if at times unpalatable. The ghetto revolts, however, raised the specter of class upheaval and seemed to demand the redistribution of wealth and powers, and this demand was unacceptable to those who had been the allies of the black movement." (Bloom 1987:187)

'Religious' Identity

Religions are perhaps amongst the oldest sources of ideological 'identity' (Geertz 1979: 88). As 'elementary forms' for organizing our emotions, beliefs and practices about the world (Geertz 1979) they can authorize explanations of 'origins' and guide the transmission of salient collective memories via the reproduced specialized knowledge of practiced rituals (El Guindi 1977). In this manner, religions not only can generate and preserve cultural notions of identity, but also transform our "social worlds"—thus occupying both a "revolutionary" and "conservative" (Keesing 1976:330) role in the imagining of identities.

The 'revolutionary' aspect of religious identity can be manifest in 'revitalization movements', such as, messianic cults (see Lanternari 1963). These social processes demonstrate how 'religious identities' can be a cultural means to actively shift social meanings and how they implicate broader systems of social relations that articulate a politics of identity. Anthony Wallace (1956:265) defined a 'revitalization movement':

> as a deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture....[It is] a special kind of culture change phenomenon: the persons involved in the process of revitalization must perceive their culture, or some major areas of it, as a system (whether accurately or not); they must feel that this cultural system is unsatisfactory; and they must innovate not merely discrete items, but a new cultural system, specifying new relationships as well as, in some cases, new traits.

The New Guinean islanders, described by Lanternari, sought social "adjustment" through "a religious reaction to alien control" (Lanternari 1963:173-174). They achieved this through the 'cargo cult' that was based in religious identity. The example demonstrates how revitalization movements can express a politics of identity that 'connotes' broader social conditions of change and discontent. By communicating that shifts in the meaning of particular ideological identity can be

reactions to changing social realities, or are strategies for the management of inconsistent identities (cf. Ewing 1990:226), revitalization movements represent, in Hetherington's terms, an expressive politics of identity. Social change is thus based on a creative process that mobilizes the meanings of 'traditional' religious beliefs and practices for revision.

For example, the "charismatic figure" central to messianic movements, was described by Weber as "the 'specifically creative' revolutionary force in history"—the "breaker of traditions" (Shils 1981:228). This description initially may appear to contain a contradiction given that revitalization movements aim to a reconnect or re-establish continuity with the 'essential' beliefs and practices of the religion (via 'revitalized' religious interpretations and their corresponding meanings upon identities) (see Worsley 1959). The apparent contradiction, however, does not hold at closer inspection. For in order to break with 'tradition', a charismatic leader unavoidably needs to draw from the very authority of 'tradition'. In this manner, revitalization movements, as "uniform process[es]" of "major cultural-system innovation", come to rely on syncretic social processes to reformulate religious group identities—enjoining the images of the past with visions of the imagined future (e.g. Lancaster 1988).

The actual "mental image" of "the society and culture" that the individual imagines was referred to as the 'mazeway' by Wallace (1956: 266). In a cultural system deemed "unsatisfactory" the 'mazeway' describes a person's experience, perception, and articulation of "nature, society, culture, personality, and body image" that must be changed to eliminate the 'stress' (1956: 266,265).

'Ethnic' Identity

'Ethnicity' does not lend itself to easy definition (Sollors 1996:*xi*). It has generally been "characterized by a sense of origin, a sense of distinctiveness and a sense of place" (Smith 1995:132). For the ancient Greeks, *ethnos* was a reference to *otherness*, whereas, *genos* was the designation for *the people* (i.e. the Greeks)—an 'us' and 'them' model. Ethnos later assumed a religious signification as a reference for non-Christian and non-Jewish 'otherness' (Chapman et al. 1989:12). This particular meaning of the terms came to be inverted it is thought during the period of Ottoman Empire (1989:13).

The Ottomans designated various minority religious communities within their domain according to a *millet* system. In these regional *millets*, "the Orthodox Christians themselves were the most prominent religious 'other', defined as such by the majority Muslim definition" (1989:13). Thus ethnos, as a religious formulation became a referent for the Orthodox Christian religious millet, and today retains this same meaning in modern Greek. In the first half of the twentieth century, the sociopolitical sequelae to fascism motivated the replacement of the popular term 'race', instead with 'ethnicity'. Although arguments remain concerning their relationship[32], the term 'ethnicity' increasingly fell into more common use (see Chapman et al. 1989: 14; Sollors 1996:*x, xxix*).

Though the concept of 'ethnicity' need not represent a political project (Hobsbawm 1992:4), Dan Aronson (1976:13) argues that the terms 'ethnicity' or

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[32] Chapman et al. (1986:15) states that "[w]hat is immediately interesting is that the terms seem to have rediscovered, even without intention, the 'us and them' duality that related terms have had through most of recorded history. 'Race' as a term did not, so to speak, discriminate. Within the discourse of race, everybody belonged to one. In actual use, however, not everybody belongs to an 'ethnic group', or has an ethnicity. In their common employment, the terms have a strong and familiar bias towards 'difference' and 'otherness'".

'ethnic identity' refer to the "use of differences for political ends by competing groups in a given arena" (cf. Sokefeld 1999). For Aronson, "ethnicity [is] an ideology of disengagement" (1976: 16). In other words, group identities use differences to ideologically affirm a "value dissensus" between their members from dominant or competing world-views. The implications of Aronson's idea with respect to the meaning and representation of identities is that 'ethnicity' as an identity practice based on an ideology of disengagement "[can]...alter prior social formulations and arrangements" (1976: 15).

For example, during the 1950s and 1960s, changes in the socio-political milieu of the United States compelled radical social rethinking of the forms of social relationships and power relations that had existed between individuals and society at large (Gleason 1996:478). The perception that prevailing social conditions such as the segregation and oppression of blacks (see Bloom 1987; Wynn 1978) generated a shift in public 'sentiments' (cf. Gellner 1983:1) from the dominant consensual devaluation of particular group identities. These 'ideologies of disengagement' lead to the expressive politics of civil rights (cf. Gleason 1983:478). The civil rights movement not only denoted the social change occurring in American society but also connotated broader social transformations through its 'impact' on, for example, the 'student' movements and the 'anti-Vietnam war' movements (Bloom 1987:221).

Given the variety of expressive politics of identity, it was the "revival" of 'ethnic identity' in the America of the 1960s that specifically "had the most enduring effect on usage of the term identity" (Gleason 1983:479). America was becoming less of a 'melting pot' (Glazer and Moynihan 1963), and its newly declared 'ethnicities' sought to maintain separate and distinct sets of values from the dominant consensus (Aronson 1976:16).

'National' Identity

There can certainly be an ethnic basis to national identities, but national identities and ethnic identities are distinct concepts. A 'national identity' refers to an explicit "political programme" based upon the idea that "groups defined as 'nations' have the right to, and therefore ought to, form territorial states of the kind that have become standard since the French Revolution" (Hobsbawm 1992: 4). This may be a basic argument for the 'nation-state', but the concept of 'nation' is to be distinguished from the related idea of a 'state' in that the state is explicitly a centralized structure of social authority that wields the authority to do violence in order to maintain social order (Gellner 1983:3,4). Although "nationhood is pervasively institutionalized in the practice of states and the workings of the state system" (Brubaker 1996:21), not all nations belong to states, nor are all states comprised of one nation. But 'national identities', despite being 'imagined political communities' (Anderson 1991:6) are commonly portrayed or narrated in expressions of nationalism as 'primordial' entities.

'Nationalism' (see Woolf 1997) can be defined as "a heterogeneous set of 'nation'-oriented idioms, practices, and possibilities that are continuously available or 'endemic' in modern cultural and political life" (Brubaker 1996:10). These idioms, practices, and possibilities are draped over "structures of feeling" (Gupta 1992:72) that enforce the idea that 'states' and 'nations' were "destined for each other' (Gellner 1983:6). Nationalism is also a 'homogenizing' rhetoric that "does not so much erase existing narratives as *recast* their difference" (Gupta 1992:72) in an ideological identity—'nationality'. In this manner, the 'nation' and the 'individual' are 'homologously' matched in their 'boundedness' and 'permanence' (Cohen 1994:157; Handler 1996:40): the 'nation' is both a "collective individual" and a "collection of individuals" (see Handler 1988: 40-47).

Religion, nationality, and ethnicity are social concepts that all represent systems of beliefs that organize collective identity practices and connote social consequences (in the form of ideological identities). Civil rights, messianic cults, and ethno-nationalism provide salient examples of an expressive politics of identity that is conditioned by the different forms of ideological identities. Religious, ethnic, and national identities, though distinct, also commonly share particular elements: such as, origin myths, authorizing narratives, specially signified spaces (cf. Smith 1995:133)—all glued together by the concept of 'memory'. We shall see next how a 'politics of identity' is largely based on practices of 'remembering and forgetting (Gillis 1996:7; also Lambek 1996).

Politics of Memory

'Memory' is commonly attributed to the individual in the same way that 'history' is attributed to the collective. Jacques Le Goff (1996:xi) observes that "[m]emory [may be] the raw material of history" but it is "the discipline of history [that] nourishes memory in turn, and enters into the great dialectical process of memory and forgetting experienced by individuals and societies". The concept of memory thus allows us to see how "public, historically created, cultural representations join private representations" (Bloch 1996: 231). In addition, this bridging, by memory, of the private and public, the subjective and social, also permits the continuity and persistence of moral meanings that are contained in constructions of time.

Recall, that although Locke's notion of the 'individual' referred to a continuousness of the bodily organism, his notion of the 'person' was operationalized in a relationship between "memory and responsibility" (Hacking 1996:81).

Inevitably, we find that such a 'memoro-politics' (Hacking 1996) also drives our "representations of the self" (Young 1996:98) and that ideological identities (i.e. ethnicity or nationality) are also politically strategized from memories. Thus ideological identities are culturally *made from*, as well as culturally *make*, historical claims.

Edward Shils (1981:195) has spoken of "two pasts": one refers to a "sequence of occurred events", and the other, refers to a mutable, "perceived past". In the latter understanding, Shils echoes the observation by Walter Benjamin that: "To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it 'the way it really was'" (Benjamin 1968:255), and that "[h]istory is the subject of a structure whose site is not homogeneous, empty time, but time filled by the presence of the now" (1968:261).

The 'past' as a concept of time is thus subject to constant revision "in the mind of living generations" with respect to both the future, and the present (Shils 1981:196). This is the condition by which 'memory' and 'history' practices serve to 'reproduce' cultural knowledge, and are complicit in "the reification of culture in various forms of ethnicity, nationalism, and cultural revival" (Lambek and Antze 1996:*xxi*). Conversely, they also provide "a source of resistance to such reifications" (1996:*xxi*). Hence, we encounter the dynamic 'invention of traditions' (Hobsbawm 1983)—the meaningful repetition of social practices that "inculcate" our beliefs that the 'past' and 'present' are continuous with each other (Hobsbawm 1983:1; cf. Friedman 1992:837). But in order to invent traditions, to imagine communities, and to designate a particular architecture of time, 'imagination' is a necessary tool.

For Shils, imagination is in fact "the great modifier of traditions" (1981:228). The various traditions that culturally emerge are conceived in communities via distinct 'styles of imagination' (Anderson 1991:6)—'styles' which come to be

"naturalized" through individual and collective experiences that serve to symbolically or experientially validate imagined realities (Lambek and Antze 1996:*xx*). The links between cultural notions of personal identity and history also contribute to a generation of different "personal styles" of (re)invented traditions that implicate specific positions toward the past and history: i.e., commemoration, revision, valuation, or abandonment (Strauss 1959:169).

For example, in Western conceptualizations of personal identity, a specific 'style of imagination' produces "a sense of homogeneity, consistency, and order from unruly, heterogeneous experience" (Lambek and Antze 1996). This notion is consistent with the idea of a cohesive, bounded self, evident in the notion of national identities. In the conceptualization of a 'national identity', there is also implied a shared membership and representation of the group that is temporally and morally justified in terms a "retroactive mythology" (Hobsbawm 1992: 3; see Strauss 1959:167), and "naturalized" within the boundaries of a national space (Gupta 1992:74). In this manner, a "psychological interaction" (Lifton 1974:11,21) between a collective and individual experience of time is sustained and expressed by the way in which "the history of the nation" can be spoken of as "the history of a person" (Handler 1988: 42).

'Ethnic' identities are also invented through particular styles that articulate the use of shared passive 'origins' and active 'beginnings' (Herzfeld 1987:107). An example is the imagined continuity between ancient Greek, and modern Greek identity, which is a "recent construct" (Friedman 1992:837) that again demonstrates how history "is an imprinting of the present onto the past" (1992:837). The social memory (Connerton 1989) that cultivates ethnic, or any other ideological identities permits us to see how collective memories are infused in the personal memory of the

individual (Lambek and Antze 1996:*xx*) and how the social practice of 'memory' and 'history' produce strategic narratives (Kerby 1991) that shape, and are shaped by, particular cultural styles of imagining 'identity' (cf. Friedman 1992:853).

Thus, in exploring a politics of identity we discover how the "rhetoric of [the] past is mobilized for political purposes" (Boyarin 1994:2). The diverse styles of imagining identities, and inventing traditions, are reflected in the way "[m]emory becomes a locus of struggle over the boundary between the individual and the collective or between distinct interest groups in which power becomes the operative factor" (Lambek and Antze 1996:xx). Thus, a politics of identity implies how identity and memory practices are mutual constituents, and how each is conditioned by competing power relations and social relationships that aim to express a particular view, and to strategize particular social consequences.

3. 'AFGHAN' IDENTITY

The 'Pashtun' are the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan, and constitute the majority of present-day 'Afghan' refugees. In this section I outline a brief history of the region and peoples of Afghanistan, and introduce some salient concepts for 'Pashtun' identity. In the light of tensions that can exist between ideological formulations of identities (i.e. religious, ethnic, nationalist) the emergence of the 'Taliban' will also be discussed.

Historical Background

The 'Islamic State of Afghanistan'[33] (EUI Country Report 1999) is a landlocked region in Southwest Asia bordered by the states of Iran, Pakistan, the Central Asian Republics, and China's Xinjiang province[34] (S. Jones 1992: *xv*; see Fig-1). Its 245, 000 square miles (Rashid 2000:7) claim a region of extreme climatic conditions. Afghanistan features mostly non-arable land (only 1-12% is 'cultivable', 2000:8), with flat plains to the north, extensive mountain ranges in the central areas, vast plateaus to the south west, and to the northeast, the Hindu Kush mountain range (S. Jones 1992: *xv, xviii, xvi*).

Historically, Afghanistan has been a famous passageway for numerous migrants, invaders, and merchants of diverse origins and different eras. The reputed Khyber Pass had for centuries remained a vital artery joining western and eastern empires—traders and armies alike. Alexander the Great once cautioned that "it is easier to march into Afghanistan than it is to march out again" (S. Jones 1992: *xvi*). Sadly, "the encounter between imperial invasion and...tribal resistance has never ceased" (Ahmed 1980:63). The inhabitants and terrain of Afghanistan have met the forces of the Persians, Alexander's army, the hordes of Genghis Khan, as well as British and Soviet military excursions, and occupation (see Caroe 1958; Dupree 1980; S. Jones 1992: *xix-xxv*). Afghanistan is again a theatre of a new war: the 'International Coalition Against Terrorism' led by American and British forces, is presently

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[33] In 1996, the Taliban administration renamed the country the 'Emirate of Afghanistan'. This occurred after Mullah Muhammad Omar adorned himself with what is believed to be the 'Cloak of the Prophet' in Kandahar, and was subsequently given the title of 'Amir-ul-Momineen' (Commander of the Faithful) (Rashid 2000:42)—a referent that has not been used since the early period of the Rashidun Caliphate.

[34] The current boundary separating Afghanistan and Pakistan is an artifact of a geopolitical competition that existed between Russia and Britain in the nineteenth century (S. Jones 1992: *xv*). The 'Durand Line' was created as a division between British India and Afghanistan in 1893 (Rashid 2000:12) and kept intact after the 1947 Partition between India and Pakistan.

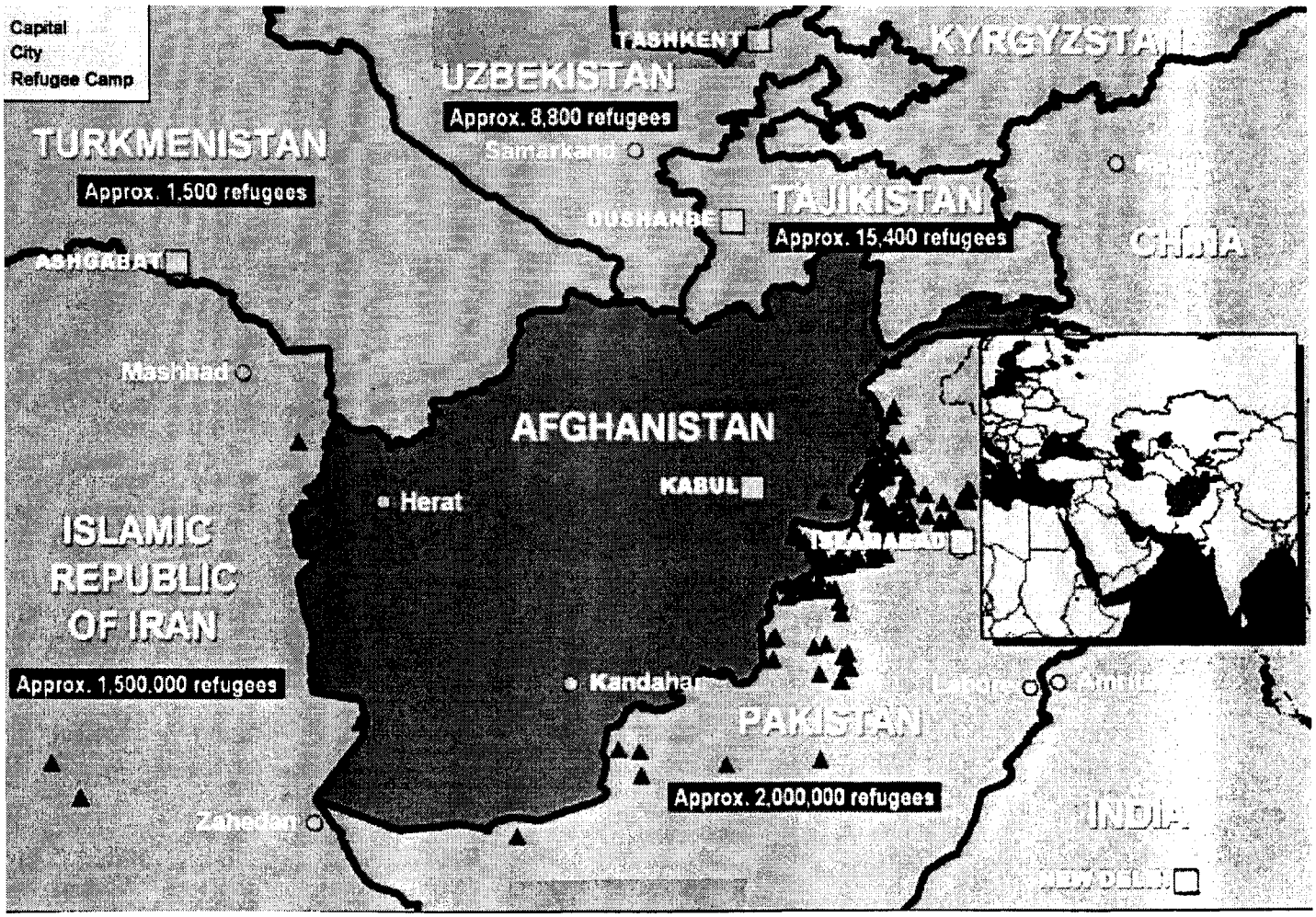

FIG-1: Current map of Afghanistan
(Source: UNHCR 2001: www.unhcr.ch)

conducting 'Operation Enduring Freedom'. The dismantling of the Taliban regime is underway, and plans are being newly sketched for the future of the country.

The State of Afghanistan first came to existence in 1747, as Ahmed Khan ('Ahmed Shah Abdali') took power and was declared ruler following a convening of the Loya Jirga (the elective Counsel of tribal chiefs) (Rashid 2000:10; S. Jones 1992:*xxi*; see also Shahrani 1984:31). Ahmed Khan renamed himself 'Ahmed Shah Durrani' and proceeded to unify the various Pashtun tribes under the 'Durrani' label (Rashid 2000:11). The Durrani rulers did attempt to "Pashtunize" the minorities living in Afghanistan, although the royal policies eventually had to permit a certain level of tribalness in order to appease and pacify potential threats to the stability of the kingdom (Tapper 1989:235). The 'Durranis' would wield power in the Kingdom until 1973: when Muhammad Daoud Khan usurped his cousin King Muhammad Zahir Shah (who had ruled since 1933). With Zahir Shah's exile to Rome, Afghanistan was revisioned as a 'Republic' with Muhammad Daoud Khan as its new President (Dupree 1984: 58; Rashid 2000:11,12).

Daoud Khan's leadership was soon opposed by growing Islamicist movements that were effectively constrained with military assistance and support from members of the leftist Parcham party led by Babrak Karmal. In 1975, the Islamicists' leadership composed of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, Ahmad Shah Masoud, and Burnhaddin Rabbani eventually fled to Peshawar, in the Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan. These men would later lead the Mujahideen forces to fight an occupying Soviet military (Rashid 2000:12-13).

In 1978, five years after Daoud Khan had seized power, he was killed during the Saur (April) Revolution (a Marxist coup d'etat), an event which presaged the Soviet military occupation of 1979. But prior to the eventual entry of the Soviet army

into Kabul in 1979, and the installation of Babrak Karmal as President, more violence and bloodshed would be seen: Afghanistan's main Communist factions were staunchly divided between the *Khalq* (the masses) Party and the *Parcham* (flag) Party. This antagonism and distrust eventually precipitated the murders of the Khalqi President Nur Muhammad Taraki, and Hafizullah Amin (Rashid 2000:13).

With the Soviets in Kabul, a new version of the 'Great Game' that had been played between Russia and Britain, was unfolding between the Soviets and Americans. The Communist military presence in Afghanistan was deeply provocative to the United States, and thus, the 'Cold War' was to quickly thaw on the soils of Afghanistan. Afghan 'Mujahideen' (Muslim warriors) were given forms of economic and military support by Pakistan, the United States, Saudi Arabia, and others like China, to forcefully expel the Soviets and their government allies, as enemies of 'Islam' and 'democracy' (see Gohari 2000). After ten years of the 'Soviet Union's Vietnam' (Sarin and Dvortesky 1993), which left an enormous number of Afghans dead, or exiled, the Soviet military began its withdrawal in 1989 (1993:1).

As the United States simultaneously reduced its military and economic support, Afghanistan imploded into various civil wars between enemy factions that were divided across ethnic lines and either in favour of, or against, the government of communist-backed President Najibullah. In 1992, the Mujahideen that were under command of Ahmad Shah Masoud seized Kabul, and removed President Najibullah from power (Rashid 2000:5). Four years later, an inchoate group of ideologically driven self-proclaimed Islamic warriors, known as the 'Taliban', would harness control of Kabul from Masoud's forces, and then proceed to publicly execute ex-communist Najibullah (Nojumi 2002: 151).

The several years of oppressive rule by the Taliban exacerbated the already devastating effects of displacement, drought, and war in Afghanistan, and the disintegration of the remaining "infrastructure" of the country (Rashid 1999: 35). The recent aerial bombings of Afghanistan by the 'International Coalition Against Terror' have efficaciously dismantled the existing infrastructure of the Taliban regime, as they have also produced new waves of refugees and casualties of war.

'**Afghans**'

In official state language, the term 'Afghan' refers to a categorical 'national' identity ascribed to any citizen who belongs the state of Afghanistan. But the aim of achieving 'national' Afghan unity has not been an easy task, and we even find that the meaning of 'Afghan' in popular discourse can be different from its official intended meaning. This phenomenon of lukewarm Afghan nationalism is, in part, due to Afghanistan's distinctive geography, rugged terrain which has played a significant role in both preserving and isolating particular ethnic and religious communities and identities (Connor 1989:912; Dadfar 1994:126). In the official discourse concerning Afghanistan:

> the official conception is of a 'homeland' (*watan, heywad*) or 'country' (*mamlakat*) populated by a 'nation' (*mellat, wolus*) divided into 'peoples' (*qaum, tayfa*), by which is usually implied a distinct linguistic and religious identity, often region or origin or residence, though not occupation or class. The main qaum are tribally subdivided, but discussion of 'tribes (*qabila,* also *qaum, tayfa*), as traditional support or opposition to the ruling elite, tends to denote Pashtun tribal divisions; the Ministry of Tribes and Nationalities deals mainly with the groups of the Pakistan frontier—Pashtun and Baluch (Tapper 1989: 234).

Richard Tapper (1989:236) also states, however, that in 'popular' discourse, concepts of *qaum (tribe), watan (homeland),* and *mazhab (religious sect)* are understood by the 'Afghans' to be the "bases of identity", but these notions are to be

contrasted with the *kinds* of labels and names that actually "constitute identities" (Tapper 1989:236). Let me explain.

The term *qaum* (see Fig-2) "implies [both] linguistic or tribal identity" and this makes it an "ambiguous and flexible concept, allowing scope for strategic manipulations of identity" (1989:236). This is an idea that has some proximity to Sokefeld's notion of the 'self' as a 'manager' of multiple identities as discussed earlier. In fact, the "greatest ambiguity" attributable to the concept of *qaum* pertains to the usage of actual *qaum* names—the specific labels used by groups that refer either to language or tribal ancestry (1989:238). For instance, the national identity category of 'Afghan' includes at least twenty-three such *qaum* labels or identities (Connor 1989: 912): *Pashtuns*, *Tajiks*, *Sheikh Mohammedis*, *Uzbeks*, *Turkomans*, *Hazaras*, *Banglewals*, *Aymaqs*, *Chajalbafs*, *Arabs*, *Baluchs*, *Gujars*, *Kirghiz*, *Farsiwans*, *Moghols*, and *Nuristanis* (Omidian 1996:57; Tapper 1989: 912-916; see also Dupree 1980; Oveson 1983).

Although a particular tribal group name often connotes an associated language, "[m]ost major qaum-names, such as Pashtun or Baluch, include the widest conceivable variations in language, culture, and political affiliations" (Tapper 1989: 238, citing Barth 1969). Some *qaums* like the 'Moghols' or 'Arabs' are self-ascribed "by names indicating languages they no longer speak" (1989:238). The *qaum* label of 'Pashtun'[35] is, in practice, often used interchangeably with the label of 'Afghan' as an ethnic category. Members of non-Pashtun, and non-Pashto speaking groups often employ 'Afghan' as a referent to Pashto speakers. But the caveat is that not all 'Afghans' (as a national category) are Pashto speakers, or synonymous to 'Pashtuns'.

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[35] I encountered at least three variations of the term: 'Pakhtun', 'Pashtun', and 'Pathan' (Wirsing 1987:4). For consistency I have chosen to use 'Pashtun' throughout. Though 'Afghan' can be ethnically synonymous with being 'Pashtun', I generally use 'Afghan' to connote its 'national' categorical meaning.

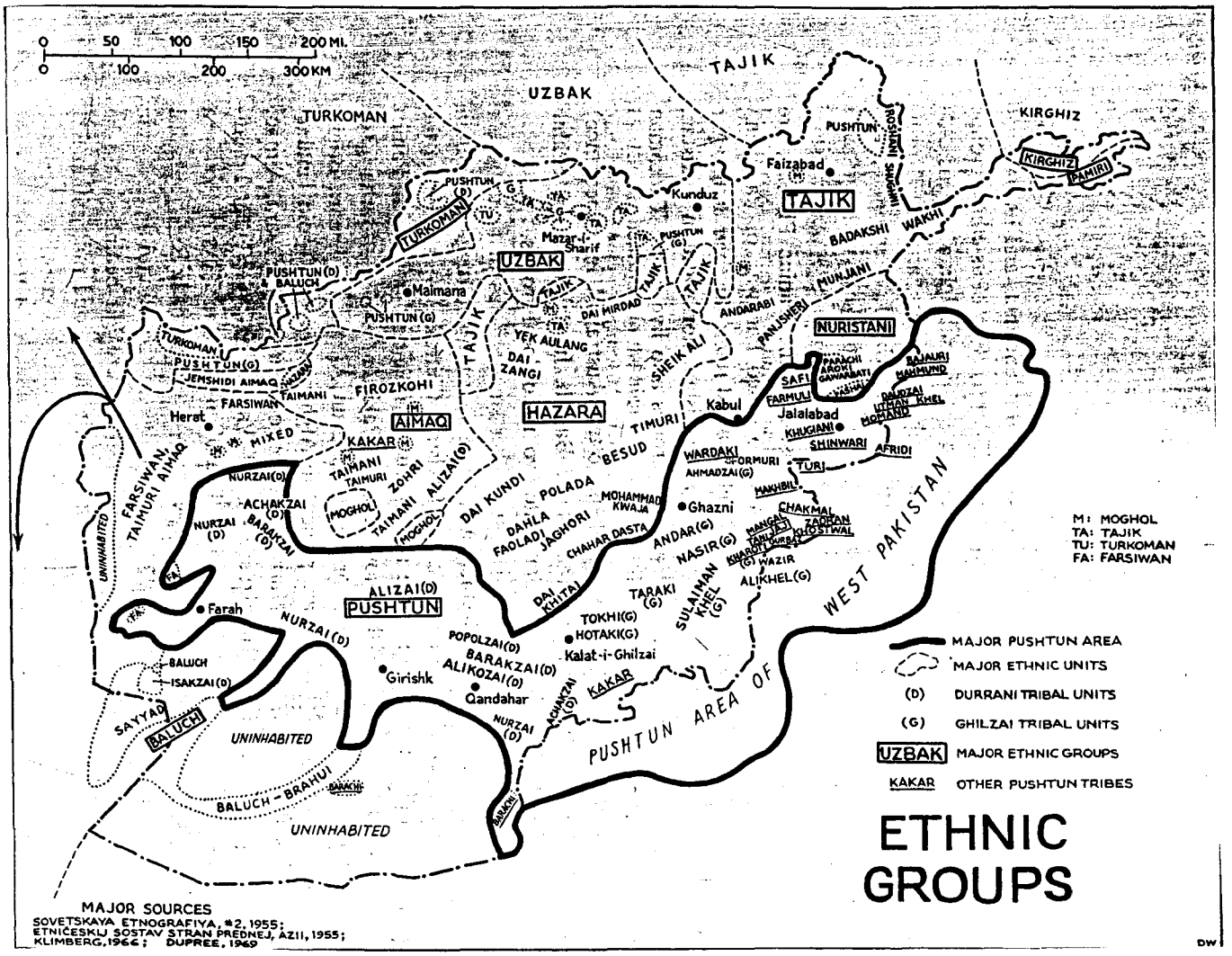

FIG-2: Map depicting the location of various ethnic groups in Afghanistan prior to forced refugee migration

(Source: Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p.56)

To add to the confusion, non-Pashto speakers are commonly known as 'Parsiwan', but 'Parsiwan' can also mean non-Turkic speakers (1989: 238). These examples show how the concept of *qaum* as a base of Afghan identity can be an ambiguous practice. Despite the fuzzy permutations of tribes and languages in Afghanistan, there have existed only two official Afghan state languages: the predominantly urban and administrative language of *Dari* (Afghan Persian spoken by 98% of males) and *Pashto* (spoken by 50% of males) (Hanifi 1976:78).

The concept of *quam* is joined by another important base of identity for 'Afghans'. This is the notion of *watan*—'homeland'—which can be a reference to both a 'place' (i.e. valley) and to 'time' (i.e. origins). Although absolute space and time are theoretically understood to be separate, the cultural notion of *watan* indicates how 'place' and 'time', as constituents of identity, are conceptually embedded in one another (Boyarin 1994; see also Benjamin 1968). It may be worthwhile to ask how a qaum that has traditionally practiced sedentary living, and a quam with a pastoralist lifestyle, might privilege different spatial-temporal senses of *watan*. Perhaps for nomads, collective memories of descent or ancestry are more pertinent to notions of a continuous collective identity than places per se. The fact that Afghanistan is referred to as 'Yaghistan' ('land of rebels', 'land of free'; Dupree 1973:*vxiii*) by some, signifies how identities can be conceived in spaces that are perceived as lying on the 'margins' to others. Afghans have been generally suspicious of centralized structures, and thus, when "their homelands [were] absorbed into the modern state system, with its characteristic emphasis on centralized authority and on political and economic integration" social discontent soon surfaced (Wirsing 1987:7).

Another significant 'base' for Afghan identity lies in *din* (religion) and the related notion of *mazhab* (religious sect) (Tapper 1989:236). Most Afghans are Muslims, and

the division of mazhabs is between the 'Shia' (mainly 'Ismailis' or 'Imamis'), and the 'Sunni' (mainly 'Hanafis') (Wirsing 1987:8). The majority of 'Afghan' communities belong to the Sunni *mazhab*, but Afghanistan also includes religious communities of Sikhs, Jews, Christians, and Hindus (Rashid 1999:24; Omidian 1996:57). Afghanistan has traditionally been a 'conservative' but 'tolerant' Muslim society (Rashid 1999: 24). Sufism has lent a pronounced influence (1999:25) and thus "Islam has never been the basis for a permanent, formal, and hierarchical religious or political organization" however religious symbols and sentiments have been actively mobilized as a "unifying" practice (Frederik Barth, cited in Kakar 1995:141; see Anderson 1984:266).

'The Pashtuns'

The largest *qaum* in Afghanistan is that of the Pashtuns, making up over 40% of the population (Omidian 1996:57; Shahrani 1984:6). Much of Afghanistan's history is not only tied to Pashtun political dominance, but the Pashtuns also comprise the majority of Afghan refugees, and form the major ethnic composition of the Taliban. For these reasons alone Pashtuns offer a compelling study.

Pashtuns have been described as amongst the largest tribal[36] societies on earth (Ahmed 1976:6). The *qaum* can be divided into two main, often rival groups[37], the *Abdali* and the *Ghilzai* (who later called themselves *Durrani*, Rashid 2000:10,11).

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[36] Richard Tapper's (1983) edited volume, beginning with his *Introduction,* and ending with Ernest Gellner's chapter on *Tribal Society and its Enemies*, provides a thorough discussion of the distinctions between the concepts of tribe, clan, lineage, and the state. They emphasize the multiple meanings that 'tribe' can imply. Aside from the fact that there are subdivisions of Ahmedzai, Ghilzai, Durrani, Abdalis, and so forth, the use of 'tribe' implies that Pashtun communities are homogeneous when in fact they show elements of diverse organization and can often appear as "non-tribal" in certain respects (see Edwards 1986: 314; Gellner 1983).

[37] Olef Caroe (1957:xiv-xv, as cited in Wirsing 1987:4) refers to Ghilzais and Durranis as Western Afghans; the Pakistani-settled Yusufzais, for example, as Eastern Afghans; and describes the 'highlanders' which include the 'Wazirs', 'Mahsuds', 'Afridis', 'Mohmands', 'Bangash', and 'Orakzai' as the 'true' Pashtuns.

Ahmed Shah's conquests, and creation of the Durrani dynasty in the mid-eighteenth century (S. Jones 1992: *xxi*) solidified Pashtun dominance of the region from Kabul to Delhi (Ahmed 1976:6). Given the political salience of Pashtuns, it is not surprising to learn that 'Afghanistan' is sometimes translated to mean the 'land of the Pashtun' (Omidian 1996:59). Most of the Pashtuns (including refugees) populate an area that has been described as 'Pashtunistan' (Rogers 1992:753) and which spans from northwest Pakistan to southeast Afghanistan. Around 12 million Pashtuns actually live on the border of eastern Afghanistan and western Pakistan (Edwards 1986: 314) (the vestigial 'Durand Line').

Pashtun 'Identity'[38]

Although 'official' and 'academic' discourses of identity can be reified, 'popular' conceptualizations of ethnic identities (and related notions like 'kinship', 'language', 'religion', and 'descent') are "complex", "essentially changing", and "flexible, negotiable, and ambiguous" (Tapper 1989: 232,233). Their realities are probably found somewhere in the dialectical interplay between expert and lay discourses (1989: 236). Keeping this in mind, I would like to revisit the notions of language and identity, and specifically how the 'Pashtun' *qaum* label is commonly used as a referent for those 'Afghans' who speak 'Pashto'[39] (Tapper 1989:238). What I want to emphasize here is that for the Pashtun, speaking 'Pashto' alone, is insufficient to assert Pashtun identity or 'Pashtunhood'.

We have already discussed some salient 'bases' of identity for 'Afghans' which included 'tribe' (language and/or descent), 'homeland' (place and time), and 'religion'

[38] My discussion of Pashtun identity is incomplete. The paucity of ethnographic information available upon Pashtun women limited addressing 'identity' in regards to Pashtun men alone.
[39] 'Pashto' could also be used as a reference for a 'soft dialect' whereas as 'Pakhto' was a reference to a 'hard dialect' (Wirsing 1987:4).

(faith). Frederik Barth (1969) claimed that the salient cultural constituents of 'Pashtun' identity were patrilineal descent, *pashtunwali* ('doing pashtu')—both elements of 'tribe' and 'homeland'—and Islam (see also Ahmed 1980:107).

Origins

It has been claimed that for Pashtuns "the defining criteria [of identity] are not language or religion, which one can change, but a recognized descent from the ancestor of all Pashtuns and the practice of endogamy" (Tapper 1989: 238). Thus an experienced 'continuity' of a 'collective' Pashtun identity is elicited from notions of Pashtun 'origins' and 'beginnings' (see Herzfeld 1987; also cf. Friedman 1992). In a politics of identity, new 'beginnings' can be actively created through the refurbishing of passive past 'origins' of communities (Herzfeld 1987:107-108,111).

For Pashtuns, the significance attributed to an ability to recount one's origins (Rashid 2000:32) is encapsulated by the 'segmentary lineage' system of Pashtun social organization (Ahmed 1980: 82; see Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1970). The Pashtun *qaum* is divided into a political structure that is 'acephalous' and in which value and authority is placed in the record of patrilineal descent from a common ancestor. Thus, part of being a bona fide 'Pashtun' means that one must be able to "trace his lineage through the father's line to one of the Pakhtun [sic] tribes, and in turn to the apical ancestor" (Ahmed 1980:84).

Edmund Leach (1990:229) offered that all history is mythological but not all mythology is historical. For Pashtuns, two mythological narratives are available to describe Pashtun origins. These narratives need not be held as incongruent to each

other, in fact, it is through their convergence that we might come to understand the oft remembered 'beginnings' for the community of Pashtuns[40].

The first origin myth describes how present-day Pashtuns are descended from amongst the largest tribes of *Bani-Israel* (the Children of Israel) (see Caroe 1958; Pennel 1913: 31; Wirsing 1987:5). In the narrative, King Saul of Jerusalem has a grandson by the name of *Afghana*, who later becomes advisor to the Biblical King Solomon. The descendants of Afghana are expelled from Damascus, to Babylon, and in their exile, settle in the Ghor mountains of Afghanistan. Thus, the narrative describes how present-day Pashtuns came to inhabit the region.

A second narrative, of Pashtun 'beginnings' is conjoined to the narrative of 'origins'. This mythological story is set during the seventh century AD, when *Qais*, a descendant of *Afghana*, travels to Mecca to find the Prophet Muhammad. There Qais becomes a Muslim, and subsequently takes the name 'Abdul Rashid' as given to him by the Prophet (Ahmed 1976: 7; Anderson 1984: 274; Pennel 1913: 31-43). Qais' eldest son, *Sarbanar*, is said to be the progenitor of the dominant *Durrani* tribe; Qais' second son is considered to be the progenitor of the Ghilzai tribe; and his third son is thought to be the progenitor of the "Kakars in Kandahar and the Safis around Peshawar" (Rashid 2000:10). The Pashtun narratives of the 'origin' from Israel, and the 'beginning' in Mecca, are mythological points through which Pashtun religious and ethnic identities are interwoven into a temporal pattern which is repeatedly spun in traditional lineage recounts by Pashtuns.

[40] Caroe (1958) states that there is more than one version of the story. I present these narratives not to argue their historicity but rather to import their cultural salience, as they are often invoked by Pashtuns, and symbolically blend religious and ethnic meanings that shape conceptualizations of Pashtun social identity.

'Pashtunwali' (The Pashtun 'way of life')

'To be a Pashtun' really means 'to do Pashtun': this principle of the theory and practice of Pashtun identity is framed in an unwritten sociomoral system of *Pashtunwali.* Pashtunwali is the sociomoral code, or 'way of life' that constitutes the "core" (Ahmed 1980:90) of Pashtun social interaction and identity roles (see also Barth 1969; Boesen 1986; Edwards 1986). Pashtunwali includes the practices of: *badal* (revenge), *melmastia*[41] (hospitality), and *nanawatia* (the provision of sanctuary to those who ask). Any judiciary processes that are relevant to the institution of Pashtunwali are addressed by the *jirga* (a democratic council of tribal elders that is assembled to adjudicate on various social matters) (Ahmed 1980:90).

One vital point for understanding conceptions of Pashtun identity is that the individual's expression of Pashtunwali, that is, 'to do pashtun', is fulfilled through the Pashtun 'honour' practices—*nangwali*[42]. Frederik Barth (1969) wrote that Pashtnuwali's:

> customs and institutions provide the organizational features which allow Pakhtuns [sic] to maintain their identity as Pakhtuns as distinctive 'value orientations' which 'emphasize male autonomy and egality, self-expression and aggressiveness in a syndrome which might be summarized under the concept of honour (izzat) (Edwards 1986: 315, citing Barth 1969: 117-134).

Honour, or *nang*, can be conceived of as a kind of moral emotion that organizes the social behaviour of Pashtun men—the 'doing' of Pashto. *Nang,* as a constituent of Pashtun social identity, is socially performed, and requires public legitimization of the individual's membership within the *qaum*, and collective moral community.

A Pashtun individual's public demonstration of *nang* also implies or certifies that the man privately possesses *ghairat*. *Ghairat* refers to a kind of altruistic (Anderson

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[41] 'Melmastia' is the practice of providing from one's resources, even at a risk to oneself, in order to give comfort to one's guest.

[42] 'Honour' is also termed as *namus* (Boesen 1994), and *izzat* (Ahmed 1976:56).

1984:276) moral emotion that broadly translates to mean "bravery or zeal expressed in the pursuit of one's objectives or self-identity" (Rogers 1992:758). It is *ghairat* which endows the Pashtun man with the "capacity to be self-determined, autonomous and capable of defending self, family, tradition, customs, property and home, living under rules outside the jurisdiction of national governments" (Rogers 1992:758).

Ghairat is a fundamental organizational ideal and practice for the subjective conceptualization of Pashtun identity. It is an ideal feeling or aspired attitude that constitutes a Pashtun man's subjective identity, and a pre-requisite for the practice and maintenance of *nang*. An individual Pashtun man with *ghairat* is presumably capable of showing autonomy and independence through public action—thus, he is able to 'do Pashtu'. The social premium that is given to both the features of autonomy and independence of an individual is historically reflected in the Pashtun collectivity. For example, in the Pashtun *qaum*, "tribal autonomy [has] entail[ed] maintaining a marginal stance" or "a marginal identity in relation to those around them" (Edwards 1986: 315,316).

It is not so difficult to understand how a 'core' identity position of 'marginality', in addition to Afghanistan's isolating terrain, and its "complex ethnic, cultural and religious mix" have rendered processes like "Afghan nation-building extremely difficult" (Rashid 2000:10). The Pashtun aversion to political power being in the hands of a centralized "state and authority" (Rogers 1992: 758; also Edwards 1986:315-316) is particularly obstructive to the development of sympathetic 'structures of feeling' (Gupta 1992:73) that are necessary for constructing and maintaining 'national' identities.

In Pashtunwali, "as long as [an individual] can keep his own identity from being subsumed within an externally imposed definition—then he can consider

himself a Pakhtun [sic]" (Edwards 1986: 315). An individual who possesses *ghairat,* possesses a fundamental emotion that enables the preservation of identity, and thus entitles the man to Pashtunhood and belonging to the collective moral community. If the man, however, wishes to maintain the social status as 'Pashtun', and to *stay within* the moral community, then *nang* must be assumed and appropriately demonstrated by the individual. Opportunities for the performance of *nang* present themselves through various social and institutional practices and beliefs such as *badal*, or *melmastia*, or *purdah*: "A man is Pathan [sic] less by virtue of his enrolment in a particular group than by his manifest behavioural conformity to traditional Pathan customs—foremost among which is the unremitting assertion in every public forum of male autonomy" (Wirsing 1987: 7).

'Islam'

"Afghanistan provides a complex picture of Islam and Islamic forces" (Hiro 1989:268). For now let us attend to how religion is a salient aspect of Pashtun life in Afghanistan, and how it forms an important base for conceptualizing Pashtun identity[43] (Barth 1969). Anthropologist Akbar Ahmed (1980:82) claimed that for Pashtuns "Islamic symbolism is intrinsic to" the meanings of social practices and the 'Muslimness' of the individual Pashtun. But what is striking is how *qaum* and *din* or *mazhab* are blended in notions of Pashtun self-identity. Ahmed goes on to argue that for a Pashtun man, being 'Pashtun' and being 'Muslim', are ideally considered as mutually "embedded" in the other—where "the integrity of the former is assumed in the latter" (1980:107). In the practice of everyday life, however, the prescriptions of 'Pashtunwali' and 'Islam' also run into inconsistencies and tensions (Anderson 1984:276).

[43] The majority of Pashtuns adhere to the Hanafi school of thought in Islam (Wirsing 1987:7).

For example, the practice of usury is forbidden in Islam, but is a common Pashtun practice; additionally, in contrast to Shariah, there are no property rights for Pashtun women (Ahmed 1980:106), and divorce is not a practical option either for Pashtun women (Shahrani 1984:276). A remarkable feature of the way Pashtun identities are 'managed' is that even in cases where Pashtunwali and Sharia (Islamic law) openly contradict each other, apparently "no conflict" or "disjunction" is claimed by Pashtuns between seemingly divergent tribal and religious prescriptions for identities (Ahmed 1980:106,107).

Ahmed concludes that the ethnic and religious aspects of Pashtun identities are not required to "coalesce" (1980:106,107; cf. Sokefeld 1999). In fact, it appears that despite the importance of religion for Pashtun life, "Islam operates in *conjunction* with other local aspects of identities rather than as a univalent partisan interest" (Anderson 1984:267, my emphasis). Ahmed's explanation stands on its own:

> Deviance from Islamic laws are partly legitimized in the eyes of society by a frank recognition of deviance and are explained as Pukhto [sic] *riwaj,* as if by such explanation the guilt would be extenuated or even exculpated. 'Yes there is contradiction, we were wrong, but can a Pukhtun [sic] be anything but a Muslim?' His attitude to the Almighty is that of a *favourite.* Native exegesis rests on the assumption that the Pukhtuns were a *favoured* Islamic group. He carries no stigma of forcible conversion. His Islam reaches back to the *origins* of the religion (Ahmed 1980:106, emphasis mine).

It seems that Pashtun representations of individual and collective identities, despite incongruities between religious observance, and the 'doing' of 'Pashto', are conceived as intrinsically suffused with an 'Islamicness'. Thus, open contradictions are either forgivable, or justified in terms of being perfunctory, or non-threatening to the Muslim authenticity of Pashtuns. For a Pashtun, "[this] complete confidence in his Muslimness" not only "explains the continuation of Pukhto [sic] custom which contains non-Islamic elements" but also the "constrict[ed]...role of *religious groups"* in Pashtun traditions (Ahmed 1980:107, emphasis mine).

The mythological narrative of Pashtuns being amongst the Lost Tribes of Israel, and favoured by God, indeed provokes intriguing questions in regards to the significance of the relationship between Jewish and Islamic identities within 'Pashtunhood'. The ancestors of the Pashtuns are not only divinely inspired and favoured in Jewish tradition, but persist as blessed 'Believers' from the very beginnings of Islam. It has been suggested that this amplification of a pious identity encouraged a "tolerant" expression of Islam—that is, the presence of a non-proselytizing form of Islam in Afghanistan (Ahmed 1980:107). This idea of tolerance, however, can also be explicated by the fact that prominent Pashtun tribal areas are generally not populated by non-Muslims.

In recent times, Islamic ideology has especially been "vulnerable to political exploitation and manipulation, and has been widely employed as a partisan political weapon by both governments and oppositions" (Wirsing 1987:7). This has been most salient in the emergence of the Taliban movement and their relevance to Pashtun identity is the next topic of discussion.

The Taliban

In Arabic, *talib*, refers to a student or seeker of knowledge (Gohari 2000:31; Nojumi 2002:119). *Taliban* is the pluralization of *talib*, and is a term that was adopted by a novel and "secretive" (Rashid 2000:5) religious-political group of (mostly young) ideologically driven Pashtun men .

The Taliban membership ubiquitously includes students of the Pakistani *madrassahs* (religious schools) that had proliferated along the Pakistan-Afghan border, and in Afghan refugee camps, during the Afghan-Soviet war. Upon the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, and subsequent US detachment from the region,

the same madrassahs that taught Quranic recitation, and had extolled the virtues of struggle against the atheism of Communists (Gohari 2000:26-43), were as ideologically potent in aiming their discourse to the broader evils in the dar-ul-harb (House of War)—a 'House' that would include the United States.

Afghanistan had been in a state of perpetual civil war after the departure of the Soviets, with various antagonistic groups brutally fighting each other to attain domination of greater territory. The Afghans that lived in the south, predominantly Pashtuns, had also grown tired of living with the bullying and bullets of rival warlords, and thus originally welcomed the Taliban as benefactors of peace and order, and perhaps as the reclaimers of Pashtun supremacy in the region (Rashid 2000:2,35).

The severe fighting between the traditional Pashtun *ulema* (scholars) who "valued the historical ideals of early Islamic history and rarely challenged traditional Afghan tribal structures like the Jirga" and the Islamicist factions which "denigrated the tribal structure and pursued a radical political ideology in order to bring about an Islamic revolution in Afghanistan" (2000: 19) helped tear open an unchallenged space for the Taliban to enter (Nojumi 2002:121). In 1994, the Taliban thus came to prominence , after their conquest of Kandahar in Afghanistan. And two years later, in 1996, they would take the capital of Kabul (Rashid 2000:4), and eventually establish rule over most of Afghanistan.

The expanding Taliban control of Afghanistan ensured the viability of new smuggling routes between Iran, Central Asia, and Pakistan, as well as created new possibilities for the economic development of oil (see Rashid 1999;2000). Though they did not proclaim a political manifesto per se, the Taliban increasingly invoked politico-religious Islamic injunctions whereby Afghan men were obliged to grow beards, Afghan women were prohibited from public view, girls forbidden to attend

schools, and the listening or playing of music, the flying of kites, and watching television, were deemed as punishable moral offenses (Rashid 2000:2; see also Gohari 2000: Ch. 6). Numerous human rights violations have been documented against the Taliban since they took power in Kabul (Amnesty International Report 1996).

Revivalism and Pashtun Identity

A revitalization movement requires that there be "a deliberate intent by members of a society" to "innovate not merely discrete items, but a new cultural system" (Wallace 1956:265). The emergence of the predominantly Pashtun—Taliban—has brought into question how this revitalization movement has impacted meanings and conceptualizations of Pashtun identity. It has also compelled a questioning of the underlying political and economic processes that are implicated and connoted by the new expressive politics of the Taliban. In addition, attempts to understand the role of Islamic ideology in transforming cultural identities, and in modulating certain tensions between national, ethnic, and religious identities is also a vital task. I intend to raise these issues here to only provoke further thought towards their clarification and relevance to imagined Pashtun identity.

Islamic revitalization movements have not been an uncommon phenomenon in the twentieth century (see Rippin 1993a; also e.g. Irwin 1984). In this light, Ahmed (1976) has also shown that millennium movements and charismatic leaders also occupy the historical past amongst the Pashtun. The Taliban, however, are the most recent Islamic 'revivalist' movement which "emphasize the institution of customs, values, and even aspects of nature which are thought to have been in the mazeway[44] of previous generations but are not now present" (Wallace 1956: 267). Thus, they

[44] 'Mazeway' refers to the "mental image" that a person has of "the society and its culture, as well as of his own body and its behavioral regularities, in order to act in ways which reduce stress at all levels of the system" (Wallace 1956: 266).

claim aspirations to "restore peace, disarm the population, enforce Sharia law and the integrity and Islamic character of Afghanistan" (Rashid 2000:22). As revivalists, the Taliban wished to forge a new imagined 'Islamic' community based on an imagined past of the early Muslim *ummah.* For a fuller sketch of their genesis we must look to British India at the turn of the century.

In the milieu of the latter half of nineteenth century colonial India, the *Deoband* theological seminaries emerged as an openly moral, and implicitly political, challenge to British authority and dominance (Shaikh 1989:118). The Muslim students of the *Deoband* seminaries were referred to as *Deobandis*, and their membership molded the reformist movement which sought a renewal of the practice of rudimentary Islamic principles in everyday life. The Deobandis wanted to "safeguard Islam" and Muslim identity and community life by promoting a strict adherence to "codes of Islamic law and education" by Muslim individuals (1989:228). The Deobandis felt that the practiced piety of Muslim individuals would be the most effective means to oppose the degrading moral-cultural threats of British colonial rule upon India's Muslims (1989:228). Thus, a self-conscious return to Islam's basic tenets was perceived as the best means of preserving the moral integrity of the Muslim 'community' or 'ummah'.

About one hundred years later, the religious schools, *madrassahs,* that were established in Pakistan during the 1980s were loosely modeled upon the early Deobandi seminaries of colonial India. These madrassahs were also a manifestation of particular ideologies (religious and political), and preached that the most practical response to the cultural and religious threat of an oppressive power (i.e. Soviet Union) was a return to the basics of Islam. The Pakistani madrassahs were however also different from the Deobandi seminaries in several ways:

1. Their proliferation was a reaction to Soviet Communism and not British Imperialism, and thus, registered many young Afghan refugees as new 'generations' of mujahideen, 2. The madrassahs were also advocated not only by the neo-Deobandi party of the JUI (Jamat-ul-Ulema-e-Islami) in Pakistan, but also funded by Saudia Arabia, and supported by the United States (Nojumi 2002:125-126, 196-197), 3. The 'scholars' (ulema) of the madrassahs were predominantly uneducated non-theologians, with minimal knowledge of historical Deobandi tenets, or Islamic history for that matter, 4. Finally, the Pakistani madrassahs were significantly influenced by *Wahhabi* principles (Gohari 2000: 58-60; Rashid 1999:25). Wahhabism had been another revivalist movement within Islam that emerged in eighteenth century Arabia. It emphasized a literalist interpretation of the Qur'an and the Traditions of the Prophet (*ahadith*). It is this particular Traditionalist expression of Islam that is practiced in the Saudi kingdom today (see Rippin 1993a:28-29).

But the Taliban are neither purely Wahhabis, nor purely Deobandis. They are arguably an entirely novel phenomenon that has "promoted a new, radical model for Islamicist revolution" (Rashid 1999:27). The genocidal practices that have been associated with the Taliban's model of Islam, however, do have an historical precedence in Afghan history: Abdul Rehman, also known as the 'Iron Amir', ruled the kingdom of Afghanistan with support by the British from 1880-1891 (Rashid 2000:12).

The Iron Amir's style of rule seems to have been uncannily similar to that of the Taliban. He restricted Western cultural influences, including formal education, and also by-passed traditional structures of authority as he distributed power to the mullahs, and forcefully introduced the idea of "the divine right to rule rather than the traditional concept of election by the Loya Jirga" (2000:12). The Iron Amir also

managed to effectively suppress any Pashtun opposition and killed off particularly any non-Pashtun Afghans, including the Hazaras and Uzbeks who threatened his control (2000:12). Until the Iron Amir, and more recently the Taliban, Pashtun dominance in Afghanistan had not meant the ignorance of tribal processes, nor the neglect of other ethnic leaderships (2000:212). But the Taliban sought new beginnings in an imagined 'Islamic' community—although within the taut religious ideology of the Taliban, the threads of Pashtun ethno-nationalism were also tensely strung.

Shared amongst revitalization movements is the fact that they are commonly reactions to perceived or experienced threats by an oppressive Other. The Afghan-Soviet War, and subsequent internecine civil wars lead to a devastating fragmentation of Afghan family structures, social roles, and generated masses of refugees. The Taliban, although a revivalist movement of finite success, ironically also reveal a politics of disconnection from the traditional meaning of Pashtunhood: the values of Pashtunwali, the importance of patrilineal descent and collective memory, and the intrinsic feeling of Muslimness through the daily practice of life. Many of the Taliban grew up in "a generation who had never seen their country at peace—an Afghanistan not at war with invaders and itself. *They had no memories* of their tribes, their elders, their neighbors nor the complex ethnic mix of peoples that often made up their villages and their homeland" (Rashid 2000:32, emphasis mine). The wars and life in the refugee camps had extinguished any history or memories of their *qaum* and *watan* (cf. Rashid 2000:23). Perhaps, the ideological narrative of an 'eternal Islam', a way of life that promotes an imagined identity not rooted in a particular space, nor based upon ethnic difference, was the ideal means to reclaim a past in new beginnings that were modeled upon the notion of the early Muslim community.

Although the Taliban found "supreme religious legitimacy" in Islam for their political strategizations and military approach (Gohari 2000:26), the 'Islamic' ideals and practices of the Taliban were in certain ways foreign to Afghanistan. From the poeisis of the Taliban in Pakistani refugee camps and madrassahs, to the hybridization of ideological tenets derived from colonial India and a Wahhabist Saudi Arabia, the revivalism of the 'Taliban' was an historical outburst of an expressive politics of identity that sought a complete revolution and transformation of Afghan society through the effective mobilization of Islamic vocabularies and narratives.

PART II: REFUGEE IDENTITIES

"There is a constant tension between reality and the ideals of the myth."
—Roger Zetter (1999:13)

"If you are a king, but outside your homeland, you are no better than a beggar"
—(Pashtun saying)

4. THE CATEGORY OF 'REFUGEE'

As far back as we know people have been on the move: nomads, exiles, migrants, armies and travelers have all punctuated the historical and mythological landscapes of human existence (see for example, Norwood 1969; Tabori 1972). In recent times, the eruption of global refugee populations has brought salience to theoretical paradigms such as 'diaspora' (Cohen 1999; Clifford 1994) and popularized the explanatory or descriptive power of concepts like 'globalization' and 'transnationalism' (Hefner 1998; Kearney 1995; Shami 1997). The essentialism and rootedness (see Malkki 1992) contained in the ideologically dominant 'national' identities (see Malkki 1995) is increasingly challenged by the displacement of peoples, exposing how cultural conceptualizations of 'identities' can be unfixed, shifting, and polysemic. In this light it is both timely and useful to explore the 'processes' rather than 'essences' (cf. Fischer 1999) that go toward imagining identities and communities (cf. Gupta and Ferguson 1992: 9).

In this section I want to address the contemporary phenomenon of new global refugee cultures. I focus on how 'identity' is a concept that is culturally imagined in space, time, and represented in a symbolic-moral universe. Beginning by briefly tracing the politico-legal formulation of the refugee 'status' identity, a discussion follows on how the concept of 'refugee' can be thought of as an ambiguous and elusive social construction, validated and contested by various social practices. Subsequently, some relevant issues pertaining to the relationship between migration

and the social conceptualizations of identity for Afghan refugees in Pakistan will be raised.

Refugees

The historical migration or displacement of individuals, or collectivities, has been a "major source of social transformation" with sequelae for both "sending and receiving societies" (Castles and Miller 1998: *xiii*, 1; cf. Kunz 1973: 136). The noun 'refugee' was initially used in 1573 (Tuitt 1999: 110; cf. Shahrani 1995: 188) and is originally derived from the verb 'refuge'[45] (Lee 1996:30) which describes the act of providing, or seeking "shelter from pursuit or danger or trouble" (*Oxford English Reference Dictionary*). Its employment has historically varied. For instance, in the late 17th century, the term 'refugee' was the specific referent to the French Protestant Huguenots who were expelled from France (Kraut 1994: 40; Tabori 1973: 77-81; Tuitt 1999: 111). Prior to the twentieth century, the term 'refugee' was also interchangeable with the 'emigrant' or 'émigré' (Tabori 1972:23,27)—the original émigrés being members of the Russian nobility and French monarchy who chose to leave their homelands (Kraut 1994:40). What is interesting with respect to conventional meanings of 'refugee' is that 'emigrants', 'émigrés', and 'immigrants' referred to persons who had *voluntarily*, without coercion of any kind, moved across 'boundaries' (1994:35). Emigrants traveled across borders and *out of* native country; immigrants traveled across borders and *into* another country. In contrast, modern 'refugees' tend to be viewed as a class of *involuntary migrants*, persecuted persons in

[45] The term 'asylum' is also linked with the notion of 'refuge' (particularly in the lexicon of 'refugee' law). It is also tied in meaning to "institution[s] offering shelter and support to distressed or destitute individuals, esp. mentally ill" (*Oxford English Reference Dictionary*); See also Mortimer (1997).

'flight' (1994:35) who have crossed *national* boundaries with no ability or intent to return to their country.

In the early part of the twentieth century, the historical consequences of WW I included the creation of mass European refugee populations due to the disintegration of the Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman Empires (Smyser 1987:5). A temporary office of the *High Commission for Russian Refugees* by the League of Nations was established to specifically address legal concerns and aim at possible solutions for containing the 'problem' of refugees. The enormous displacement of people from Russia and other European countries was also concomitant with the "un-mixing of populations in the Near East—the Greek, Bulgarian, and Turkish migrations" (Simpson 1939: 11). For example, based mainly upon religious categories of identity, large populations of 'Muslims' and 'Greek Orthodox Christians' were mutually traded between the newly emerged nation-state of Turkey and the kingdom of Greece[46] (Brubaker 1996: 152- 156; Simpson 1939: 15-16).

In the 1920s, Dr. Fridtjof Nansen[47] was elected as *High Commissioner for Refugees* (HCR) by the League of Nations. His job was to manage the resettlement of mainly Russian, Turkish, and German refugees. The 'Nansen Passport' system was accordingly devised to provide 'identity' or 'travel documents'[48] to the European refugees that would allow 'freedom of movement' between European states. The HCR office gave an official recognition to various *groups* (Leopold and Harrell-Bond 1994:20) of refugees that had emerged in the interim between WWI and WWII. But the validation was unable to achieve any universal consensus or agreement that would

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[46] See *Chapter 6:* 'Aftermaths of empires and the unmixing of peoples' (Brubaker 1996)

[47] Dr. Nansen was a Norwegian Northern arctic explorer, scientist, and philanthropist (Tabori 1972:279-280; cf. Kraut 1994:47).

[48] The idea was raised in 1922 in a discussion "on the issue of an international document to the de-nationalized refugees from Russia" (Simpson 1939: 239). The Nansen Passport did not however provide the same amenities as the modern passport, since it was valid only for a year, and did not guarantee a "return [for its holder] to the country of issue" (1939:239).

guarantee the protection of, and assistance to, recognized groups of people (Smyser 1987:6). The persecution and expulsion of European Jews from Nazi-occupied regions, however, stimulated increased political action (Steinbock 1999:18). As such, the *Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees* (IGCR) was created following the German invasion of Poland (Long 1993:17). By 1939, the earlier political "emphasis" that had been given to 'displacement' was being directed at "[the] reasons for [refugee displacement]" (Leopold and Harrell-Bond 1994: 29). As such, 'displaced persons' (DPs) came to be viewed as vulnerable persons who primarily did not have *protection* from the "Government of the State" from which he or she "[had] been, or still [was], a national" (Simpson 1939:229).

Five years into WWII, the *United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (UNNRA) was established as an *ad hoc* organization to accommodate the rising refugee populations in war-torn Europe. By the end of WWII the extent of the refugee problem in Europe ensured that when the UNNRA mandate ultimately expired in 1947[49], the United Nations would substitute UNNRA with the new *International Refugee Organization* (IRO).

The IRO's mandate was *specifically* concerned with the resettlement of refugees (Gallagher 1989: 579; Smyser 1987:9). Thus following WWII, "certain key techniques for managing mass displacements of people first became standardized" and then later "globalized" (Malkki 1995: 497). It is interesting to note that the refugees that emerged, both during and after WWII were managed as a "military problem" and the responsibility of management was assigned "under the jurisdiction of the Displaced Persons Branch of the *Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary*

[49] This was also the year of mass refugee movement of millions of people due to the partitioning of India (Kraut 1994:49) into three separate states: India, West Pakistan, and East Pakistan. I have not elaborated on non-European regions of refugee movements only because they were separate phenomena in terms of the developments that lead to the 1951 UN *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*.

Force (SHAEF) (1995:499). The original refugee camps were thus were operationalized and modeled after prisoner-of-war camps, and served as effective 'total institutions' (Goffman 1961) for controlling and coping with the problems of displaced peoples.

Later the same year of the IRO's creation, the UN General Assembly approved the establishment of the *United Nations Relief and Works Association* (UNWRA) to specifically provide assistance to Palestinian refugees who had been displaced by the creation of the State of Israel (see Barakat 1973; Siddiq 1995; also, Long 1993:18; Sztucki 1999:57). By 1950, the eventual transmogrification of the IRO into the *permanent* office of the *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (UNHCR) (see Cunliffe and Pugh 1999; Gallagher 1989) revealed a visible shift in the conceptualization (and treatment) of refugees from being mainly a 'military problem', to becoming a global humanitarian issue of concern for sovereign state governments (Long 1993: 14,16; Jacobson 1977:514; Malkki 1995: 500, 513; see also Crepeau and Barutciski 1994)[50].

The mandate of the UNHCR was to provide protection and leadership in the management of mass refugee movements in accordance with UN law. It is useful to note how the "formalization" (Gallagher 1989: 594) of the "mechanisms" (Druke 1990: 24) of the international refugee system were derived from the needs of the nation-state system. Essentially, the main goals of the UNHCR were to adequately "respond" and "restrict" the fluxes of mass displacement across nation-state

[50] The establishment of an 'international organization' with a complementary 'humanitarian' ethos had in fact preceded the UNHCR. In 1859, a Genevan businessman named Jean Henri Dunant decided to help the "victims of war" after the Battle of Solferino, in Crimea, where over 40,000 French and Austrians were killed. He eventually formed one of the first international relief agencies—the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) (Tabori 1972:276-278). The ICRC would later establish the League of Red Cross Societies [Red Cross, Red Crescent, Red Lion and Sun] which were set up to "coordinate international relief work and became guardians of the Geneva conventions protecting war prisoners" (Long 1993: 14).

boundaries (Gallagher 1989: 594). Other forms of *assistance* would also arrive from various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), volunteer agencies (VOLAGs), as well as some economic and development agencies (Malkki 1995:505; see also Druke 1990; Nicholson and Twomey 1999).

At present, the UNHCR remains the primary international organization responsible for monitoring refugee concerns, but its current mandate also differs from that of 1950: at the moment "legal foundation transcends...the immediate framework of UN law and has...some basis in international refugee and human rights law" (Turk 1999: 155; see also Crepeau and Barutciski 1994). The UNHCR also functions as the main administrative organization involved in the production of legal discourse, and the dissemination of official statistics concerning refugees (Malkki 1995: 505-506; see for example, Nicholson and Twomey 1999; UNHCR 1995; 2001).

The 'Status' Refugee: People 'of concern' to the UNHCR

According to the *1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugee*[51] (Article 1.A.), a 'person' qualifies as a categorical refugee:

> "as a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it" (Gallagher 1989: 580; Leopold and Harrell-Bond 1994: 21; Smyser 1987:11).

The above definition describes the 'status' refugee as a "moving entity" (Tuitt 1999:108) that has crossed national borders, and either rejects, or is prevented from, returning to the place of origin. As a politico-legal definition shaped by the ideology of the nation-state system and discourse of human rights (cf. Steinbock 1999:29-33;

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[51] The *Revised 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, Article 1(2) begins with "An individual who, owing to well-founded fear..."

also Cunliffe and Pugh 1999), the status 'refugee' lays importance on the notion of 'border crossing'[52] *and* 'persecution' (see Lee 1996:31; Leopold and Harrell-Bond 1993: 89). It is also interesting to point out that the earlier focus placed on refugee collectivities or *groups*[53] by the HCR has been constricted to the 'refugee' as an *individual* or person. It is no coincidence that the individual—'citizen'—is also the fundamental sociopolitical unit of the nation-state.

The Convention definition of refugee may have been satisfactory in the context of European displacement, but its Eurocentricism (Sztucki 1999:56) and restricted geographical[54] and historical criteria degraded its appropriateness for refugees that were to originate from Africa, and other non-European, and non-Soviet territories around the world (Gallagher 1989: 583). Many African[55] and Latin American[56]

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[52] Interestingly, the notion of the crossing of boundaries had been 'irrelevant' for determining refugees until 1951. For example, "during Japan's invasion of China in the 1930s and 40s, internally displaced persons in China continued to be referred to as 'refugees' in American official communications" (Lee 1996:31). The key aspect in prior definitions of refugee was the notion vulnerability, and the lack of 'protection' (1996:31). The nation-state ideology had significant influence on shaping the meaning of the modern category of person of the 'refugee' as an individual who has crossed national boundaries.

[53] The UN General Assembly put forth a resolution in 1973 that formalized "social authorities" to the UNHCR. These 'social authorities' not only obliged the High Commissioner "to continue his assistance and protection activities," but also "expanded the range of persons" within UNHCR jurisdiction to include "types of persons who were to be treated as if they were refugees even if the legal definition was not changed" (Smyser 1987: 18). Thus, "victims of man-made disasters" or famine or "refugee-like situations" were also taken under the jurisdiction of the UNHCR (1987: 18). This did broaden the scope of the narrow 1951 definition and *again gave salience to "group determination"* (Leopold and Harrell-Bond 1994:22, emphasis mine) and to the "actual conditions in the country of origin, rather than a focus on personal fear or "persecution alone" (1994:21).

[54] In 1967, the UN *Convention* was amended in a UN Protocol that called for the expansion of the criterion of geographic area beyond Europe, and to strike the antedated application of the status (Smyser 1987: 11-12). The new Protocol combined with the 1967 UN *Convention on Territorial Asylum* ensured the protection of refugees against forcible return (*refoulement*) and denial at state borders. It did not, however, guarantee asylum since the "needs and interests" of sovereign states predominated over the international, authoritative injunctions that claimed benevolence towards the needs and interests of refugees (Smyser 1987: 22; See also Druke 1990:194). For this reason, the new 1967 Protocol, albeit an improvement, remained inadequate for the *Organization for African Unity* (OAU). It must be kept in mind that the political and geographical landscapes of post-colonial Africa were in constant flux, marked by frequent civil conflicts, and producing large numbers of displaced peoples (Smyser 1987:14).

[55] In 1969, the OAU *Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa* was signed. This document augmented the Convention definition of a 'refugee' by including a "person who was compelled to flee because of 'external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part of the whole of his country of origin or nationality" (Gallagher 1989: 584; Smyser 1987: 15). By the end of the 1970s the refugee situation in the world had continued to grow to massive proportions. Increases in regional conflicts and "anticolonial wars"

nation-states have since signed their own amended versions of the Convention declaration.

Distinctions between the *OUA Convention*, *Cartegena Declaration*, and *UN Convention* definitions expose the different historical and sociopolitical processes that can underlie the possible social meanings of refugee 'status'. These realities have dilated the official and everyday uses of the refugee status label, and even compelled the inclusion of new, alternative politico-legal categories of social identity. From earlier historical homologs and synonyms such as 'exiles' or 'émigrés', additional terminologies have emerged to describe the different sorts of exiles that might exist today. In 1960, "the Mental Health Expert of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees", Dr. H. Strotzka, "established five different classes of exiles, basing this division both on material and psychological considerations" (Tabori 1972: 29). Strotzka divided exiles into the 'legal refugees' and alternatively as 'political', 'economic', 'psychological', and 'personal' exiles (1972:29-30).

The "competence" of the UNHCR was officially expanded later to include various classes of 'refugee-like persons'. These *"ratione personae"* included 'Asylum-seekers', 'Stateless Persons', 'Returnees', 'Internally displaced persons' and 'Persons threatened with displacement or otherwise at risk' (see Turk 1999: 155). Currently, the most significant category belongs to the internally displaced persons[57]. In 1995, 30 out of 53 million displaced people were 'internally displaced' (Lee

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(Leopold and Harrell-Bond 1994:21) resulted in forcibly displaced populations in the 'Third World' from Southeast and Southwest Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Central America (see Rogge 1987).

[56] In 1984, selective Latin American countries signed the *Cartegena Declaration*: a customized *Convention* definition of 'refugee' that took into account the contingencies of regional conflicts in South America (see Gallagher 1989).

[57] The *Analytical Report of the Secretary General on Internally Displaced Persons* describes them as "persons who have been forced to flee their homes suddenly or unexpectedly in larger numbers, as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, systematic violations of human rights or natural man-made disasters; and who are within the territory of their own country (UN Doc. E/CN.4/1992/23. P.5)" (cited in Lee 1996:28).

1996:27-28). Since the IDPs represent "the fastest growing group of uprooted persons in the world" (UNHCR 2001) the notion of "[d]isplacement per se rather than cross-border displacement has...become the pivotal point around which institutional aid and protection are organised" (Tuitt 1999: 109). Generally, the present application of the status refugee definition "serves to protect people against three related kinds of harm: harsh discrimination, attribution of collective guilt, and punishment for the exercise of rights of free expression and belief" (Steinbock 1999:33).

In January 2001 "the number of people 'of concern' to UNHCR was 21.8 million" (UNHCR 2001). The majority of these people were not from former Cold War countries but rather from the so-called Third World: countries of origin such as Afghanistan, Burundi, Iraq, Sudan, or Somalia (UNHCR 2001). Most resettlement of refugees occurs in the United States, Canada, and Australia (2001) with European countries generally resettling fewer numbers (see Castles and Miller 1993: 89; Sztucki 1999:68-72; UNHCR 2001).

5. THE CONCEPT OF 'REFUGEE'

Liisa Malkki (1995: 497) describes the modern conceptualization of the "refugee" as an "historical moment of reconfiguration". The socio-historical process of de-colonization and the subsequent emergence of the nation-state system have transformed an early historical meaning of 'refuge' from being an act of "saving individuals from family and tribal feuds to protecting victims of national and international conflicts" (Long 1993:14). Thus, the politico-legal category of the 'status' refugee represents a new "'kind' of person" (Malkki 1995:513) and subjective collective identity, both fashioned in the image of "the national order of things"

(1995; 1995a:5) and 'rooted' in particular cultural constructions of space (1992) and time (Tuitt 1999:107).

Boundaries

The movement of refugees across the geopolitical *borders* of nation-states tends to challenge their very existence. The 'border' is a specific example of the broader notion of 'boundary' which is a common metaphor carried in a variety of terms (Alvarez 1994:449) that express symbolic and physical meanings: for example, "borders", "edges", "frontiers", "margins", "verges", "transition", "membranes", "walls", "doors" "windows", "gates", "fences", and "zones" (see Rodman and Cooper 1994:94; see also Alvarez 1994; Donnan and Wilson 1994).

Anthropologist Frederik Barth (1969) was interested in the symbolic boundaries that existed between 'ethnic groups' as well as the physical boundaries that separated cultural spaces. His idea of ethnic 'boundary processes' postulated that cultural boundaries were symbolically generated, maintained, and contested via social relations *between ethnic groups.* The cultural role of boundaries was to enforce 'visible' distinctions between an 'us' and a 'them'. Akin to Paul Ricoeur's (1992) analysis at the level of the individual, Barth claimed that group 'differences' were translated as criteria for establishing symbolic boundaries that distinguished 'Other' from Self. Thus, for Barth the presence of 'boundaries' implicated different possibilities for social relationships might exist between 'identities' and 'communities' (cf. Tonkin 1989:15,18).

Anthropologist Mary Douglas (1966; 1982) also studied the idea of boundaries that were associated with cultural notions of 'danger' and 'pollution'. She conceptualized the human body as a kind of symbolic space, and saw social taboos as

an expression of moral 'boundaries' that symbolically designated cultural body practices and spaces. Similarly, anthropologist Victor Turner's interest in ritual performance lead him to conclude that during the proceeding stages of a ritual performance, symbolic boundaries are transgressed and subsumed in the reordering of social meanings. Turner (1969; 1979) described three phases to the 'rites de passage': separation, liminality, and re-aggregation. These notions hold relevance for migrational processes, and demonstrate how 'boundary' practices might be used to strategize and organize the symbolic transformations and constructions of "multiple identities" (Alvarez 1995: 448; cf. Shahrani 1995; Malkki 1995a).

Boundaries are susceptible to 'invisibility' if they are taken for granted, but they can also serve as 'visible' physical markers or "impassioned zones of political dispute" (Donnan and Wilson 1994:7). The invisibility of boundaries, however, can be advantageous since it is harder to 'subvert' or challenge something that does not appear to be there (Wilson 1994:102). This possibility for alternating between the visibility and invisibility of boundaries not only generates ambiguity, but also predisposes the creation of new meanings (Tonkin 1989:103): a condition which makes one suspect whether or not 'boundaries' are made to be crossed? (1989:22). Certainly the 'crossing' of the national boundaries by an individual or group can enhance their 'visibility' (Urciuoli 1995). But this fading of invisibility also brings a condition of vulnerability and threat.

As an individual crosses geopolitical boundaries, the purity of the 'national order of things' (which includes the spatial entity of the nation-state itself, and the correspondent 'national' identities) may become tainted, and their reality attacked (Malkki 1995a:7). As the social condition of 'refugeeness' and 'statelessness' fluoresces the imagined boundaries of the nation-state, the 'threat' of the

"inclassified/unclassifiable" individual is concomitantly relegated to a 'liminal' zone of "systematic invisibility" (1995a:7).

A symbolic and political response to removing the 'threat' of the transgressive moving entity is by containing it by a 'name': hence, the invocation of the social category of the 'status' refugee. Institutional labeling[58] practices permit the re-naturalization, or 're-aggregation' of the liminal individual back into the "trinity of state-nation-territory" (Warner 1999:257). The status 'refugee' label permits the reassertion of the salient as-if reality in which the nation-state system can again be taken as a natural truth (cf. Malkki 1995; see also Long 1993:13). The definition of the status 'refugee' is not only "a process imbued with [an] ideology" (Tuitt 1999:114) of nation-statism, but it is a process also related to the moral ideology of humanitarianism and international law (1999:114-115). Thus, refugee identities are imagined in a symbolic-moral universe that represents the individual as a moving entity that is "a victim of causes" (1999:108). It is in this sense that the 'refugee' is "synonymous with a violation of human rights" (Uehling 1998: 123).

Rethinking the 'Refugee'

Roger Zetter (1988a: 106) states that the refugee label, as an "externally imposed [model] of identity", continues to create a necessity for persistent redefinition in order to manage the varieties of people 'of concern' (i.e. IDPs, asylum-seekers, and so forth). It seems that the numerous kinds of people that the refugee status may or may not be ascribed has "lead to ambiguities" (1988a:106) and confusion in the everyday meaning and application[59] of the 'refugee' label (cf.

[58] Aspects of the social processes of 'labeling' will be discussed in further detail in Part III.

[59] The category of refugee is part of a constellation of many related legal sub-classes and typologies (see, for example, Turk 1999). The label is subject to "administrative parameters" (Leopold and Harrel-Bond 1994:20) that are subordinate to the particular interests of distinct sovereign nation-states

Sztucki 1999:58). But Patricia Tuitt (1999: 114) argues that to assign "confusion within a proliferation of meanings is merely to disguise the true nature of the refugee paradox". For Tuitt (1999:114) "the term refugee remains elusive because it is employed simultaneously to define a category of persons and to describe a group which has defined itself". Thus, the problems of meaning and use associated with 'refugee' label are related to the 'tensions' that can exist between the external ascription of an individual's social identity, and the internal self-ascription of the collective identity (cf. Jenkins 1996).

Another conceptual problem of the status 'refugee' label is that it implies an individual social identity, a 'person', who is "bounded by the spatial activity of movement" (Tuitt 1999:107). This notion has reified particular historical moments of exile, that are generalized to capture a broad range of particular migratory experiences (1999:107). Recall that earlier historical meanings of 'refugee' which had existed prior to the invention of the 'status' identity, were not conditioned by the actual movement of peoples, but rather, were employed "ex post facto" to refer to people who had willfully chosen to move (1999:114). In this particular context, the meaning of 'refugee' expressed a condition of vulnerability, and the term was applied only after movement had occurred. The status refugee definition has replaced the particular historical understanding of the refugee by a novel emphasis toward the actual process of displacement *and* the crossing of borders. In other words, "from moving people *becoming* refugees the refugee becomes moving people; from movement becoming a facilitator of the people it *becomes* the people [reified and universalized]" (1999:115, my emphasis).

(Malkki 1995:513). To list just a few examples: 'asylum-seekers', 'returnees' (Turk 1999), 'internally displaced persons' (Lee 1996), 'non-persons' and 'irregular migrants' (Ghosh 1998), 'transit migrants' (Messina 1999: 142); 'humanitarian refugees', 'non-Convention refugees', 'designated class immigrants' (non-Convention refugees in Canada), 'B refugees' (non-Convention refugees in Sweden) (Adelman 1988:7-8), or 'stateless persons' (Kearney 1997: 557).

The refugee status identity, as a universal category of person bound by national spaces, cannot be discussed without also mentioning, that it is also an identity that is ideologically imagined in "ahistorical" time (1999:107). The status refugee is representative of a universal community of 'timeless' individuals. This treatment of time permits the ignorance of any of the particularities of "class, of wealth, of status, of race and, above all, of gender in the construction of space and the spatial activity of movement" (1999:110). For Tuitt, ultimately it is the "'universalization' of moments of exile, and the failure of identifying these moments as particular not general, [that] lies at the heart of contemporary ambivalence over the refugee concept" (1999:114). But in order to 'rethink' the concept of 'refugee' (1999: 106,107. cf. Marsella et al. 1994:4) we need to be aware of how the 'social worlds' (Marx 1990) of refugees are institutionally mediated and that better "models of refugee identity [may be] concealed by an orthodoxy of predetermined responses" (Zetter 1988a: 106). An improved conceptualization of refugees should be able to take into account the realities of the "variety of identities, experiences, and constructions of power and powerlessness" (Uehling 1998:142).

6. AFGHAN REFUGEES

During the 1980s, the Afghan-Soviet war[60] compelled the cross-border movement and overall displacement of over 5 million (UNHCR 2001) 'Afghan war refugees'[61].

[60] Even prior to the Soviet invasion, the exiting of refugees had began to occur (UHCR 2001). The communist government of Taraki had initiated wide social reforms that included forced conscription, changes to education curricula, the status of women, as well as the introduction of new economic and agricultural practices (see Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont 1988: 71, 74, 75). These social changes were not well received amongst populations of Afghans. After the Soviet military entered Afghanistan in 1979, about 600, 000 Afghans refugees were created (UNHCR 2001: Afghanistan facts and figures).

[61] From the UNHCR *Handbook*, the following passage is given "under the heading '*War refugees*'": "Persons compelled to leave their country of origin as a result of international or *national* armed conflicts are not normally considered refugees *under the 1951 Convention or 1967*

Despite peace agreements, and the departure of the Soviet military, regional calm was temporary in ex-Soviet Afghanistan (UNHCR Refugee Report 1995) as internecine fighting between different factions soon followed the Soviet pullout. These events contributed further to the displacement of more Afghans (Rizvi 1990) with a "peak" reaching 6.2 million in 1990 (UNHCR 2001).

In 1995, the Afghan refugees were still the largest refugee population in the world (Dadfar 1994: 135; Rogers 1992: 735; Shahrani 1995: 187). From a country with an original estimated population of 15 million, from one third to one half of Afghans had been displaced between the end of the 1980s and early 1990s (Omidian 1996:4; Schulz 1994: 563; see UNHCR 2001: Chronology of crisis). As Afghanistan had never been "a former colony" Afghan refugees did not anticipate nor appeal for sanctuary from "an ex-ruling power" (French and English were mainly unspoken by the refugees, Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont 1988: 91). The movement of the majority of Afghan refugees involved crossing over into neighboring host countries of Pakistan or Iran. Some traveled to India, and those Afghans belonging to the wealthier and educated classes (as well as some from the middle class) were able to leave for countries further abroad (Jones 1985:5). Presently, "[t]he main host countries [have] remained unchanged with Pakistan sheltering 2 million persons, Iran 1.9 million, and Germany 976, 000" (UNHCR 2001: World Refugee Overview).

By the mid-90s around 1,000,000 Afghans had been killed, 1,000,000 remained internally displaced, and about 3.2 million refugees had fled to Pakistan, and 3 million to Iran (Dadfar 1994: 134; cf. Smyser 1987: 73, UNHCR 2001). By 1998, an estimated 540,000-1,000,000 internally displaced persons remained in Afghanistan due to civil war, whereas about 107,000 refugees had repatriated, with

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Protocol...However, *foreign invasion or occupation of all or part of a country* can result—and occasionally has resulted—in persecution for one or more of the reasons enumerated in the 1951 Convention" (cited from Sztucki 1999:62, original emphasis).

97,000 returning from Pakistan. 1.2 million Afghan refugees remained in Pakistan, with 1.4 million in Iran, 16 000 in India, and 8 000 in the Central Asian Republics (USCR 2000). More recently, Taliban governance, conditions of severe drought (UNHCR 2001: Afghanistan facts and figures), and the anticipation of U.S. air-strikes upon the region have again produced more Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons.

There are currently about 1 million internally displaced Afghans, about 2 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan, and 1.5 million Afghan refugees in Iran (UNHCR 2001: Afghanistan facts and figures). In an era when most refugees come from, or are hosted by mainly Muslim countries (Shahrani 1995:187), the Afghan refugees still comprise the largest refugee population in the world—about 30% of the world's total refugees (UNHCR 2001: World Refugee Review).

Afghan Refugee Identities

Most Afghan refugees that arrived in Pakistan following the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan had been pastoralists or agriculturalists, and were predominantly comprised of women and children (Schulz 1994: 557, 573). The vicissitudes of war destroyed the traditional lifeworlds of pastoral nomads, and the deliberate scattering of landmines throughout the country also rendered past ways of supporting a living almost inconceivable (Jones 1992: *xviii*; see also Roberts and Williams 1995; UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs 1996; 1997). Another important feature about the Afghan refugees that arrived in Pakistan during the 1980s is that they were mainly 'Pashtun'. Given that Pashtuns have historically constituted the ethnic or tribal majority of the total population in Afghanistan this should not be surprising. Again, because of their sociohistorical salience and their predominance in the ethnographic

literature, I limit much of the following discussion to aspects of Pashtun refugee identity.

Many of the Afghan refugees that found "safe haven" (Rogers 1992: 757) in Pakistan were self-settled in refugee camps. The Pashtuns that self-settled in Peshawar were obviously "less varied" than other Afghan refugee populations in that they "shared geographic origins, ethnogeographic ties, and extent of political involvement" (Connor 1989:927). A 'unique' aspect of settling in Peshawar, Pakistan for Pashtuns was that they also shared ethnic, linguistic, and religious characteristics with the local communities of Pashtuns. One might be lead to think then that difficulties should not arise in such a scenario. But realities are often otherwise (Boesen 1986:110; see Chambers 1986; Rogers 1992). Let us attend then to some particularly salient issues that have contributed to the 'ambiguity' of Afghan/Pashtun refugee identity (see Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont 1988a).

To begin, exile from home has created changes in "the relations of production...the very foundation of social hierarchy, power and influence, alliance and inheritance which are bound to the possession of the land" (1988a: 142). These 'relations of production' and the related experiences of self and other selves have not only been affected by "social dislocation" but also by "the framing experience of becoming—in multiple senses of the word—refugees" (Edwards 1986: 325). David Edwards, who conducted ethnographic studies of Afghans self-settled in refugee camps in Peshawar, Pakistan, stated that:

> The creation of the category of refugee has facilitated the creation of bureaucratic responses to the problem of displacement, but it must also be recognized that our application of identifying categories of identity and difference is an act that can have profound implications on how those who are termed refugees and those who deal with them interact and view themselves and one another (Edwards 1986: 314).

The status 'refugee' model of identity has also come to compete with ethnic ('tribal') and religious ('muhajir') conceptualizations of 'Afghan' identity (Centlivres

and Centlivres 1988a: 141). What is interesting is how these identities can "coexist in the consciousness the [Afghan] refugees have of their situation and are used in different ways, according to their context" (1988a: 141). For instance, the self-perception amongst Afghans that they are not a "mass of unarmed and helpless individuals" but rather, short-term "beneficiaries of traditional hospitality" (Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont 1988a: 144,145), directly conflicts with the definition of 'refugee' in the way it challenges the inherent ideology of victimhood and sense of vulnerability conveyed in the status label.

In an example of coherence, rather than contradiction, the construction of refugeehood can also "[create] ethnicity, for it is exile that allows, rather forces, a group to see 'difference', to see 'others'" (Mortland 1994:8). "[P]atterns of transethnic unity" (Dupree 1984: 72; see also Shahrani 1995:195) have existed in Afghanistan in the past, and Afghan camp refugees in Pakistan have come to experience both the "dislocation and realignment of ethnic groups" (Edwards 1994: 357). It would be interesting to see if the refugee label's 'creation of ethnicity' is a viable process given that important 'similarities' are already shared in the cultural identities of Pashtun refugees and local Pakistani Pashtuns. Alex de Waal (1988: 138) observed that the category of refugee *itself* may be construed as a new type of 'ethnicity' or 'citizenship' (as was the case in Dar Masalit, Sudan). It may be that a similar shift in conceptualizing 'Afghan/Pashtun/refugee' as a newly syncretized 'ethnic' identity might happen to occur amongst the Afghan/Pashtun refugees, local Pashtuns, and local Pakistanis of other ethnic backgrounds.

The moral notion of victimhood that is intrinsic to the status refugee label also provides a ready-made opening to justify social practices of 'charity' that come in the guise of international aid or humanitarian relief. Afghan refugees thus also come to

from part of "the repertoire of humanitarian concern" (Zetter 1988:1) and eventually are professionalized as dependent "clients of refugee agencies" (de Waal 1988:138). The relationship of dependency upon donor organizations inevitably can lead to the genesis of tensions and ambiguities between the refugees and aid personnel (Shahrani 1995). As 'clients' of international aid "all refugees are asserted a common identity without reference to their background or needs" (Knudsen 1991: 29). Zetter (1988a: 104) warned that when the 'refugee' category is "deployed in relief programmes" in this manner, the consequences can be highly "insensitive and in some cases life threatening". He is making a specific reference here to Alex de Waal's (1988) critical study of assistance programme relief practices in Sudan which, based on a blind understanding of local meanings of refugee identity, lead to a 'creation of famine' that was preventable.

That refugee aid is based on principles of "fair and equal distribution" (Centlivres and Centlivres 1988a: 150) is in opposition to the "traditional forms of [Pashtun] distribution which are collective and hierarchical in nature" (1988a: 148). Although the cultural notion of 'charity' is "redefined" in humanitarian relief practices by virtue of the fact that it "implies giving to a deserving or worthy subject" there is "[a]n interesting paradox [that]" (Harrell-Bond et al. 1992:207) also emerges:

> The donor borrows from the idea of charity the concept of non-reciprocation or, better, not necessary reciprocation, and, in turn, uses it in order to impose a condition on the donations: desert or merit which is construed in terms of absolute destitution on the part of the recipient" (1992: 207).

In contrast to the above idea, the Pashtun concept of *melmastia* (hospitality) encapsulates a notion of charity that is a potentially reciprocal relationship. It must be added, however, that such "relations [over time can] become asymmetric; [and] a clientele relationship can even develop" (Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont 1988a: 147). Nevertheless, the idea of being asymmetrically dependent upon external relief

agencies degrades the Pashtun ideal of *nang* (honour), and also runs counter to Pashtun system of gift relations.

Another source of tension between donor agencies and refugees, is that Afghans do not necessarily see themselves as 'victims' as is implied by the refugee/humanitarian category. The religious self-identification (amongst) Afghan refugees as 'muhajirin' (Muslim migrants) or 'mujahideen' (Muslim warriors) deflects the moral meaning in the refugee category, and any relevant representations of victimhood that may also be encapsulated by the status refugee identity. Instead, the self-ascription with an alternative moral identity enforces the idea that Afghan refugees are not "necessarily powerless and passive" (Zetter 1999:19).

That Afghan refugees in Pakistani refugee camps had been an armed refugee community (USCR 1985: 14) with men that were "militarily active" (Rogers 1992: 759) (in a proclamation of *jihad* against the Soviet military) created serious ambiguities of representation for relief agency donors and Afghan refugee clients: an ironical scenario emerged whereby humanitarian relief and international aid, reserved for 'victims', was being distributed to self-ascribed 'non-refugees' (i.e. *muhajirs*) and intermittent warriors (i.e. *mujahideen*). A question that is raised is whether or not the Afghans self-ascribed as *muhajirs* in those social contexts when they were to receive aid. Nazif Shahrani's (1995) juxtapositioning of 'refugee - warriors' reflects a basic opposition that exists between two moral identities that are derived from different ideological bases.

Above I introduced the ideas of *melmastia* and *muhajir*, both in relation to donor-client practices that characterize the lifeworld of a Pashtun 'refugee'. I would like to take a brief moment to show how these notions, which might casually be defined in ethnic and religious terms, had been deemed "incompatible" from the

perspective of Islamicists living within refugee camps in Pakistan (Centlivres and Centlivres 1988a: 150). The argument of the Islamicists was that the emphasis which *melmastia* placed upon tribal loyalty was contradictory to Islamic principles, which place premium upon an idea of community allegiance based upon the concept of religious identity. Amongst the Pashtun refugees, however, the notion of 'incompatibility' was rejected, and viewed as non-contradictory. Perhaps, again it is an intrinsic 'Muslimness' (Ahmed 1980) which serves to inoculate the Pashtun against any such contradictions: hence, they can practice both tribal loyalty and Muslim loyalty at once and the same. These paradoxical and shifting expressions of Pashtun and Muslim identity have similarly manifested themselves in exchanges with donor agencies.

For example, in the strategic practice of identity, Pashtun 'refugees', when eligible to receive international aid, may "act like 'refugees' but when faced with interlocutors other than the international organizations and other Western organizations, they insist on presenting themselves as Muslim and mohajer" (Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont 1988a: 149). In this manner, Pashtun were able "not only to accept food rations from the UNHCR, but also to define themselves as exiled for their faith and to make use of their position within the tribal structure" (1988a: 150).

Thus, despite perceptions of the essentialism within identity concepts, Afghan/Pashtun refugees' representations of 'identity' reveal how identities can be shifting and strategic processes, as well as woven by strands of coherency and contradiction. In this context, another subject of relevance for the concept of Afghan refugee identity is the 'refugee camp'. For it "is not the upheaval of migration but

rather the impositions and constraints" (Edwards 1986:325) of refugee camp life that ultimately lead to detrimental consequences for community and identity.

Refugee camps are "unique human environments" (Long 1993:8) comprised of "administrators, bureaucrats, functionaries, doctors, therapists...journalists, writers, academics[62], photographers, and the refugees themselves" (Malkki 1995: 498). As 'total institutions' (Goffman 1961) refugee camps inculcate "normative" (Voutira and Harrell-Bond 1995:207) beliefs and practices that can determine the way in which 'refugee' identities are imagined, constructed, and represented. For example, the practices of humanitarian aid organizations fulfill an 'ideology of control' (Harrell-Bond 1992) that is coherent with the administrative aims of the refugee camp as a "technology of 'care and control'" (see Malkki 1992:34; also 1995: 498; 1995b:41-44). Part of the process of giving food aid to clients requires the enumeration of the refugees (see Harrell-Bond et al. 1992). Amongst Afghan refugees, camp NGO bureaucrats would individually count family members in an attempt to block misrepresentations in ration cards (Rogers 1992:758). This practice may not only have been engendering of mistrust (Voutira and Harrell-Bond 1995:219; also Daniel and Knudsen 1995) but was perceived as a transgression of the autonomy and privacy of the families (Rogers 1992: 758).

For Afghans, refugee camp life has ultimately been "damaging to their sense of self and to the structure of their society" (Edwards 1986: 325). Camps have become "ambiguous" spaces where "the reconstruction of life histories" (Knudsen 1991:29), and hence identities, is elicited and compelled. It was in the refugee camps that Afghan refugees were mobilized as "instruments of warfare" (Lammers 1999:23)

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[62] For example, Waldron (1988) encourages social anthropological research to benefit refugee relief assistance and administration.

and found themselves as "pawns in a political arena" (Rizvi 1990: 253). Edwards has commented on how:

> many matters that had previously been unproblematic...[came] to take on major significance in the context of the camp. Should one arrange marriages with kinsmen who might be far away or with current neighbors from the camp? How are weddings to be celebrated in a time of jihad? Can people play music on their tape recorders? Who decides guilt or punishment when someone gets injured in a fight or accident" (Edwards 1994: 350-351).

We see how the politics of identity for Afghan/Pashtun camp refugees supports the contest of meanings and strategic uses of the refugee label, and alternative concepts like 'muhajir' or 'Pashtun'. The total institutional setting of the refugee camp, including the practices of international donor agencies, have had a salient influence upon shaping the representations of multiple inter-related identities for self-settled camp refugees. One particular identity that requires elaboration is the religious-moral identity of 'muhajir' (Muslim migrant).

The idea of a 'muhajir' represents a conceptual shift from the territorial-based 'refugee' status identity towards a kind of person whose social identity is shaped by a 'moral geography'[63] derived from Islamic migration myths. The salience of a migrant identity based in Islamic narratives also arises in its relation to other concepts of identity for displaced Afghans, especially in the way it may compete with alternative narratives of identity based in refugeehood (i.e. 'refugee', 'victim').

Afghan 'Muhajirin': An Alternative Migrant Identity and Moral Geography

"Travel is an act of imagination" (Eickelman and Piscatori 1990:*xii*) and a cultural process that has been "significant for Muslim self-expression" (1990a: 5). We

[63] "The 'moral geography' of Islam also encourages migration. All natural things are seen as created by God for the use of humankind, which gives Moslems the right to make use of what is available without infringing other's rights: a group of Fellata in the Sudan when asked why they left their country and came here replied '(we) came and found land without a master but Allah'" (Al-Bashir 1978:38, cited in de Waal 1988:134).

have already encountered the origin myth in connection to Pashtun identity, but with respect to Islam, historically there are several kinds of 'travel' that may be acknowledged. These include: the 'Hajj' (pilgrimage to Mecca), the 'hijra' ('migration'), 'rihla' ('travel for learning and other purposes'), and 'ziyara' ('visits to shrines') (Eickelman and Piscatori 1990:xii). Anderson has also mentioned travel for jihad or Mahdism (1984:284). My focus will be upon 'hijra'.

Islamic mythology[64] is marked by two significant migrations: The first, involved the voluntary migration of a small group of Muslims from Mecca to Abyssinia, a Christian kingdom, in 615 A.D. The second, involved a migration that was obligatory for Muslims (if they wished to be part of the moral community) and occurred from Mecca to Medina in 622 A.D (Shahrani 1995:191). 'Blood ties' were even severed between those who migrated and those who stayed behind (Masud 1990:31), although economically impoverished persons or those who were physically unfit were excused from the journey (Shahrani 1995:191). This second migration is historically known as the 'Hijra': which means "to abandon" or "to break ties with someone" (Masud 1990:30). It is referred to in the Qur'an 16:41-42:

> To those who leave their homes in the cause of Allah, after suffering oppression, We will assuredly give goodly home in this world; but truly the reward of the Hereafter will be greater. If they only realized [this!] [They are] those who persevere, and put their trust in their Lord.

The Hijra, as a morally charged movement through space, represented the beginnings of an identity process where "individual paths converge[d] into collective itineraries" (Rousseau et al. 1998:386). It also marked the beginning of the Islamic calendar and the open political expression of Muslim collective identity—the 'ummah' (*community of believers*) (cf. Rippin 1993:33; Shaikh 1989:14-15). The term

[64] I use the term mythological in the sense that all history is mythological, but not all mythology is historical (Leach 1990:229).

'hijra' has since also evolved a variety of particular meanings. For some Muslims it refers to "accommodating state authority to resisting it", or the migratory "transition from poverty to a better life" (Eickelman and Piscatori 1990:11). For the "Muridiyya of Senegal" hijra has come to mean "emigration from a land where Muslims are a majority but face poverty, to places such as New York or Paris" in order to improve their economic situation (1990: 11). We find that hijra has also been meaningful amongst Afghan refugees (see Shahrani 1995).

For the Afghan refugees that were displaced to Pakistani camps, the 'status' definition of 'refugee' came into conflict with an alternative self-definition of 'muhajir' (migrant). Some other possible self-ascriptions (in Pashto) included 'panahandah' (one who desires asylum) and 'awarah' ('vagrant' or 'homeless'; Shahrani 1995:189). But these terms had been used among Afghans as a common "reference to displaced peoples outside the Muslim world" and also to the "Palestinian refugees" (1995:189). In contrast, the term 'muhajirin' had in recent times been reserved by Afghans as a reference to the Turkestanis who had been displaced to Afghanistan in the 1920s when the Bolshevik government asserted its control over Central Asian territory. Thus, "[f]or the Afghans, in this context, the Arabic terms 'hijrat' [hijra] and 'muhajir' did not simply mean a displaced person or a refugee, but referred very specifically to a 'Muslim refugee'" (1995:189). In Pakistan, a preference was also notably expressed by Afghan refugees to be identified as 'muhajirin-i-Afghanistan' (1995:189).

During the Hijra, the early Muslims became morally and politically "formed *as a community* out of...interconnected space[s]" (Gupta and Ferguson 1992:8). What is also important to recognize is that it was the moral authorization of movement through space, from one place to another, that generated the formative and

transformative possibilities for identity and community[65]. The ambiguity or liminality of the 'in-between' provided the ideal conditions for creatively "elaborating strategies of self-hood" (Bhabha 1994:1), and for tracing a moral geography that would ground the identities of the new community of Muslims.

In recent invocation, the Islamic migration myth has similarly enabled a "re-creation of the [Afghan] self in the world of travel" (Bhabha 1994:2). The self-identification as 'muhajir' by Afghan refugees symbolically links their experiences of displacement and loss to the experiences of an original mythological community of Muslims. Hijra provokes an 'act of imagination' that morally blends meanings of space and time that instruct the reinvention and renewal of moral communities and representations of individual self-expression. In this sense, the 'muhajir' identity signifies both a "political act of resistance" as well as a "moral act of faith" (1995:192) for any Afghans who have travelled from the dar-ul-harb ('house of war') to the dar-ul-islam ('house of peace')[66]. If hijra is an 'act of imagination', and imagination is, as we know, the "great modifier of traditions" (Shils 1981:228) the conscription of an Islamic migration myth by Afghan refugees in order to enrich and valorize the moral meaning and representations of their own social identities, may also come to "engender new interpretations of Islamic identity and faith" (Shami 1996:4).

But an immediate significance of the 'muhajir' identity lies in the way it competes with the narrative of 'status' identity that is derived from refugeehood.

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[65] In *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), Michel de Certeau offers a distinction between the notions of 'place' and 'space'. For de Certeau, a 'place' represents "instantaneous configurations of positions" and also "implies an indication of stability" (1984:117). In contrast to 'place', however, "space is like the word when it is spoken" (1984:117). Thus "*space is a practiced place*" which includes the diverse set of social practices that competitively constitute a "polyvalent unity" (1984:117) of a particular place.

[66] Islam's moral geography conceptualizes the world into a House of Peace and a House of War. The significant numbers of Muslim refugees in the world has invited the creation of a third House: the dar-ul-muhajirin (see Anderson 1988).

The 'muhajir' identity is imagined in connection to a moral geography, and in the landscape of a mythological past that is made continuous with the present through the narrative device of the Hijra (cf. Kerby 1991). This process of identification contrasts with the 'nationally' coordinated identity of the status 'refugee'. The status refugee concept denotes a kind of identity that has been amputated from a nationally ordered space, and subsequently grafted to another place.

The concept of 'muhajir' also opposes the morally intrinsic idea of victimhood in the refugee 'status' identity. Afghan refugees as muhajirs are relieved of this notion of a persistent victimhood. For they are merely fulfilling a valorized religious duty, and can anticipate an eventual return to the "moral destination" (Malkki 1992:36) of home (cf. 1995:191). This 'myth of return home' (Zetter 1999:6) implicit in the muhajir identity also renders concepts of space and time as teleologically moral. In this sense, Afghan 'muhajirs' perceived themselves as temporary 'guests' of their fellow Muslim hosts in Pakistan[67]. Overall, the commemoration of the Islamic migration myth of Hijra enables an alternative field of meanings for Afghan identity, and provides a 'source of resistance' to the reifications of refugeehood that may be morally and politically incommensurable with the self-experience of migration for Afghans in Pakistan.

[67] This difference in self-representation as 'muhajirin' from the victimhood of the refugee label created a 'politics of mistrust' between refugees and the governmental relief organizations (Shahrani 1995). Another element for this 'distrust' and confusion between relief organizations and Afghan refugees was related to the self-reference by armed Afghan refugees as 'Mujahideen' (Muslim warriors). In the Qur'an "a close association" between "hijra and jihad" is implicated (Masud 1990:32). In the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan during the 1980s, the "ambiguity and complementarity between mohajir and muhjahid [was] present everywhere" (Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont 1988:86).

PART III: SUFFERING IDENTITIES

"Suffering separates and dissociates; like a centrifugal force it pulls you away from the center of life, the hub of the universe where all things tend toward unity. The divine principle distinguishes itself by an effort toward cosmic synthesis and participation in the essence of everything. The satanic principle, on the other hand, is a principle of dislocation and duality which characterizes all suffering."

– E.M. Cioran, *The Satanic Suffering (1992)*

7. 'SUFFERING'

The social processes that affect the course of new refugee societies are, in part, influenced by a protean calculus of 'suffering' that subsumes existential and ideological meanings. In the following section, 'suffering' is treated as a kind of ideological grammar, or rhetoric, that characterizes the variety of language games—'dialects'—contained within a broader 'language of suffering'. I intend to focus on a 'medical dialect of suffering' and emphasize aspects of its role in articulating the identities of refugees and in representing their experiences of suffering. I make a preliminary argument that as a kind of language game, the medical dialect of suffering employs medical discourse, practices, and technologies to drive the transformation of categorical 'refugee' identities into 'medicalized' and 'traumatized' identities. The medicalized identity reveals how medical discourse and practices can serve as a *screen* upon which cultural identities derived from an ideology of suffering can be projected. The traumatized identity, as a special case of the medicalization of identity demonstrates that the 'medical dialect' of suffering itself can also *project* into culture, new salient meanings for identity, as these represent experiences of human suffering.

A Language of 'Suffering'

War, persecution, torture, oppression: each describes a form of life suffused with a moral notion of 'suffering' that includes the existential, pan-human experiences of pain, loss, grief, the forbearance of great burden, or injustice. My use of 'suffering' is intended to defer from its existential meaning. I cover the term as a kind of ideological rhetoric that is intrinsic to the system of social relations which constitute the category of 'refugee'. By doing so I do not wish to deny the reality of existential suffering, but rather, to enforce that first it is necessary to clarify how the representations of such experiences are infused with particular cultural ideologies, institutional practices, and technologies.

Language Games

A language serves at least two functions: 1. To communicate meanings, and 2. To make meanings—and the lifeworlds that they express—commensurable. In order to accomplish this, language requires a 'vocabulary', and rules, to organize the use of the particular vocabulary. Wittgenstein conceptualized language as a social activity comprised of various 'language games'—a metaphorical description for "our methods of representation" (Bouveresse 1995:21,27). These methods of representation are comparable to one another on the basis of 'family resemblances'—shared "similarities" and "relationships" (Bouveresse 1995:21,23)—and in their "pattern[s] of activity" (i.e. praying, labeling; Canfield 1981:20,21,23). As "enabling conventions" of meaning (Norris 1999:130) or 'normative activities' (Brenner 1999:26) language games exist as "diverse in nature as the jobs they are required to do" (Norris 1999:130). Any attempt to produce a complete typological classification would lead to an "inexhaustive" list (Bouveresse 1995:16).

Language games are also governed by 'rules', and characterized by a 'grammar'. Rules may structure the use of a particular vocabulary within a particular language system, but they "do not [always] provide for every contingency" (1995:26). Wittgenstein insisted on a distinction between "tabulating [the] rules" (Bouveresse 1995:112-113) of a language game and the 'grammar' of a language game. For him, it was a 'grammar' that specifies the contingent expression of meanings[68]. I contend that the function of a 'grammar' in a language game is fulfilled by a particular system of knowledge—an 'ideology'.

Ideology

The concept of 'ideology' is familiar, somewhat panoramic, and ambiguous. Its polysemic nature can pose challenges to arriving at a meaningful and useful account. For this matter, I have turned to an analysis by Raymond Geuss (1981) who provides three useful classifications of ideology—'descriptive', 'pejorative', and 'laudatory'. For Geuss (1981), 'descriptive' ideology is a loose description of the thoughts, beliefs, activities, and commodities of human groups. He actually describes a few "senses" of the term (Geuss 1981:5). One kind is the "purely descriptive sense", which is a "non-evaluative" form of ideology that is ascribed to "every human group" and comprises all that is *shared and different* within a human group (1981:5). All human groups, thus possess ideologies of the purely descriptive variety, but "narrower senses" of meaning (i.e. political ideology or

[68] For example, 'I sat on the chair' follows specific grammatical criteria, and abides by rules that govern the meaning and use of the word 'chair' in the English language. The sentence 'I swam in the chair' is also grammatically correct, but it violates the rules that govern the 'contingencies' of vocabulary—'chairs' are not meant for 'swimming' in. Thus, the meaning of the vocabulary is represented through its use. The distinction noted by Wittgenstein is however less critical to my use of the concept of 'language games' as a template for the 'dialects of suffering'. I have thus kept the term 'grammar' to be used interchangeably with the term 'rules'.

religious ideology) also exist and distinguish one group from another based on what *differs* between them (1981: 9). Another 'sense' of descriptive ideology expresses a knowledge-type that promotes a particular explicatory "world-view" (1981: 9; cf. Geertz 1964: 47-76). Related to this is also the "programmatic sense" of descriptive ideology that defines "a program or plan of action" which is "based on an explicit, systematic model or theory of how the society works" (1981:11). The notions of 'ideology' conveyed by the descriptive 'senses' appears to be that of a system of meanings that is both explicative and promotive of specific human behaviour and intentions. This particular understanding of ideology may indeed represent a 'truth' about the world, but it is also risks trivializing realities because it is far too broad an account. Another limitation to consider is how a 'descriptive' ideological classification can proffer an equation of 'ideology' with 'culture' (cf. Geertz 1964). In this respect, the concept of 'descriptive ideology' is diminished in its analytic potency and becomes redundant for anthropological use (cf. Young 1983:203). Let us then move ahead to Geuss' respective pejorative ('negative') and laudatory ('positive') classifications.

In contrast to the meanings introduced above, 'pejorative' ideology is a knowledge-type that is in fact "evaluative", and that characterizes "a program of criticism of beliefs, attitudes, and wants of the agents in a particular society" all in efforts to expose the "false consciousness" of a human group (Geuss 1981:12). Here we find ideology deemed as a kind of negative rhetoric that leads people away from the 'truth', in part, by masking "its own social origins" and "disguis[ing]" the "social relations through which people produce and reproduce their life conditions" (Young 1983:203). It is thus "a way of thinking which is systematically mistaken" (Hawkes 1996: 4) and embraced by the "deluded" amongst the group (Geuss 1981:12). The

definition of pejorative ideology gives attention to the relationship between the notions of 'truth' and 'knowledge', and the idea that realities may indeed be illusory. This is somewhat problematic: not the idea of a 'false' reality in itself, but rather, the all-encompassing *scope* of the idea that *all realities* articulated via ideology are *false*. The wide sweep that *all* ideologies are lodestones for false consciousness extinguishes any possibility for the existence of *degrees* of truth or deception in human consciousness. In this regard, I believe that the pejorative definition is too restrictive and simplistic since it cannot account for the possibility of differences and variations in 'false' consciousness and thus submits an incomplete account of reality.

Moving to the last classification offered by Geuss, we encounter a notion of a positive ('laudatory') ideology. Unlike its alternatives, Geuss states that:

> ideology in the positive sense isn't something 'out there' to be found by even the most careful empirical investigation...[it] is something *to be* constructed, created, or invented; it is a *verite a faire* (Geuss 1981:23).

Thus, positive ideology is a *socially* achieved knowledge-type—an *invented,* and *inventing,* sort of *teleologic*—that guides human groups towards specific *degrees of knowing*, or consciousness of, the realities of human experience. This is the meaning of ideology that I prefer, and that I will employ from this point on: for it does not slip into an instant equation with culture, and while acknowledging that "all" socially significant "knowledge" is always "socially determined" the 'positive' notion of ideology concedes that "some instances of knowledge [may be] more conspicuously deceptive than others" (Young 1983:204).

Existentialists might take for granted that the human quest for 'meaning' in life is symptomatic of, or prompted by, the vast meaninglessness of life. Essentially, life is an ultimate void, and empty of intrinsic meaning. Fortunately, one is not obliged to such existentialist expression in order to attain understandings of life's

existential phenomenon. Conceptually, there is an alternative view. That life, is in fact, brimming, or overflowing with 'meanings': a condition that makes life complex to say the least. This is where 'ideology' enters the foray. By setting a social program for the rational defiance of alternative or competing explanations of realities 'ideology' serves to simplify the vast meanings, contradictions, and paradoxes that can, and do, inundate the realities of our lifeworlds (Young 1980:144;1993:116; 1995:223). This premise is fundamental to understanding the link between 'ideology' and language games. For it is ideology, as a knowledge-type "*to be* constructed, created, or invented" (Geuss 1981:23; cf. Young 1983:204,213) that comes to serve as a type of 'grammar' that characterizes and organizes the social practices of language games. Stated another way, language games, as methods of representing realities, or 'enabling conventions', operationalize the way in which we ideologically discriminate between our possible realities.

'Suffering' as Ideology: The Dialects of Suffering

'Suffering', as 'experience', indubitably permeates the life worlds of refugees (e.g. Cirtautus 1957; Daniel and Knudsen 1995; Kleinman et al. 1997). But in the new culture of refugees, 'suffering', might also be seen as an ideological grammar that characterizes the various dialects of suffering—shaping both *how*, and the *kinds* of identities and communities that are to be imagined (cf. Davis 1992; Summerfield 1999).

In *On the Heights of Despair*, E.M. Cioran writes how he "cannot either curse or love suffering" (Cioran 1992:73). His ambivalence flashes as an ironical reflection of a duality that marks the notion of 'suffering' in Christian theology: In life, 'suffering' is the path to salvation, and in the afterlife, suffering is a state of

punishment for worldy sinners. In alternative conceptualizations of 'suffering' (in at least contemporary North America), suffering can be construed as an ideology that prominently connotes certain existential experiences that ought to be avoided, deterred, prevented, or remedied in the practice of everyday life: "Suffering isn't bad only for the sufferer. It is bad, period" (Mayerfield 1999:87). It is a "problem" that "passes easily into the problem of evil" and is deemed "morally undeserved" (Geertz 1979:84). I contend that the ideological expression of suffering as "intrinsically bad" characterizes those particular[69] language games—dialects of suffering—that are played out in a broader language of suffering that is used throughout the new culture of refugees.

In refugee societies, the notion of 'suffering', however, is not only layered with moral-religious meaning, but also forms part of a broader rhetorical "social communication" (Davis 1992:152,158) that contributes to the making of the category of 'refugee' (Fordyce 1988:282), and arguably other 'suffering' identities. As we shall see, via the dialects of suffering, rhetorical communication guides the institutional practices of, for example, NGOs, the UN, and nation-state governments in the articulation of particular realities of existential suffering that take the form of suffering identities (i.e. 'victim', 'patient').

This particular social 'negotiation' of refugee identities is driven by an interplay between multiple dialects of suffering that serve to both clarify as well as confound our representations and meanings of identity in a language of suffering. For the moment, it will suffice to present how, in *Ideology and Insanity*, Thomas Szasz (1970:49) maintains that in the relationship between medicine and ideology, a "[l]ack of clarity may be no handicap when language is used to influence people; indeed it is

[69] I am being cautious in using 'particular', because the existence of variation and plurality within the meaning of suffering must also be conceptually accommodated. For example, take the distinctions between, say, psychiatric and Buddhist conceptualizations of suffering (see Obeyesekere 1988).

often an advantage." The 'speaking' of the dialects of suffering generates various methods of representing the experiences of 'suffering' by refugees, however, these methods "themselves [may also] conceal some forms of suffering, [and] even contribute to them" (Connolly 1996:251). It is important then to try to gain an understanding of the social processes that serve to make 'suffering' *real*. This requires going back to the notion of ideology.

The rise to salience of any ideology relies on at least two pre-requisites. First, the "*process* through which *socially significant* [my emphasis] facts and meanings are produced, valorized, circulated, and accumulated" (Young 1983:204) requires endorsement by an 'authority'. And secondly, the salience of ideology rests upon a condition of reality that renders ideology pragmatically unavoidable (Young 2000: personal communication). The *authorization* of ideology is established via politicians, religious leaders, scientists, lawyers, and so forth. These social agents make ideologies salient through institutions and their authorizing practices and "production processes" (Young 1993:116). Because ideologies are endorsed through a consensus amongst collectivities, the contributions that individuals and groups make in the authorization of ideology are not necessarily equal. Thus, the roles of different institutions, collectivities, and individuals, can vary in significance, and as such, ideological salience does not necessarily imply ideological dominance.

Once an ideology has been authorized it not only serves as a way of *describing* a particular reality, but inevitably also becomes the way of *entering* reality. It is in this sense that ideology is pragmatically unavoidable. Thus a salient ideology comes *to be true* because it *is* the reality we live in—an *as-if* reality that constitutes a model *of* and a model *for* the truth (Cohen 1994:108; cf. Young 1983:215). Now in the new culture of refugees, a 'language of suffering' is characterized by an 'ideology of suffering'.

As a knowledge-type that morally connotes a negative existential condition, this ideological characterization of the language games of 'suffering' generates particular as-if realities that both describe, and permit us to enter, the particular lifeworlds of refugees.

Representations of Identities

Ian Hacking argues that reality is *parasitic* upon its representations (Hacking 1983:136). His analogy persuasively captures the way in which refugee identities can be *realized* through their various methods of representation: e.g. language games employing historical narrative (see Kerby 1991) or moral rhetoric (see Battaglia 1995). These methods of representation are promoted by agents of cultural institutions such as medicine, religion, schools, courts, or government. A prevalent language game that is vital for enabling the dialects of suffering to represent refugee identities is the language game of 'labeling' (Bouveresse 1995:21).

Labeling and the 'Looping Effect'

As we have discussed above 'identity' is often described by a variety of cultural concepts or terms, i.e. 'ethnicity' or 'nationality' or 'occupation' or 'gender'. The perspicuous usage of such terms is matched, however, by their capacity to also distort and confuse the diversity of meanings, beliefs, and emotions that are built into social life, and intrinsic to the reflexive ebb of social and subjective identities (Cohen 1994:10; see also Handler 1996; Sorenson 1990).

In other words, 'identity' is a fuzzy concept. Its representations are not only tilled in the landscapes of memory (Kirmayer 1996) but also cultivated in 'mythico-histories' (Malkki 1995a:55) that provide the raw material for the 'imagined

communities' (Anderson 1991) and 'imagined identities' of refugees. As discussed above, the practice of a language game (or 'speaking' of a dialect of suffering) requires the application of a particular 'vocabulary' in accordance with specific rules. Thus, labeling practices come to serve as a kind of "preparation" for "language learning" (Bouveresse 1995:17).

In the social processes of identity formation and transformation, ideology may provide the rules that organize the language game, but it is the ascription of labels that provides a kind of rudimentary 'vocabulary' for playing the game. In a language of suffering, 'labeling' is an ideologically driven, *identification* process that serves to both categorically frame and vitalize particular representations of suffering-as-experience for refugees. The various kinds of ready-made identities that are promoted through labels (i.e. 'refugee') are socially "consequential" (Jenkins 1996)—either benevolently (i.e. aid, resources) or malevolently (i.e. stigma, sanctions). It is inevitable, however, that the full potential 'consequences' of labeled identities, are not necessarily prescient to the ascribers or the ascribed (1996: 156, 170). Hacking (1995:21) describes the process by which social and subjective identities are shaped through labeling practices as the "looping effect of human kinds."

He asserts that "[p]eople [who are] classified in a certain way tend to conform to or grow into the ways that they are described; they also evolve in their own ways, so that the classifications and descriptions have to be constantly revised" (1995:239). Thus, people are influenced by their self-conceptions and also by the expectations of others as they are perceived and represented—this is called a "feedback effect" (Hacking 1995:21,239). In the feedback effect, institutionally authorized categories can determine or compel the assumption of 'ready-made' identities imagined by a process of continual revision of subjective and social identities. This process also

applies to the categorical identities of "refugee" and "victim"—two forms of 'suffering' identities susceptible to becoming "self-fulfilling prophec[ies]" in the sociomoral language of suffering (cf. Summerfield 1999:1456).

Kinds of 'Suffering Identities'

In a discussion on refugee labeling, Roger Zetter (1991) offers a complementary argument to Hacking's. Zetter posits that the importance given to the *meaning* (definition) of the 'refugee' category must also be extended to the *processes* that lie behind the ascription of the label. Thus, following Hacking's discussion on the 'looping' and 'feedback' effects, Zetter calls for an interrogation of the systems of social relations that produce such 'effects': the experts, institutions, ideologies, and technologies that drive the "forming" and "transforming" of identities (Zetter 1991). In the case of the 'refugee', we know that the status identity is an outcome of specific historical events that followed WWII—an 'identity' that has since been incorporated into the discourse and policies of state governments and the United Nations.

In the global nation-state system, the unauthorized movement (or migration) of individuals across geopolitical boundaries is considered a violation of nation-state sovereignty. In this context, the existence of the politico-legal category of 'refugee' might seem unavoidable (Zetter 1988a:105; 1991:40; see also Gallagher 1989; Jenkins 1996: Ch.15). In a language of suffering, the inevitability of the 'refugee' also assumes a moral meaning that dilates from the politico-legal formulation. An interplay between the dialects of suffering communicates the experiences of suffering by refugees in the form of various suffering identities. Through the 'speaking' of dialects, prior conceptualizations of 'identity' for an individual may be rendered 'anonymous' as they are transformed or substituted by others into new institutionally

authorized, categorical identities, that not only represent the 'individual', but also connote a wider 'collectivity' of 'refugees' (and 'victims') (Jablensky et al. 1994:331). It is in this manner, that "mixed categor[ies] of people", such as the diverse global refugee populations, become reconstructed into " 'a culture', ... 'identity', a 'social world', or a 'community' " (Malkki 1995:511).

The social ascription of the "refugee" label might offer a legitimization of refugee's experience of suffering, but Zetter (1991) cautions that it can also lead to "delinkage": a phenomenon by which an individual's prior notion of identity is subsumed by "stereotypes" via a category that "replicates the [assumed] professional, bureaucratic and political values" which underlie its production (1991:44). Thus, an individual who is identified as a 'refugee' may be eligible to receive sanctuary, protection, and "tangible" benefits (Muecke 1992:518) but 'delinkage' is also risked when the "body of experience" of that same individual is concomitantly "incorporated in rules, regulations, contracts, agreements, and handbooks" (Gallagher 1989: 585). In the looping effect of 'refugee kinds', where new meanings and identities are 'formed' as others are simultaneously "forgotten" (de Voe 1981:89) and subverted, it is possible that even differences in identity that may exist between individuals from *within* the *same* communities, can be neglected or ignored (cf. Rechtman 2000:413).

The ubiquitous representations of refugees as "powerless, victimized, and passive" people (Uehling 1998:130) is an outcome of the looping effect described above (cf. Brody 1994:57). The English word 'victim'—derived from the Latin word *victima*—is a term that "originally contained the concept of 'sacrifice'" (in Hebraic: *korban*). The Biblical idea is epitomized by "a man suffering from acts committed by an aggressor" (Mendehlson 1976:9). This concept of 'victim' falls close to the contemporary meaning and is certainly relevant and applicable to the 'refugee'

category. But there are also other 'categories of victimhood' (Stanciu 1976:33): 'tortured man', "raped women", "bereaved mother", "traumatized children", "widow", and so forth (Summerfield 1999:1456) that demonstrate that 'victims' are not restricted in definition to merely those persons who have experienced exile or displacement.

Individuals, and groups of refugees, are eligible for 'victimhood' via multiple accounts: i.e. as 'politico-legal' victims, 'economic' victims, or 'medical' victims. Although these different categorical identities "[connote an] humanitarian designation" that is intended with "benevolent" (Zetter 1988:1) aims, they can also compete with, and challenge one another. As a result, refugees may find themselves thrust in a "floating world" where the significance of particular histories, politics, and meanings toward shaping their 'identity' (Malkki 1995:518) are rendered subordinate to the particular ideologies and interests that underlie the systems of institutional practices and social relations that drive the making of 'suffering' identities.

For example, within a politico-legal dialect of suffering, an authority to officially sanction the ready-made suffering identity of 'refugee' is wielded by the nation-state (Tuitt 1999). This raises the question as to how an 'ideology of suffering' conforms (or perhaps merely appears to) an ideology of the 'nation-state' (see Brubaker 1996; Gellner 1983). We need not remind ourselves that an organization such as the United Nations "is representative not of people but of states" (Stanciu 1976:38) and thus, the status of 'refugee' comes to validate the very nation-state system that determines, authorizes, and deploys the criteria that construct the status 'refugee'. Such a relationship between the ideology of suffering and nation-state may explain the commonly "enforced" refugee dependency upon international government assistance (Muecke 1992:518), and the way in which various categories of

government, judiciary, and health care "experts take custody of the refugees by taking custody of what they, the experts, have identified as the refugee's 'problem'" (de Voe 1981:90). Though it cannot be generalized, it is not uncommon for refugees to be institutionally represented as powerless victims. This leads to tensions and conflict around subjective notions of identity and the personal desire for "self-empowerment" (Krulfeld and MacDonald 1998:6). Similarly, in the medical dialect of suffering, refugee identities are negotiated via a "medical dialogue" in which clinical perceptions and medical narratives serve to both expose and obfuscate what has "really happened" (Crandon-Malamud 1991:171) in the representations of the lifeworlds of refugees.

8. THE MEDICAL DIALECT OF SUFFERING

Cultural meanings for 'suffering' determine the ways in which suffering identities are imagined. Religions have traditionally provided the scope of meanings for 'suffering', commonly teaching us not "how to avoid suffering", but rather, "*how* to suffer" appropriately (Geertz 1979: 84). Early Christian notions of the 'self' included the idea that "the suffering body became the meeting place of the human and the divine; healing became the material manifestation of Christian power" (Kleinman 1997a:322). Religious symbols guided the "transformation of subjectivity" (1997a: 322) and dominated the individual's meanings and experiences of suffering and healing. Although the moral-religious meaning of suffering contained in the notion of Christian charity arguably persists in 'human rights' and 'refugee relief' practices of today, "science and technology have replaced Christianity...as the dominant way of ordering our thoughts about the world, about life and about death and suffering" (Bracken et al 1997:441). Scientific knowledge is the source of 'medical power'

(Cassell 1991:22). In this framework, the social institutions of biomedicine and psychiatry have come to authoritatively articulate the meanings of 'suffering', and to promote new ways of imagining *how* to suffer.

The Medicalization of Refugees: 'Refugees' as 'Patients'

In recent times, the view that immigrants are harbingers of 'imported' diseases have come to be prevailed over by a perception that refugees are 'sufferers' in need of medical provision and mental health interventions (Martin 1994:72; see also Ager 1994; Holtzman and Bornemann 1990; Losaria-Barwick 1992; Marsella et al. 1994; Muecke 1992:519,520). The suffering of refugees is considered to be of a "special nature" that necessitates "special expertise in caring for such people" (Bracken et al. 1997:437). As such, in the new culture of refugees, "medical problems [have become] the primary route for refugee recourse when in any kind of pain, whether medical, social, or emotional" (Muecke 1992:519). Refugees offer a new kind of locus of meaning for 'pathology'—the study of 'suffering'. Despite Eric Cassell's (1991: vii,32) view that the "adequacy" of medicine in dealing with patient 'suffering' is close to destitute, the agents and technologies of the *scientific* institution of medicine have emerged as powerful authorizing components of a language game—the 'medical dialect of suffering'—that saliently represents particular realities of 'suffering' through 'medicalization'. The perdurable salience of the 'ideology of suffering' has been best achieved by caching the degrees of ideological 'deception' within the domain of 'truth'—the discourse of medical science and thought which is able to "legitimize its own socially significant facts through a claim to being non-ideological" (Young 1983:209).

'Medicalization' can be defined as the social process whereby "the dominant ideology and contradictions of a society come to be both accepted and yet not

explicitly acknowledged by their reinterpretations as illness" (Skultans 1998:20). In the 'medical dialect' of suffering, the physician's ascription of medical labels prompts a transformation of the politico-legal status identity of the 'refugee' to a medically authorized identity of 'patient'—a new categorical identity that perpetuates and re-articulates the experience of the 'suffering' individual. Diagnostic categories are deployed as meaningful expressions of an ideology of suffering (i.e. an impoverished and undesirable existential state) and medically transmogrify existential 'suffering' into psychobiological phenomenon, a pathological entity. As much as religious interpretations of suffering may prominently signify a spiritual crisis that necessitates *spiritual healing*, the biomedical conceptualization of suffering-as-illness analogously requires *medical healing* and intervention.

The 'sick role' adopted by a refugee via 'patienthood' reinforces the moral career of 'victimhood', and also establishes another "place in society" that entitles the *refugee/patient* to social and economic resources, therapeutic attention, and "judicial correctives" (Malkki 1992:8; see also Jenkins 1996: 156; Muecke 1992:519). In the medical dialect of suffering, medical practices and knowledge can serve as a "primary resource through which the negotiation of social position and social relations" are a "secondary resource gained" (Crandon-Malamud 1991: 139).

Clinical consultation and judgment not only carry medical significance, but also confer economic, moral, and political consequences for the refugee (cf. Kleinman 1995:39)—as well as the physician. The clinical encounter between a refugee and physician also validates the cultural role of the clinician-expert, and may lead to the extension and legitimization of new social duties. For example, the 'forensic role' of the clinician has emerged as particularly prominent in the immigration boards that employ staff psychiatrists (Ekblad et al. 1994:289)—a demonstration of how the

medical dialect of suffering is "internally linked" (Canfield 1981) to the other dialects of suffering: i.e., the politico-legal dialect can overlap with the medical dialect.

Keeping in mind that ideological salience does not necessarily mean ideological dominance, the internally linked dialects within a language of suffering are able to generate multiple 'looping effects' which may have the effect of enforcing particular categorical identities such as 'patient' or 'refugee', and yet also pull 'identities' apart (Kirmayer 1999: personal communication). An ideology of suffering is thus not intrinsically limited to a singular identity, but rather, gives a format for the social relations that produce competing representations of identity. In a language of suffering, "biomedicine is just one world [patients] must participate in to obtain technical help. It coexists with their own, often multiple, local cultural worlds" (Kirmayer et al. 1994:591).

But despite the blend, and interplay between the dialects of suffering, the 'patienthood' ascribed to a 'refugee' can still ascend to a " 'master status,' to which most other identities [become] subordinate" (Jenkins 1996:156). Hence, medical discourse, technologies, and therapies are made available to be strategically "appropriated" by refugees to "negotiate their own identities", and not necessarily "for medical, but for social reasons" (Crandon-Malamud 1991:150). This phenomenon resonates with Cioran's view "that sickness and suffering have 'lyrical virtues' which alone lead to 'metaphysical revelations'... '[t]o suffer is to *generate* knowledge'" (Trans. by Zarifopol-Johnston 1992: *xvii*, my emphasis). Refugees are not passive receptacles for ready-made identities but rather *active* participants and "co-producers" of *expert* knowledge (cf. Young 1978:103) and practices that culminate in the "objectification, naturalization, and bureaucratization" of their social identities (cf. Cussins 1998:168).

The judgment of "whether it is therapeutic or punitive to be called 'sick' (or 'mentally sick') depends largely on the social context in which the person so diagnosed lives" (Szasz 1970:50). Certain scenarios can precipitate *sequelae* to a 'medicalized' identity that may be detrimental (Kleinman 1995:35). For some refugees, diagnostic labels are viewed as "imposed concepts", and "at odds with the refugees' own perceptions, who [do not see] themselves in the role of patients in the first place" (Knudsen 1991:28). Thus, accompanying the idea of putative gains, there is also a notion of perceived risk of the different sorts of socio-moral stigmas and economic losses that may follow from the medicalization of identity.

Arthur and Joan Kleinman claim that a negative consequence of medicalization is found in the instance whereby "psychiatry delegitimates the patient's suffering as moral commentary" (cited in Beohnlein and Kinzie 1995:241). The medicalization of refugees can bring with it the distortion and neutralization of socio-historical and politico-economic realities that underlie 'suffering' (Kleinman 1995: 38). The risk of Zetter's 'delinkage' also persists so long as the 'pathological/patient' identity is narratively constructed from the specific details mined from the lifeworlds of refugees to support medical meanings of symptoms and signs, while alternative life moments and meanings are selectively ignored, or marginalized (Bracken et al. 1995:1077). Reframing the lifeworld of a refugee as a clinical narrative, thus requires the systematic erasure of particularities of an individual's lifeworld as clinically salient details are produced as medical facts, and conformed to ready-made clinical stories to fit a diagnosis. What is striking, however, is that despite a clinical neutralization of people's complex life stories via clinical narratives, the sociopolitical and moral significance of 'medicine' *itself* remains intact, and exerts a continued impact upon shaping cultural identities.

For example, physicians' "symptom and disease attribution[s] [still] serve to negotiate the social and moral significance of illness" (Kirmayer et al. 1994:591). In the social relationship that exists between 'physician' and 'refugee', medical etiologies and diagnoses can also be used "as instruments to initiate changes in social status" (Crandon-Malamud 1991:150), and even social relations within the community and culture (1991:11). Medical judgments can serve as "political act[s]" that direct "attention" to "individual suffering" (Zarowsky 2000:304). For example, by 'documenting [the] refugee health crisis' and even 'exposing violations of medical neutrality' (see Geiger and Cook-Deegan 1993:617), physician roles are politically (re)configured in the elicitation of medical testimonies of refugee 'suffering'. Therapeutic encounters which suggest that "the same factors that create refugees can also create mental health problems" (Martin 1994:72) clearly implicate 'medicine' and 'society' as an 'inextricable' pair.

As we live in a time of ubiquity for the statistical law, testimonies of 'suffering' are inevitably medically translated into 'quantums of sickness' (see Hacking 1990: Ch.6), whereby a refugee's experience of "human misery" is represented as "health problems" and assembled into 'metrics of suffering' (i.e. the 'DALYs' [Disability Adjusted Life Years] that are used by the World Bank) (Kleinman 1997a: 12,15). 'Suffering' can also be expressed as a qualitative measure that "consists of evaluations of subjective well being, health, and welfare" (i.e. the QoL [Quality of Life] used by the World Health Organization, Ekblad et al. 1994:331-332). These quantitative redefinitions of suffering carry moral, economic, and political currency in a language of suffering.

A political valence of medical discourse and practice is also evident in the way these can be employed to implement state goals "to suppress political dissent"

(Skultans 1998:19). In her study of Latvian illness narratives, anthropologist Veida Skultans notes that post-Soviet Latvian "medical categories [were] constructed in such a way as to deflect attention away from the social sources of dissatisfaction" (Skultans 1998:20). She discovered that "[t]he process of medicalization—this reinterpretation of historical and social discontents—has been fragmented and incomplete in Latvia" (1998:20). For Soviet Latvians, the roots of dissatisfaction were "not contained" by the medical (psychiatric) categories, but in fact, they "breached those categories" (1998:20). Sick Latvians "saw themselves...as primarily oppressed and only secondarily as suffering from damaged nerves" (1998:20).

Thus, 'medicalization' was directly perceived as a process of state oppression directed against the Latvians (during the Soviet period). A significant contrast to cultural scenarios in which medicalization serves as a representation of underlying sociopolitical causes of misery (cf. Kleinman and Kleinman 1985:477). Citing the ethnographic work of Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1992), Skultans (1998:19) provides a counter example to Latvia: "In Brazil, poverty, famine and oppression are medicalized both by the medical profession and the poor and hungry". Here, "the use of psychiatry to suppress political dissent" did not "distance ordinary people form psychiatrists" (1998:19).

In the following pages I will introduce a special category of medicalization that can serve as both a 'primary resource' which compels refugees to seek medical assistance, and yet may also be construed as undesirable and to be avoided. I am referring to a new kind of category of person that corresponds to the idea of 'trauma'—and that is able to articulate the salient ideological notion of 'suffering' already infused into 'patienthood' and 'victimhood'. This notion of identity also fosters a new way to 'medicalize' refugees, and to culturally represent suffering.

Traumatized Identity: PTSD and Refugees

The refugee mental health paradigm has shifted somewhat from an earlier emphasis on "acculturative change" to a new focus on "individual life history of trauma" (Brody 1994:59). As a novel cultural concept that currently lacks consensual meaning, the use of 'trauma' in the new global culture of refugees is remarkably prominent. The specific concept of 'refugee trauma' (Boehnlein and Kinzie 1995) belongs to the vocabulary of a 'medical dialect of suffering' and is employed by a variety of social organizations and institutions to articulate the psychological effects of 'suffering': these include the effects of 'extreme stressors' like being taken hostage, displacement (Foa et al. 1999), war, torture, rape, camp life, and so forth (Summerfield 1995:223). In the case of refugees, the notion of 'trauma' has come to mean "refugee suffering" (Zarowsky 1997:11).

The contemporary notion of 'trauma' medically originates from the psychiatric diagnostic category of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which was created in 1980 for the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)*—specifically the *DSM-III.* In the *Fourth Edition* (*DSM-IV)* 'PTSD' refers to "the development of characteristic symptoms following exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor" (see *DSM IV 1994*: 424). The definition includes criteria which state that the "overwhelming traumatic event is reexperienced, causing intense fear, helplessness, horror, and avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma" (*The Merck Manual, 17th Edition 1999*). Two important predictors for developing the syndrome are the "proximity of the event to the individual" and the "extent of the trauma" (Korn 2001).

A peculiar feature of PTSD is that it describes both the *effects* of a traumatic experience for an individual, and also implicates a particular *cause* that has lead to the effects, and subsequent illness. Although there do exist other psychiatric diagnostic

categories that include 'stressor' causes, the temporal-causal aspect of PTSD is unique in how it mandates that the 'etiological event' form *part of the diagnostic criteria.* In this respect "PTSD allows us to study the process by which the environment influences the individual in dramatic ways" (Korn 2001). Of anthropological significance is how the diagnostic prerequisite of an etiological event may be used to either implicate or prevaricate sociohistorical processes that might precede, underlie, and proceed from a 'trauma'. More studies are needed to improve our understanding of how such processes and the 'traumatic event' itself are made to correspond to conceptualizing various refugee identities, and the narratives of suffering (cf. Ager 1994:22). For the moment it might serve useful to mention how 'PTSD' is itself an outcome of socio-historical events associated with the experience of American soldiers during the Vietnam War.

PTSD was invented as a diagnostic category to morally communicate the suffering of 'traumatized' Vietnam war veterans (Boehnlein and Kinzie 1995:226; see also Young 1995). It opened another cultural space for representing suffering—and a new moral rhetoric to talk about suffering. But despite offering a novel way to express experiences of suffering, PTSD remains a category that generates 'neutralizing' narratives of complex lifeworlds and 'environmental' processes that may mingle in the 'experience' of self-identity for an individual. In the biomedical model, to which PTSD of course belongs, the exegesis of sociohistorical factors is not essential to the construction of the desired 'disease entity'. Thus, to reach a diagnosis, it might be crucial to identify the *causative event*, but a seeking out, or excavation, of the *reasons or circumstances behind the cause* is incidental to the institutional role of a 'diagnostician' and 'patient'. This clinical picture of PTSD

diagnostics permits a distinction to be made between the medical dialect of suffering from the others in a language of suffering.

Most dialects of suffering (i.e. moral, politico-legal, economic) are explicitly and "*specifically*" connected to "*social domains*" (Young 1983:214). But the 'medical dialect' of suffering employs clinical discourse and practice solely as-if they "are intended to organize knowledge of a *non-social domain*" (1983:214). The clinical method, and the ideology of suffering, are embedded in 'scientific', 'objective truths', that permit the treatment of the mental 'pathology' of a refugee as a 'non-social' disease entity (i.e. medical 'fact'). And yet the systems of social relations between patient and physician, state and refugee, or ideology and practice, all implicate how medical discourse *is ultimately* "organizing social facts" (1983:214) and an interlocutor of cultural values. Recalling the definition of 'laudatory' ideology, we see how an 'ideology of suffering' effectively 'deceives' by covering itself in 'truths' that are set in the cultural assumptions embedded in medical beliefs.

The medical 'self'

A significant cultural assumption that PTSD shares with other biomedical nosologies is the notion of the Western 'self' (See Kirmayer 1989). Accordingly, the 'refugee'-as-'patient' is conceived as an autonomous, biological, individual organism to which clinical signs and symptoms are attributable (Bracken et al 1995: 1074, 1075, 1077). This notion of an egocentric, bounded self is presupposed in the 'traumatized identities' that arise from a PTSD diagnosis (Summerfield 1998:22). The particular conceptualization of the medical 'self' can have important implications for understanding the pathological process and determining modes of treatments.

Clinically, the cultural assumption of the Western 'self' is advantageous in the following respect: it is more simple to manage and treat a 'refugee' as an *individual* 'patient' rather than having to directly address the *collective* plight of 'refugees' and associated sociohistorical processes (cf. Beohnlein and Kinzie 1995:240). PTSD, or the notion of 'refugee trauma', enables the medical gaze to remain acutely focused upon the 'individual', a medical object independent of other selves. Physicians can thus avoid the risk of an epistemological diplopia that may confound clinical practice by them having to contend with the non-individual, non-biological processes intrinsic to conditions like poverty or displacement.

The fact that 'refugee trauma' implies that the medical 'problem' is coming from *within* the individual, also justifies the social presence of medical experts to provide expertise, and to gear possible therapeutic interventions toward an *individual*—who is then anointed with moral blame or exculpation (see Young 1993:127; Young 1995a:289). This serves as an example of how the role of the clinician can become charged with explicit political or moral significance in scenarios (i.e. recall illness narratives in post-Soviet Latvia) where the medical institution is perceived by 'patients' to be a part of the state apparatus. Given that medical agents are frequently cognizant of the links between social processes and mental health, it is puzzling that "Western psychological models have never really acknowledged that social action directed at the conditions of one's life might be a strategy for improving mental health" (Summerfield 2000:423). Cognitive-behavioural therapies directed at the individual still remain the main modality of treatment (Korn 2001), and although the application of "[p]sychotherapy promotes an ethic of acceptance: it is still the individual who [is required] to change, not society" (Summerfield 2000:423).

PTSD's assumption of a western model of the self, also raises the issue of its cross-cultural applicability and relevance (Bracken et al. 1997; Friedman and Jaranson 1994; Lavik et al. 1996; Summerfield 1999). Although current psychobiological accounts of PTSD advocate that it is a 'universal' human reaction to traumatic events (Boehlein and Kinzie 1995:240; see also Young 1995: 269-283) "this powerful new tool has provided anything but a solid explanation of disease" (Caruth 1995:3). In addition, PTSD is not 'value neutral' (Bracken et al. 1997) and this can upset the meaning and even "acceptance of the traumatic experience" (Korn 2001) for different individuals.

Patient responses to 'trauma', as a Western psychiatric model, are ultimately contingent upon differences in culture and particular sociohistorical processes (see Boehnlein and Kinzie 1995; Friedman and Jaranson 1994; Marsella et al 1994; Summerfield 1999). Although PTSD does provide a new cultural means for representing suffering, the use of PTSD as a cross-cultural tool should be adaptable to the variability of emotions, meanings, symbols—the very processes that shape trauma—and the representations of identities of refugees.

The clinical value of PTSD is not constrained to 'patients' alone. The popularity of PTSD is linked also to the "clinicians working with traumatized refugees" (Boehlein and Kinzie 1995:234). PTSD provides clinicians not only with an "adequate nomenclature" to represent suffering (1995:235) but also "empowers clinicians by giving them a sense that they know what they are dealing with clinically" (Muecke 1992:520). In the medical dialect of suffering, the existential experience of suffering is *made real* for both sufferer and healer, via the ideologically laden biomedical category of PTSD. As a 'disease of time', it guides the stringing

pathological memories, so as-if realities of suffering are reflected and projected in the novel 'traumatized identity' of the refugee.

'Disease of Time'

Anthropologist Allan Young has referred to PTSD as "a disease of time" (1995:7) which "medicalizes [the] past" (Young 1993:127) as it concomitantly generates new 'traumatized' identities in the present. Thus, the pathological memories of traumatic events yield pathological identities. Since identities are tilled in the landscapes of memory, PTSD also reveals how competing institutional jurisdictions over memory practices can organize salient conceptualizations of identity. In the case of PTSD, 'clinical narratives' authorize and de-authorize particular memories. Thus, in the medical dialect of suffering the 'pathological' memories of individuals are specifically preserved in the representation of a 'traumatized identity'. Subsequently, the prior categories of 'victim' and 'refugee' are amalgamated into a continuous moral identity (Brody 1994:57)—a *suffering identity* of the 'patient/refugee'.

The new kind of 'suffering identity, however, can threaten alternative memories, narratives and identities that are not included in the constellation of pathological memories. The focus on past traumatic experiences can "encourage less attention to other less tangible aspects of the refugee experience" (Ager 1994:7). In refugee trauma, issues that pertain to economic hardships, or disrupted social roles, or moral stigma can be marginalized as compared to the reality of the pathological object (see Boehnlein and Kinzie 1995). Thus, in the clinical commemoration of 'suffering', identities that are medicalized via a 'disease of time' can protect, violate, or posit new meanings for refugee identities and their corresponding lifeworlds.

9. AFGHAN 'SUFFERING': THE MENTAL HEALTH OF AFGHAN REFUGEES

C.K. Cirtautus (1957:18) remarked in his 'Psychological Study' that "suffering is intense" for refugees. Afghan refugees have been no different in that they have also endured intense suffering through their experiences of war, loss, isolation, hunger, disease, and physical injury from bombs (see Dadfar 1986, 1987, 1989, 1994; Roberts and 1995 Wardak 1993; UNHCR 2001) and landmines (Roberts and Williams 1995:39; UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs 1996:4,12; 1997:13-14). If Afghan 'suffering' is also conceptualized in terms of an ideological grammar that is shared by both the politico-legal and medical dialects of suffering, an opportunity arises to explore cultural representations of 'suffering' identities for Afghan refugees.

'Medicalized' Afghans

Traditional 'Afghan' medical models have been based in either oral ('folk') or literary (*Unani*) systems of medical knowledge[70] (Penkala-Gawecka 1987: 92). Biomedicine was introduced to Afghanistan in the 1920s by King Amanullah (1987:99) and later followed by the elaboration of modern public health services after WW II (1987:100). The series of enormous displacements of Afghan refugees in recent times has opened the door for biomedical and psychiatric discourse and practice to play a prominent role in representing experiences of 'suffering' for Afghans in refugee camps within Pakistan, as well as for those who have resettled in North America or Europe (see for example Dadfar 1994; Mghir et al. 1995; Omidian

[70] Prior to the community presence of biomedical practitioners in Afghanistan, Afghan concepts of health and illness had been mainly derived from 'personalistic' and 'naturalistic' theories of disease (i.e, belief in the 'evil eye', and the physiological concept of 'hot/cold' imbalances, respectively). Amongst Afghans, medical therapies were commonly sought from *hakims* (traditional healers), or through religious prescriptions and rituals, such as traveling to the tombs of saints, *ziyarat* , or the wearing of amulets containing specific verses from the Qur'an, *ta'wiz* (1987: 93, 110,115).

1994, 1997). The link between exile and psychological distress has been recognized for some time (e.g. Miserez 1988), but it is important to acknowledge that migration itself does not necessarily pose "an increased risk to mental disorder" for refugees (Liebkind 1993: 27). Other associated "contingencies" such as the destinations of refuge, language difficulties, changes to socioeconomic status, or the disruption of family and social structures, have also been acknowledged to wield significant influence upon the development of psychological problems for refugees (1993: 27; cf. Dadfar 1987:2; 1994:128). "[T]he complex manner [however] in which [these] influences may interact is poorly understood" (Ager 1994: 23) but this does not exclude their salience and relevance to the mental health of Afghan refugees living in Pakistani camps and other locations of asylum or resettlement.

The Mental Health Expert of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, Dr. H. Strotzka, (who in 1960 typologized several classes of exiles), also provided his observations of the psychological effects of camp living conditions upon camp refugees:

> The characteristics of this group, who have lived mainly in camps for many years, include great apathy and mistrust. This attitude is found in varying degrees, from a normal reaction to real experience to neurotic or even psychotic mental pictures... (Tabori 1972: 29).

The sentiment of 'mistrust' (see Daniel and Knudsen 1995) still characterizes particular social relations (i.e. 'donor-client' relationship, Voutira and Harrell-Bond 1995) within refugee camps in Pakistan (see Boesen 1986; Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont 1988; Shahrani 1995) and might also be associated with the therapeutic encounter (cf. Knudsen 1991). Relations between agencies and refugees have also been strained as a result of the sheer numbers of Afghan refugees in Pakistan camps. The condition of overcrowding and the paucity of resources has served to exacerbate the social and medical problems of everyday camp living (Dadfar 1994:128).

Although Afghanistan had never really been "a country of epidemic diseases" (Penkala-Gawecka 1987: 94) respiratory infections such as tuberculosis[71] have become prevalent in Pakistan's refugee camps. Again this may be attributable to poor hygiene and sanitation conditions (see Dadfar 1989). In this milieu, another area of health that has raised serious concerns is the mental health of the Afghan refugees (Dadfar 1994:129).

'Traumatized' Afghans

PTSD, as a disease of time, and technology of the self, provides a special case of medicalized identity via the concept of 'refugee trauma'. The *Psychiatry Centre for Afghans* (PCA) was established[72] in Peshawar, Pakistan in January 1986. Under the medicalizing labels such as "Refugee Syndrome" (1986) and the "Refugee Camp Syndrome" (1987), psychiatrist Azam Dadfar described certain socio-economic influences (i.e. unemployment, poor sanitation, etc.) that were medically relevant to the psychological problems encountered by Afghan refugees living in Peshawar's camps at that time (i.e. Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Turkmens, Nuristanis; Dadfar 1989:6). Dadfar also pointed to the salience of PTSD and somatization amongst Afghans living in the refugee camps:

> The most common symptoms among the refugees were anxiety disorders and PTSD, including chronic dysphoric mood, restlessness, exhaustion, and outbursts of anger. Of the adult male patients in the sample, 84% suffered from memory and concentration difficulties; 60% complained of pain in joints, muscle cramps, and other somatic complaints associated with sadness; 31% manifested behavioural disturbances, exaggerated startle responses, and withdrawal symptoms; 16% suffered recurrent distressing dreams of traumatic events and demonstrated low tolerance toward stress; and 8% had paranoid thoughts and delirium, mostly with mystic and megalomaniac features. The second largest group of symptoms were associated with somatization disorders. A majority of Afghan refugee women complained of headaches, sleep disturbances, sweating, tremors, and tachycardia (Dadfar 1994: 129-130; see also Dadfar 1987:2).

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[71] A recent visit to Peshawar, Pakistan in August 2001 revealed that a local hospital clinic near the *kachi gari* (makeshift 'homes' of present-day Afghan refugees) had been established to accommodate the increasing number of Afghan refugees infected with tuberculosis.

[72] In the same visit to Peshawar, Pakistan, I was informed by the Medical Director for the UN Health Programme for [Afghan] Refugees that the PCA was no longer operational.

PTSD has also been invoked as a diagnosis amongst Afghan refugees who have resettled in various locations in the United States (Firling 1988:33; see esp., Mghir et al. 1995). For instance, 'war trauma' and depression have been attributed to some adolescent and young adult Afghans refugees (sample of Pashtuns and Tajiks) resettled in Seattle, Washington (Mghir et al. 1995:28). Experiences of Afghan refugee 'suffering' have thus been incorporated into the medical dialect of suffering, and diagnostically represented through corresponding 'medicalized' and 'traumatized' refugee identities. Representations of Afghan 'refugee trauma' have also been interlocuted via the notion of 'somatization': both an "official psychiatric nosology" that "refers to a family of psychiatric disorders" and a general description of "a pattern of illness behaviour, especially a style of clinical presentation, in which somatic symptoms are presented to the exclusion or eclipse of emotional distress and social problems" (Kirmayer and Young 1998).

Psychologist Wali Wardak (1993:362) has described how somatization is a "major component of PTSD" amongst Afghan refugees living in refugee camps. Patricia Omidian (1994) also observes that among Afghan refugees resettled in California, symptoms of *narahatee* (discomfort, anxiety or depression) and *tsabee* (nervousness, anxiety, and/or depression; Omidian 1997:156) formed a basis for somatic complaints. Thus, somatization, as part of the language of Afghan refugee trauma, also serves as a metaphorical representation of "humiliated, degraded, and dehumanized" (Wardak 1993: 352) Afghan refugee individuals.

Wardak provides a particular psychological explanation[73] of the somatization of grief, which suggests that since 'grief', for Afghans, is culturally prescribed to a realm of private experience, appropriate public expressions may alternatively be

[73] Wardak's explanation is based on his belief that "Afghans, like other Orientals, tend to somatize emotional problems" (1993: 360). Recent arguments show that somatization is in fact an 'ubiquitous' cultural phenomenon (Kirmayer and Young 1998).

communicated through somatic symptoms like 'back pain', 'headaches', or 'sleep disturbances' (Wardak 1993:360). His particular explanation of a form of Afghan somatization coincides in meaning with Linda Green's (1998:5) description of how "[m]emories of violence" or "memorias de sangre" ('blood memories') were "embodied through illness" for Guatemalan women. In cases amongst Afghan refugees (esp., Pashtuns) the "perception of self is damaged" (Wardak 1993:359; cf. Edwards 1986:325) by the weakening or destruction of the subjective experience of personal autonomy and independence. The "deep sense of loss, both human and material, forced displacement, and the resulting demoralization" (1993: 361) are all articulated through the medical dialect of suffering: the newly constructed 'patient' and 'trauma' identities.

Afghan refugee trauma, however, is not just restricted to the individual. Individual trauma is also 'dialectical' with collective trauma (Zarowsky n.d.:1). In the case of Afghan refugees, the disruption of a "traditional cohesive framework" (Wardak 1993:361) of society and social relations has created conditions for 'collective trauma' (Zarowsky n.d.). In this context, Afghans living in refugee camps in Pakistan have been described as being advantaged in some ways over resettled refugees abroad, since they share many features of culture, religion, and language with the local host population (Wardak 1993: 361). But in a language of suffering, the 'traumatized' identities also reflect cultural assumptions about the Western self, the ideological assumptions inherent to 'suffering', and the moral assumptions contained in the notion of victimhood.

The 'medicalized' identity of an Afghan refugee 'patient', or the 'traumatized' identity of an Afghan refugee diagnosed with PTSD may be materially and psychologically benevolent, and culturally (biomedically) validating as they share an

ideological continuity with the moral career of victimhood that is intrinsic to the status refugee identity, but they are also contestable and challengeable categories of representation. In the encounter between Afghan refugees and clinicians, vast lifeworld experiences and meanings are transformed into specialized clinical narratives that promote alternative as-if realities of suffering. But the narrative authority of 'trauma' also diminishes the attention given to "intercurrent social variables and background culture" (Summerfield 2000:423). In addition, the 'therapeutic intervention' itself can be perceived as a threatening encounter (Knudsen 1991: 21) that potentiates 'spoiled identities' from social stigma. This understanding has induced calls for vigilance against such problems in the clinical setting, in order to avoid "a generic analysis of meaning that risks dissolving individual particularities in the name of an illusory collective identity" (Rechtman 2000:413). Laurence Kirmayer (1994: 184) has also cautioned that:

> Any authoritative interpretation of illness—while it may suggest further metaphoric elaborations of experience—also limits the field of potential meanings available to the sufferer. Tension between authority and invention lies at the heart of clinical negotiation of illness meanings. This tension exists between both sufferer and healer and within each participant in the clinical encounter, since each faces the problem of clarifying illness meaning. The power disparity in the social roles of physician and patient—and the eclipse of illness by biomedical constructions of disease—may obscure this fundamental symmetry of experience.

In a language of suffering, the notion of 'identity' for Afghan refugees is variably articulated through different cultural representations: i.e. 'Refugee', 'Victim', 'Patient', 'Traumatized Refugee', or 'Muhajir'. Tensions can arise between competing interplays for meaning between different cultural notions of 'identity' and 'suffering'. For instance, the 'patient' and 'refugee' identities both continue the moral career of victimhood, but these suffering identities also may conflict with concepts of identity that are articulated by alternative moral dialects of suffering: i.e.

'muhajir' and 'mujahid'. Thus, the 'suffering' of Afghan refugees is not only meaningful as a "medical phenomenon" (Muecke 1992: 520).

Although the biomedical institution culturally dominates a 'way of thinking' about the world, and the 'medical dialect of suffering' inevitably plays a significant role in representing Afghan refugee identities, amongst Afghan refugees, a religious dialect of suffering can still persist as a salient articulator of meanings and representations of the suffering identities of Afghan refugees (cf. Summerfield 2000:422). The religious identity of being a 'muhajir' (and/or 'mujahid') amongst Afghan refugees living in Pakistan's refugee camps (Dadfar 1989:6; Shahrani 1995), invokes an alternative moral narrative, whereby the 'pathological' memories of oppression and violence are conscripted into the Islamic migration myth of Hijra, and consolidated into a different kind of moral mythico-history. Since "the existence of both medicine and psychiatry is predicated upon the necessity of pathology or problems" it raises the question as to how the medical dialect of suffering can take into "primary account" alternative moral meanings of suffering that may be ideologically resistant to notions of victimhood, and rather imply "the strengths and resilience of refugees" (Muecke 1992: 520).

Medicine serves as a cultural screen that reflects broader ideological notions of suffering (i.e. suffering is 'bad') and cultural assumptions of the Western self. This is evident in the notion of 'victimhood' that is a persisting moral career associated with 'refugee' and 'patient' identities. Amongst Afghan refugees, these suffering identities that medicine both reflects and projects may be contested by alternative representations of identity that demonstrate how a language of suffering cannot be conceptualized as a "fixed and ideal calculus" (High 1967:80), but rather that the

various operating 'dialects' should be viewed as "objects of comparison" that "throw light on" (1967: 80) salient realities of experienced suffering.

PART IV: CONCLUSION

The new culture of refugees has provided a unique opportunity to explore contemporary relationships between culture, migration, and identity. A review of the concept of 'identity' revealed some of the theoretical limitations that have been encountered by anthropology in its 'search' for a concept or vocabulary of identity that is able to wholly capture the diversity of both *cross-cultural* and *intra-cultural* experiences of 'identity' and 'self'. If anything, ethnographies tend to show that cultural meanings and representations of identity can be multiple, shifting, context-dependent, and even contradictory. Thus, we are inclined to agree (Ewing 1990) that a reliance on any singular model of the 'self' or 'person' for the interpretation of identity experiences is restrictive, and also increasingly challenged by illustrations of transforming social conditions that compel shifts in subjective and social identity practices. Additionally, it may be profitable to view experiences of identity, particularly in rapidly changing societies, from a vantage point that takes into account how self-representations are negotiated at a nexus that contains markers of both similarities *and* differences (Sokefeld 1999).

My own operationalization of the concept of 'identity' into separate qualitative ('subjective', 'social') and quantitative ('individual', 'collective') fields was intended to expose how these fields are ultimately enmeshed, and how the meaning of identity remains largely incomprehensible without a consideration of its relations to other identities. Thus, 'subjective' and 'social' identities are dialectically constituted and correspondent to one another; and similarly, 'individual' identities are gathered from 'collective' identities, as 'collective' identities are also encapsulated and reassembled in the 'individual'. Raising the topic of institutional, and ideological identities (i.e.

'ethnic', 'national', and 'religious') helped to elaborate the above point further, but also enabled the necessary introduction of a 'politics of identity': that the notion of 'identity' is authorized via institutional practices through which 'ideology' and 'memory' are used to strategically organize, and imagine individual and collective identities.

By politics of identity it was also implied that 'identity' and 'memory' practices are shaped by competing power relations and social relationships that aim to express a particular view, and obtain particular social outcomes. Meanings that are imbued at the intersection of collective and individual identities not only serve to transmit a preserved 'past' but also contain the possibility for change and modifying traditions. The revivalism of the Taliban was taken as an example of how the conscription of a particular 'past' can be used to imagine a 'new' social identity, and a corresponding society. Via an 'expressive politics of identity'—a process that not only denotes, but connotes, social change—a revitalized religious identity for the Taliban served as a strategic practice that managed the (re)construction of memory, space, and ideology. Ironically, these historical events were also paralleled by a 'politics of disconnection' from the forgotten 'memories' of 'Pashtun' ancestors, traditions, and narratives—with particularly devastating social sequelae.

As identities are both culturally *made from* and *make* historical claims, the status 'refugee' was also interpreted as an historical outcome—a relatively new category of person, politically imagined in the 'national order of things'. It is in this light that the status 'refugee' definition has recently provoked a 'rethinking' of the *concept* of 'refugee' and elicited approaches that focus not on 'essences' but rather on the 'processes' that may underlie identity formation and transformation. Thus, in the emergent refugee societies, 'identities' are best construed not as reified entities but as

social constructions that are characterized by ambiguity in their meanings and representations. The case of Afghan refugees revealed just how the realities of 'identities' can be polysemic in their representations.

In the refugee camps in Pakistan we find ambiguous reactions amongst the Afghan refugees to the very idea of the status 'refugee'. The proliferation of various contexts of meaning and strategic uses of the refugee label reveal that the status refugee model is contingently accepted, and yet also made to compete with alternative self-definitions of refugee identity for the Afghan refugees. Identities such as 'muhajir', 'Pashtun', or 'mujahid' can deviate from such notions as 'victimhood' and 'powerlessness' that are intrinsic to the status label. The realities of a 'refugeehood' that can be morally and politically incommensurable with the self-experience of migration for Afghans, are recast, and blended in alternative fields of meaning and representation (i.e. religious) that articulate refugee identities which are shifting, tense, contradictory, and heterogeneous but 'masked by common symbolic forms'.

The case of Afghan refugees in Pakistan also demonstrated that improved conceptualizations of the 'refugee' concept must take into account that the 'refugee' label is heterogeneously used and interpreted, and that the representations of 'powerlessness' (which are outcomes of a 'looping effect') are subject to variation, and may also be matched by counter-notions of power, and defiant practices that compel an evolution or revision of the ready-made refugee identities.

Another useful entry point that was chosen to explore the concept of identity for refugees was the ubiquitous notion of 'suffering'. The analysis of 'suffering identities' in the lifeworlds of refugees was conceptually framed in a 'language of suffering'—where 'suffering' is construed as a kind of ideological grammar that organizes a language game, in which multiple 'dialects of suffering' are employed to

represent experiences of suffering. In a language of suffering, the interplay between multiple dialects is characterized by both incoherencies and new possibilities in the representation of existential suffering. Amongst these 'dialects of suffering', I argued that the 'medical dialect' (including medical discourse, practices, technologies, and personnel) is particularly salient in the calculus of new refugee culture, and plays a prominent role in conceptualizing moral identities of 'suffering': i.e. 'refugee' as 'patient'.

Again, in the case of Afghan refugees, 'suffering identities' were expressed by various interlinked 'dialects' and their corresponding cultural representations: i.e. 'refugee', 'victim', 'muhajir', and 'mujahid'. Amongst the refugees living in Pakistani camps we learned of how the medical dialect of suffering can drive the transformation of the categorical refugee identity into both 'medicalized' and 'traumatized' identities. 'Suffering', as articulated through PTSD, becomes intertwined in the weave and warp of pathological memories—which spin the threads of novel pathological identities. The emergent 'traumatized identity' represents a new category of person that preserves the salient ideological notion of suffering that is already infused into 'patienthood' and 'victimhood': Medicine is not only able to *reflect* cultural meanings of suffering, but also *projects* new cultural meanings of suffering.

It was noted that in the calculus of new refugee culture, the realities of a medical dialect of suffering yielded both social and therapeutic benefits, but could also lead to negative consequences for refugees. It was also suggested that perhaps a greater vigilance to the nuances of cultural variabilities, and a wider sensitivity to the processes of poverty and displacement, and to alternative moral meanings of suffering, might serve to ameliorate some of the 'problems' that may be clinically

encountered towards comprehending and responding to the experiences and meanings of illness for refugees. As my purpose was to describe and unpack particular realities of 'identity' and 'suffering' as they pertain to the novel social phenomenon of refugee societies, and not to offer or promote alternative truths, the task of providing 'solutions', for better or worse, was set outside the parameters of the present work.

Finally, I would like to draw attention to a salient limitation of the preceding pages. Much of my discussion and arguments were drawn from relatively recent ethnographic work. But in view of the significant events that have taken place in the past several months in Afghanistan, and Pakistan, the subject and contents deserve further elaboration and current ethnographic substantiation. Such an endeavour would also permit a deeper analysis of areas that were presently excluded or that could only be touched upon: for instance, the experiences of Afghan women refugees and the corresponding representations of identity, the intriguing possibilities for 'identity' contained in both 'Jewish' and 'Muslim' narratives encountered in Pashtun lifeworlds, and the effects of the recent sociopolitical changes on Afghan refugee populations and mental health. I leave these inquiries to the future.

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