"The Violence in Identity"[1]

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'Violence', in its everyday usage, shares meaning with a term - 'violate' - which is etymologically derived from it. 'Violate', as a verb, means variously

"1) To break, infringe, or transgress unjustifiably

2) To ravish or outrage (a woman).

3) To do violence to; to treat irreverently; to desecrate, dishonour, profane, or defile.

4) To vitiate, corrupt, or spoil, esp. in respect of physical qualities.

5) To treat (a person) roughly or with violence; to assail or abuse.

6) To break in upon; to interrupt or disturb; to interfere with rudely or roughly" (O.E.D.1971: 3635)).

Implicit in all the above senses of the term 'violate' is the concept of an integral space broken into and, through that breaking, desecrated. Thus, in its passive grammatical sense, 'violate' indicates something "characterized by impurity or defilement" as in, to use the *Oxford English Dictionary*'s own example, "Take home the lesson to thee...Who makest of this lovely land, God's garden, A nation violate, corrupt, accurst"[2]. The primary *Oxford English Dictionary* definition of the noun 'violence' - "the exercise of physical force so as to inflict injury on, or cause damage to, persons or property; action or conduct characterized by this; treatment or usage tending to cause bodily injury or forcibly interfering with personal freedom" (*Ibid.*) - relays with it this sense of an assault of one entity upon the integrity of another.

Other definitions of 'violence', however, cohabit with what the *Oxford English Dictionary* categorizes as the primary one, specifically,

"force or strength of physical action or natural agents; forcible, powerful, or violent action or motion (in early use freq. connoting destructive force or capacity). Now often merging into next, with an intensive sense....great force, severity, or vehemence; intensity of some condition or influence" (*Ibid.*, definitions 3 and 4).

Etymologically it is these 'secondary' meanings which have precedence. Skeat, in *A*

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[1] With apologies to Max Gluckman (Gluckman1956) whose title, "The Peace in the Feud", inspired mine.

[2] Mrs. Harriot Hamilton King, *The Disciples.* 1873, p. 300, quoted *Ibid.*

Concise Etymological Dictionary of the English Language, derives 'violent' through the French from the Latin *uiolentus*, 'full of might', which is formed as an adjectival form from *uiolus*, 'due to *uīs* (force)' (Skeat1927: 594)[3]. The *Oxford English Dictionary* derives 'violence' from the Latin adjective *violentia* (vehemence, impetuosity, etc.), itself derived through the Latin *violent-us* from *violens* (forcible, impetuous, vehement, etc.) from *vīs*, strength (O.E.D.1971: 3635). The noun 'violence' - which in its everyday connotation always presumes an object in relation to which it manifests itself - thus appears to be intransitive in its originary form, signifying a force or strength - a potential for action - preexisting and independent of whatever object it may or may not act upon in the future. The etymology, in other words, foregrounds what the *Oxford English Dictionary* suggests is no more than a peripheral meaning. Violence, at least semantically, does not need a victim.

These philological burrowings may seem trivial in the wake of a collection of essays examining, from a number of revealing perspectives, not only the ways violence manifests itself in different cultural contexts but also the roles our perceptions of the violences of others have played in forging our European cultures and the disciplines we wield in our examinations of others's cultures. The anthropologists who have contributed to this timely volume have brought a substantial conceptual armoury to bear on the question of whether or not 'violence' can be examined comparatively, and a retrospective investigation of the pre-history of the term they are mobilizing may seem regressive in light of the ground they have taken. My 'retreat' into European philology may seem even more pointless in light of David Riches's assertion - articulated in an earlier foray into the anthropology of violence (Riches1986a) - that European terms do not always fit non-European contexts and describe the practices developed therein[4]. Although Riches continues to use the term 'violence' in his study, he attempts to ground his usage in nuanced empirical investigations of various contexts - European and non-European - in which violence can be seen, and he substitutes for the culturally limited "Anglo-Saxon meanings of violence" a definitional model he terms "superior". Riches focusses his analysis "on the act of violence itself" (Riches1986b: 8) and thus redefines 'violence' as "an act of physical hurt deemed legitimate by the performer and illegitimate by (some) witnesses"[5] (*Ibid.*). In both Riches's *Anthropology of Violence* and the volume you hold in your hands the term 'violence' is forced to do analytical and conceptual work beyond the bounds of its normal employment, and we as anthropologists can only benefit from the new perspectives on an old topic these books have offered. Why, then, do I insist on dragging out the etymological dictionaries?

Riches' insistence on defining violence as 'an act of physical hurt' and on

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[3] 'Violate' is from the past participle of the Latin *uiolāre*, 'to treat with force', formed - again - as if from the adjective *uiolus*, due to *uīs* (*Ibid., 593).*
[4] (Riches1986b: 1-3), see also (Parkin1986: 204-205)
[5] His earlier 'commonsensical' and 'Anglo-Saxon' definition, which focussed on the performer of violence as actor, saw violence as "the intentional rendering of physical hurt on another human being" (*Ibid*: 4).

methodologically focussing on 'the act of violence' shifts the analytical emphasis of an anthropology of violence away from the source of violence (that which is capable of violence because it is 'full of force') and towards the socially-embedded performance of a specific type of violence (that which acts upon a recipient). Schröder and Schmidt, who at least nominally adopt Riches's perspective[6], are compelled by his definition to anchor their investigations on the observable performance of acts of violence against others who are subjected to that violence. While such a focus is indubitably appropriate to a discipline which bases its hypotheses on empiricist observation, the anthropology of violence's tendency to restrict its attention to acts in the course of which one integral entity violates or attempts to violate another's integrity prevents it from attending to other arenas in which violence operates, some of which I will argue are the *fora* in which the agents which threaten violence and are in turn threatened by violence are shaped. I will suggest in the following that violence is a force that not only manifests itself in the destruction of boundaries but as well in their creation, and that 'intransitive violence' (which may operate conceptually prior to manifesting itself in action) serves to create the integrities and identities which are in turn subjected to those forms of violence which seek victims. Violence - rather than being a performance in the course of which one integral entity (person, community, state) violates the integrity of another - may as well serve to generate integral identities by inscribing borders between something in the course of becoming an entity and its surroundings. Attention to etymology draws our attention to the context out of which a particular usage emerges at an historical moment, and in leading us to examine the process of differentiation that produces a particular meaning compels us as well to think of the meanings excluded and the reasons for those exclusions. In this case

the etymology of 'violence' foregrounds aspects of the term's semantic field which are not overtly manifest in the acts we define as violent. To see 'hurting' as an aspect of violence rather than as its core will compel us to ask 'what else does violence do'?

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An examination of Pierre Clastre's anthropology of pre-state societies is provocative, in spite of the criticisms which have been directed at its 'primitivism'[7], because

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[6] On **p.2 (??)** they answer the query 'what, then, is violence?' with "It is the assertion of power or, to paraphrase Riches's important discussionof the subject, an act of physical hurt deemed legitimate by the performer and by (some) witnesses".

[7] See, for an interesting debate on the contribution of Clastres (who died in an automobile crash in 1977) to anthropology, Bartholomew Dean's review of Clastre's *Chronicle of the Guayaki Indians* (1998, originally 1972) in *Anthropology Today* (Dean1999) and Jon Abbink's response in the same journal (Abbink1999). Clastres's *Chronicle* offers further insight into the issues of violence and identity, particularly in chapters five and six

Clastre reveals the deep implication of violence towards other communities in the self-understanding of the Amerindian communities he worked with. In "The Archaeology of Violence" (Clastres1994 [orig. 1977]) #1201] and elsewhere Clastres conceives of 'primitive society'[8] as a face-to-face community inherently antagonistic to any moves towards dissolving its unity and effecting a "division...between those who command and those who obey" (Clastres1994 [orig. 1977]) #1201: 156]:

"At its actual level of existence - the local group - primitive society...is at once a totality and a unity. A totality in that it is a complete, autonomous, whole ensemble, ceaselessly attentive to preserving its autonomy...A unity in that its homogeneous being continues to refuse social division, to exclude inequality, to forbid alienation. Primitive society is a single totality in that the principle of its unity is not exterior to it: it does not allow any configuration of One to detach itself from the social body in order to represent it, in order to embody it as unity" (Clastres1994 [orig. 1977]) #1201: 155].

At the core of the sociality informing 'primitive society' is thus not only an antipathy to any figure of power distinguishing himself or herself from the collectivity through impressing his or her individual will upon the rest but as well a consensus around the necessity to mobilise against any actions which would dissolve that face-to-face society into any larger collectivity:

"Primitive communities maintain a certain distance between each other, both literally and figuratively: between each band or village there are their respective territories, allowing each group to keep its distance.... [T]he hypothesis of friendship of all with all contradicts each community's profound, essential desire to maintain and deploy its being as single totality, that is, its irreducible difference in relation to all other groups, including neighbors, friends, and allies (Clastres1994 [orig. 1977]) #1201: 157].

Clastres argues that primitive societies are inherently antagonistic to any extra-communal logics of generalised exchange (whether logics of friendship, kinship, or economic trade) because such logics call on the members of autonomous communities to identify with others beyond the bounds of that community and, through that identification, initiate a process of unifying "the multiplicity of partial We's into a meta-We...[which would lead to] the elimination of the difference unique to each autonomous community" (*Ibid.*). Clastres's 'primitives' see social concourse beyond the demographic limits of their immediate communities as antagonistic to the 'We' in which they find their identities, and implicitly recognise in this antagonism not only a threat to the intimate sociality which grounds their identity but as well the possibility of the emergence of an autonomous power to rule over them. From this recognition follows a profound social proclivity to warfare against 'the Other':

(Clastres1998 [orig. 1972]) #1382: 193-274].

[8] For Clastres what characterizes primitivity is the refusal of communities to allow power to separate itself from the collectivity and to - from that autonomous position - impose itself on the collectivity by claiming to represent it. Primitivism is, for Clastres, a strong virtue, and it is this valorization which Bartholomew Dean - who wants to see indigenous people mobilize through media and political representation to fight for collective rights - finds objectionable.

"primitive society refuses: identifying with others, losing that which constitutes it as such, losing its very being and its difference, losing the ability to think of itself as an autonomous We....[T]here is, inherent in primitive society, a centrifugal logic of crumbling, of dispersion, of schism such that each community, to consider itself as such (as a single totality), needs the opposite figure of the foreigner or enemy, such that *the possibility of violence is inscribed ahead of time* in the primitive social being; *war is a structure of primitive society and not the accidental failure of an unsuccessful exchange*"   (Clastres1994 [orig. 1977]) #1201: 157 and 158, *emphases mine*].

Violence is not here an act which impinges upon a social context from a space outside of community (either that of deviance or of an Other) or through the workings of contingency, but is a fundamental aspect of that context. The social is structured and maintained by the inherent promise (often realised) of violence at its borders.

Exchange between groups, which stands in the history of anthropology as the matrix out of which the social emerges[9], is in Clastres's analysis predicated upon violence rather than threatened by its subsequent emergence:

"primitive society constantly develops a strategy destined to reduce the need for exchange as much as possible: this is not at all a society for exchange, but rather a society against exchange....[It is only] the state of war between groups [which] makes the search for alliance necessary, which [in turn] provokes the exchange of women"   (Clastres1994 [orig. 1977]) #1201: 161 and 163].

For Clastres such exchange - initially provoked by the need for (tenuous) alliances which the war-producing logic of difference brings about - will, if allowed to run its course, lead in time to the concentration of power in the hands of individuals or cliques who reorient violence so that it no longer serves to maintain the integrity and autonomy of the group but instead works violence *against* the community in furthering the transformation of the community into something other than what it had been. Such individuals or cliques come into being as a consequence of the necessity of coordinating the society's increased complexity which itself devolves from the unification of previously distinct populations, from the institutionalisation of means of effecting exchanges between peoples who are not in daily face-to-face contact, from the articulation of new modes of communication and legitimation for binding communities which do not share the same histories or *habituses,* and from the mobilization of hostile activities against societies bordering on the new social regime. In this instance violence, which had previously served as a force guaranteeing the perpetuation of a community's integrity through the warlike marking of a border between that in-group and others outside of it,   begins its transformation into a bifurcated force for refashioning the character of the in-group and protecting the integrity of that new society it constructs. This violence acts on and for the group in the name of the group from sites of power (those occupied by priests, chiefs and royal families) easily distinguished from the spaces on and against which power

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[9]   see, for instance, "The Principle of Reciprocity", chapter V in Lévi-Strauss' *The*

works.

This development culminates in the emergence of modern state formations wherein some agents of the state appropriate to themselves the power to perform violence against outsiders as well against 'deviant' forces within the society the state controls while others constrain and direct the non-deviant citizenry so that it serves to perpetuate and reproduce the order characteristic of the state[10].   With the emergence of such formations the process of discursively reconfiguring the 'violence' of authority so that it no longer appears as violence *as such* is in large part completed; henceforth 'constructive' violence comes to be seen as pedagogy and conformity while repressive state violence appears as the legitimate expression of the 'will of the people' which is rendered necessary by the state's responsibility to protect the citizenry it represents from the illegitimate violence of the peoples's enemies (external enemies of the state, criminals, revolutionaries, mad persons, etc.)[11]. The 'transgressive' violence of the enemies of the state is seen to threaten the integrity of the state and its citizenry from places beyond the boundaries of the social even when, as is often the case, that violence emerges from within the population ruled over by the state (hence the discursive formulation of the locales of deviance, criminality, and insanity by legislative, academic and medical institutions). As the visible violence of the state is popularly accepted as defensive and as carried out by persons and institutions representing the will of the citizenry, the state is strengthened in its power when 'called upon' to manifest its violence against 'enemies of the state'. Often the threat of the 'other' (national enemies, spies, criminals, ethnic or religious minorities, the insane) will be amplified (if not invented) by organs of the state so that it can expand its power over those it claims to protect.

Few anthropologists would argue that it is our job to overthrow the state, but most would nonetheless argue that it should not be our role to strengthen its power. Nonetheless, the focus on violence as a violative act - as "an act of physical hurt deemed legitimate by the performer and illegitimate by (some) witnesses" - emphasizes the deviance of violence (whether, as in classical sociology, of the criminal, or, as in the popular discourses analysed by Schmidt in this volume, the violence of the cultural other) and thereby masks what the violence of the state and

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Elementary Structures of Kinship (Lévi-Strauss1969 [org. 1949]) #1383: 52-68].
[10]   Althusser, in his seminal"Ideology and ideological state apparatuses" (Althusser1971), distinguishes between RSAs (repressive state apparatuses) and ISAs (ideological state apparatuses), noting that the former - which includes military forces, police forces, judicial apparatuses as well as institutions dealing with mental health - mobilize literal violence against enemies of the state - both within and outside - whereas the latter work to enculturate and perpetuate subjects - obedient citizenry - whose acceptance of the state's discursive organisation of the real serves to naturalize the institutional powers which perpetuate the state's hegemony.
[11]   See, for a stimulating examination of the discursive reformulation of state violence into techniques of constraint and discipline, Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault1977 [orig. 1975]) #1385].

the violence of enemies of the state share in common[12]. While few would object to the assertion that there are substantial differences between state and anti-state violences demonstrable in their means, their motives and their ends, fewer still would recognize that the perpetrators of these violences share, despite those differences, an intention to reshape the worlds of the people those violences touch, whether directly or through processes of memorialisation. One of the several strengths of this volume is its focus on the performative aspects of violence and of narratives of violence, and that emphasis, like that of Eileen Scarry's powerful study of torture (Scarry1985), stresses that violence is 'world-making'. It is important that we focus on the fact that it is not simply violative violence (torture, rape, cannibalism, acts of war and the transgressive like) which makes and unmakes worlds in which humans act or fear to act. 'Defensive' and 'constructive' violences (RSAs and ISAs), which shape a world of rules, rights, and regimes and peoples that world with imagined communities of 'us' and 'others', are deeply invested in the work of playing images of integrity off against the threat of images of violation, and we must attend in our analyses of social formations and deformations to the ways violences - violative and as well as 'defensive' and 'constructive' - shape and reshape our identities[13].

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Dean closes his review of *Chronicle of the Guayaki Indians* by accusing Clastres of "unabashed pristinism" and by stating that Clastres's work is a latter-day manifestation of "anthropology's intellectual legacy of primitivism, which needs to be checked before the discipline can continue to fulfil its mission as a critical voice in the shaping of contemporary local and global affairs" (Dean1999: 11). It is true that Clastres's fascination with what appears to him to be the *zero degree* of state organisation gives his work a neo-Rousseauian flavour which is very much out of fashion in the current day[14]. I am forced, however, to move beyond Clastres's

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[12] Edmund Leach points out in an essay on terrorist violence that both 'anti-state' violence and the violence with which the state 'protects' itself and its people are extra-societal violences which come from beyond the bounds of the communities through which, around which and over which they contend (Leach1977).

[13] The distinction Macek makes in this volume between 'soldiers' and 'civilians' on the one hand and 'deserters' on the other reflects the deserters's experiencing of the state's 'defensive' violence from a position outside of the ideological frame which, for both civilians and soldiers, provides that violence with its legitimacy and marks it as radically other than the violence of the society's enemies.

[14] But see Abbink's defense of Clastres which criticises Dean's investment in "emerging stereotype[s] in 'globalization studies'" (Abbink1999). Certainly Dean's implication in development - which leads him to celebrate the fact that "private and public organizations are now providing critically needed financial support and technical support for the creation and on-going operation of indigenous advocacy organizations" (Dean1999: 10) - sets him firmly in opposition to Clastres who would - rightly or wrongly - see such resourcing as a direct cause of the fatal division of egalitarian communities into 'those who represent' and 'those who are represented'.

material not because, like Dean, I feel it is "romantic...[and] essentializ[ing]" but because Clastres, in showing the Guayaki to be a paradigmatic case of absolutely non-statist organisation, does not show identities being formed but presents them as simply - and perhaps primally - already in place. When Clastres writes that,

"for a Guayaki tribe, relations with Others can only be hostile....There is only one language that can be spoken with them, and that is the language of violence. This stands in surprising contrast to the Atchei's clear and consistent desire to eliminate all violence from relations among companions" (Clastres1998 [orig. 1972]) #1382: 237]

he presents us with a social condition which can only be opposed those of other societies already caught up in developing in the direction of 'proto-statist' and 'statist' formations. We can imagine (and today witness) the Guayaki being violated (rendered impure, defiled) by movements to reify political authority within and over their community, but we cannot conceive of how their idea of community came into being in the first place[15]. If violence against others is a structural principle of community, how could community exist before others were encountered? Yet, how could there be others to encounter if there wasn't already a community existing in terms of which to think otherness? Clastres shows, synchronically as it were, that violence and identity are profoundly interwoven in Amerindian society. His opposition of primitive non-statist societies to proto-statist and state societies enables us to think a genealogy of violence within which two sorts of violence emerge within the space of the social - one normative and defensive, the other deviant and violative. What Clastres's ethnography does not show is identity arising out of violence, and this - rather than simply the intermingling of violence and identity - must be demonstrated if violence is to be seen as a force that is creative as well as destructive.

Simon Harrison, in <u>The Mask of War: Violence, Ritual and the Self in Melanesia,</u> contends that amongst the villages of the Manambu lineages in the middle Sepik region of Papua New Guinea "peaceful sociality within and between communities is [normally] taken for granted" (Harrison1993: 149). However, the intra-sociality (characterised by trade and gift exchanges between communities) which links persons across a wide and potentially unbounded social field is periodically shattered by rituals performed by the men's cults of the region which discursively compel members of the communities within which those cults operate to perceive peaceful exchanges between communities as acts of aggression rather than cooperation. Manambu men's cults 'create' a threatening 'outside' by dividing a terrain which was previously the 'inside' of sociality into two opposed sectors - that of 'us' and that of 'them'. In the Manambu region this division is effected by positively

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[15]   Implicit in Clastres's argument, as in any presentation which argues from 'origins', is the problem of circular reasoning. I would take here the stimulating yet finally philosophically problematic arguments of Durkheim and Mauss about the origins of religion and of primitive classification   (Durkheim1912; Durkheim & Mauss1903) as paradigmatic: how can society represent itself to itself if it only develops the idiom in which representation can occur in the

valorizing certain types of social interaction (those pertaining to kin and ritual relations) and condemning others as collaborations with the enemy (trading relations with neighbours, hospitality towards guests, gift exchanges with members of adjacent communities). Because peaceful sociality within and between communities is normally taken for granted

"the only way that bounded groups can form is through purposive action *against* that sociality. The sociality itself cannot be extinguished, only transformed into a sociality of a different kind. There is no choice whether to have social ties with other communities; they can only have such ties. The only possibilities are that these social ties may be peaceful or violent" (*Ibid.*: 149).

In reinterpreting elements of intra-social interaction manifesting cooperation between communities as signs of violence committed against the in-group by its enemies the members of these cults - who are in effect 'warriors in waiting' - are able to dominate the communities through creating a shared perception of the necessity for mobilising for war. The men "transform a conception of themselves as simply a co-resident collectivity of kin and neighbours interacting in various ways with each other and with outsiders into a conception of a specifically political entity independent of others" (*Ibid*: 150). Identities are thus not only formed for the men, but new modalities of identity are generated for all the members of the community (as well as for those in the communities warred against). War thus produces particular crystallisations of sociality out of what had previously been larger networks of interaction. The men's cults, by propagating violence, produce new realities:

"The Melanesian men's cults were not simply cultural responses to a violent world, but attempts, specifically by men, to prescribe such a world whether or not it actually existed at the level of behaviour. The cults were not simply functional adaptations to war but were male organisations for 'producing' war and for producing the bounded groups to wage it" (*Ibid*: 149).

In some ways of course the situation described by Harrison in Melanesia could be seen as a transformation of (or development out of) that presented by Clastres for Paraguay; the Manambu of Avatip village may well be acting as would the Guayaki were the latter, lured by trade and exchange into peaceful relations with their neighbours, to have subsequently rebounded from that sociality and returned to their autonomous groupings. Certainly Harrison says of the Manambu that "[t]hey fought and fostered war in their cult, not because they lacked normative ties beyond the village but, quite the opposite, *precisely because they had such ties* and could only define themselves as a polity by acting collectively to overcome and transcend them" (*Ibid*: 150)[16]. Certainly it is the case that the boundaries inscribed by the activities of the Avatip men's cults activate territorial divisions which pre-existed the initiation of antagonistic relations. While peacetime Manambu sociality draws together spatially

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course of representing?

[16]   Against the egalitarian tenor of Clastres's analysis is Harrison's point that when the Manambu communities are at war the men are empowered - as warriors and ritual leaders - over other members of the community.

distinct communities by establishing trade and gift exchange relations between them there nonetheless remains a discrete 'inside' which engages the 'outside' on friendly terms; Harrison describes his generalised sociality as a "sociality between groups" (*Ibid*: 23). In a situation of inter- communal warfare these groups render themselves once more distinct by changing the sorts of 'goods' which pass through the territorial boundaries between them from goods which assert mutual dependency (trade objects, gifts, guests) to those which assert antagonism (bellicose rhetorics, raiders, cut off heads). In this systolic and diastolic movement between open and restrained sociality one finds resonances with the structural oscillation Leach described between *gumsa* and *gumlao* modes of social organisation among the Kachin people of Highland Burma (Leach1954).

It is not, however, the structural constraints and limited social play of tribal communities which I want to evoke in my final example of the creative powers of violence. It seems, throughout the previously discussed examples, as though a dynamic force has mobilized the various social formations we have observed. In both the Guayaki and Manambu instances violence against others is consequent on perceptions by the war-making communities of a profound threat offered to their being by the presence of the others. The Guayaki are presented by Clastres as living with a perpetual awareness that sustained interactions with others will mortally wound the way of living that the members of the isolate community share, and this sense of the threat of sociality with the other leads, in the shorter rather than longer term, even to the violent termination of alliances with groups with whom they have banded together to war against others. Similarly the men of the Manambu mens's cults are literally divided from the forces which maintain them and their communities during times of peace. In situations of war, on the contrary, they reunite with the spirits from whom they were separated in mythical times:

"when men went on a raid all these beings were believed to go into battle with the men and fight invisibly alongside them....[I]t was not just the men who went to war but the very resources for which they fought - their entire ritual system, their rivers, lakes and their total means of livelihood - took up arms and went with them" (Harrison1993).

Like Bertrans de Born in Ezra Pound's "Sestina: Altaforte", the men of the Avatip men's cult Harrison worked with were only men when they were at war:

"I have no life save when the swords clash....

Then howl I my heart nigh mad with rejoicing....

Hell grant soon we hear again the swords clash!

Hell blot black for alway the thought 'Peace'!

(Pound1971 [orig. 1926]) #1386]

In each of these cases it can be argued that the 'threat' perceived as devolving from the situations the people war to escape is 'unreal' or 'illusory', but in terms of that powerful collocation of tradition, mythology, rumour and shared practice which makes up a lived world these beliefs are as real as the worlds they people inhabit. They are, in other words, 'to die (or kill) for'.

The 'threat' which these people perceive as threatening to strike at the very core of their being is what I would, following Laclau and Mouffe, term an 'antagonism'. A confrontation with an antagonism is not a competition since, in a competition, both the winner and the loser emerge from their struggle as the subjects who entered into it; the only difference is that one will have acquired an advantage or object for his or her self which the other will have failed to grasp. An antagonism is different since in the case of an antagonism the subject is himself or herself put at risk by the confrontation; "the presence of the 'Other' prevents me from being totally myself" (Laclau & Mouffe1985: 125). In some instances - such as that cited by Laclau and Mouffe of a peasant who can no longer be a peasant because of the landlord who is evicting him from the land he works - the relationship is quite material. In others - and I think here of Brian Moeran's study of violent popular films in Japan wherein the fictional gesture of extreme and transgressive violence is an inscription that enables both audience and author to fantasize overcoming the antagonism of a mortality that will erase them and their mundane acts (Moeran1986) - the perception of antagonism and the response to it may seem deeply subjective and even poetic. An antagonism is, furthermore, not something as easily evaluated as 'a matter of life or death'; many persons would feel that to carry themselves badly in battle and to survive it marked (even if only by themselves) as cowardly would be far more antagonistic to their selves than to die well in battle. An antagonism is perceived as a threat to the subjectivity of the person threatened, and for that reason its perception will depend strongly not only on cultural determinants but as well, and to varying degrees, on particular life histories. What antagonisms hold in common is that they put the self at risk, and that they are perceived as needing to be overcome if the subject is to endure. The Guayaki instance - where the dissolution of the face-to-face community into wider social networks threatens the world which enables the members of the group to be who they are - like that of the Manambu men - where the persistence of peace is antagonistic to identities which can only be sustained in situations of war - demonstrate the way perceptions of antagonism work in relatively uncomplex societies to stabilize identities and to create and sustain social groupings.

I would like in closing briefly to refer to a contemporary situation which I have studied, both through fieldwork as well as through books and newspapers, over the past ten years. Unlike the previously discussed examples, this situation involves a modernized complex society with a long experience of statehood. I would like to examine the period leading up to the past decade of warfare in the late Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia,   which we now refer to as 'Former Yugoslavia'. I

do not intend to delve deeply into the history of the region or into ethnographic studies of it; the story of 'the death of Yugoslavia' is familiar to most readers, and I list below some of the ethnographic and historical work on the region which I have found useful (or have written)[17]. Yugoslavia's peoples have been radically transformed over the past fifty years as varying experiences of antagonisms - individual and collective - have led to the constitution of numerous groupings and regroupings. There have been numerous advocates - with various agendas - testifying to the enduring and fixed identities of the people who make up Yugoslavia's national groupings[18], but the evidence suggests instead that identities have - in the course of encounters with circumstances interpreted as personal and/or as collective antagonisms - been reformulated and subsequently fixed into forms which differ radically from those which have preceded them. Here we do not see the oscillation that was implicit in Harrison's work and, perhaps, latent but unobserved in the tribal societies examined by Clastres. We see instead radical disruptions of previous modes of life, the articulation of strategies of opposition to perceived antagonisms which, in the course of being worked through amidst the contingency of events, result in the recognition of new solidarities which create new subject positions to defend. Violence, here, engenders identity.

Yugoslavia was a state born out of war, and the federation which emerged from the Second World War, under the leadership of Marshall Tito, was shaped by the region's experience of the war. "During the Second World War the conquerors not only destroyed the state, but they set its components against each other in an unprecedented way, for never before had there been physical conflict among the Yugoslav peoples as such" (Pavlowitch1988: 14). Over one million of a pre-war population of seventeen million were killed, and Paul Garde estimates that eighty percent of the deaths were inflicted on Yugoslavs by Yugoslavs (Garde1992). As a consequence of Tito's and the partisans's recognition that the state was vulnerable to external attempts to subvert and destroy it, especially through mobilizing nationalist insurrection as the Germans and Italians had during the war, the state propagated a powerful ideology of *bratstvo i jedinstvo* ('brotherhood and unity') which promoted economic and political equality between the national elements making up the federation and which repressed, with all the necessary state violence, the emergence of any nationalist tendencies within the national groupings, tendencies which the government (and many of the people) saw as antagonistic to the survival of Yugoslavia. Through the development of a powerful state apparatus, focussed on the Yugoslav National Army, and the careful playing off through the following twenty

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[17] See particularly (Pavlowitch1988), (Allcock1992), (Feldman *et al.*1993), (Bowman1994), (Bringa1995), (Silber & Little1995), (Kirin & Povrzanovic1996) (Godina1998), (Bowmanforthcoming).
[18] The myth of the eternal enmity between the peoples of the Balkans has a long history (see (Glenny1999) for a critical assessment of its usage by the Great Powers) but fell out of use between the latter part of the Second World War when the British threw their support behind Tito and approximately 1993 when most of the NATO countries decided that Yugoslavia should be divided along ethnic lines.

five years of its non-aligned status as a means of garnering economic support from both Soviet and capitalist states, Tito and the Communist Party were able to maintain authority, provide a decent standard of living for most of the population (supported by massive loans from the IMF and elsewhere as well as by strong dependence on the export of Yugoslav *gasterbeiters* to Western European nations), and suppress and occasionally violently crush any emergence of nationalist mobilization.

In the 1980s, however, the whole carefully constructed edifice began to crumble. The Arab Oil Embargo of the seventies had seriously damaged the Western economies, and many of the loans which had so profligately been granted to Yugoslavia to lure it towards the capitalist road began to be called in.   Simultaneously Yugoslavia's ability to export both its labour and its goods was impaired. By 1984 Tito was dead and the economy was in tatters with an unemployment level of   fifteen percent, inflation at sixty two percent, and a drop in the average standard of living of thirty percent from its 1980 level (Mencinger1991: 76-79). A general disgruntlement began to set in throughout the country as state policies began to be seen not to defend the people and their standard of living but to be attacking them; in the early eighties a wide range of assertions - expressed in idioms ranging the economic and political to those of art and culture (Mastnak1991) - began to articulate perceptions of the antagonism of *the state* to *its people* .

These expressions did not, however, fall 'naturally' into a nationalist idiom. Tito's anti-nationalist policies and the modernization processes which had accompanied them had to a large extent submerged the idiom of national identity beneath a flood of contending discourses on selfhood. Rural migration to the cities and to areas 'outside' Yugoslavia where money could be earned had eroded much of the pre-communist rural isolation. In the cities a trans-Yugoslav cosmopolitanism had developed around work, education and cross-marriage. The violence of the state was thus not initially perceived as inflicted upon one's national being but appeared to attack people's abilities to earn and save money, play or listen to rock music, call for greater representation in political forums, and so on. All Yugoslavians were afflicted by the declining standard of living and the clumsy moves of the state to enforce cultural and economic homogeneity during this period and within the republics the state's antagonism to personal fulfillment struck at all residents, regardless of whether or not they were of the ethnic majority.

The discursive shift to nationalist discourse occurred through the intervention of republican politicians who created 'national' platforms from whence they could launch bids to increase their holds on power in a Yugoslav state characterised, after the death of Tito, by a vacuum at the political centre. To gain power they had to consolidate their holds on the dispersed dissatisfactions which had grown exponentially after the breakdown of Titoist hegemony (Ramet1985), and many did so by inventing ethnically-defined constituencies to represent. The general strategy followed throughout the regions was to convince the people that the reason they

could no longer live they way they believed they had a right to in Yugoslavia was because the communist state - aligned with other national groupings which benefited from depriving them of their rightful national heritage - was expressing towards them the antagonism with which it had treated other members of their national constituencies over the past forty five years. People whose individual encounters with a collapsing economy and an increasingly paranoically repressive state convinced them that the state had produced a situation which was antagonistic to them as individuals were faced, as regional elections mobilized the federation in the late eighties, with nationalist politicians (many of whom had been previous members of the communist bureaucracies) who told them that their sufferings as individuals who happened to be Slovenes, Serbs, Croats or whatever were in fact symptomatic of the sufferings that all of the respective national group's population - dead or alive - had had inflicted upon it over the past decades by an antagonistic state and/or antagonistic neighbouring national groups. Nationalist campaign rhetorics were grounded not on calls for reforms and changes in the Yugoslav constitution but on platforms which argued that the state was dedicated to the destruction of the nation and, for that reason, had itself to be destroyed. I was, for instance, in Ljubljana during the campaigns for the Slovene election and was struck by the sight of anti-state campaign stations bedecked with pictures of caves (*foibe*) filled with the bones of persons killed during the massacres which had taken place at the close of the Second World War. Although the persons the partisans and others had killed came from various national groupings and political movements, the captions on the photographs said simply "This is what *They* did to *Us*". The assertion was direct - 'the communists killed Slovenes *en masse* as they came to power' - and the implication needed no further elaboration - 'and subsequent policies from the communist state towards the Slovenes has been a continuation of national genocide by other means'. This rhetoric called on people *as Slovenes* to recognise that communist violence towards Slovenes in the past was *qualitatively the same as* the state's violence towards them in the present.   Individuals encountered antagonisms which threatened them with the impossibility of being what they had previously been as individuals, and were subsequently taught first of all that much worse was to come and secondly that they now were sharing the experience of the state's antagonism with a nation of others. The explosion of nationalist rhetoric which accompanied the opening year of the war (which encompassed a massive production of revisionist, nationalist histories), along with prolific evidence of attempts by respective groups to wipe out others, provided people who responded to being addressed in national terms with evidence of the previously concealed violence which had afflicted 'their people's' pasts as well as irrefutable proofs of the need to kill others in order that they, and the nation with which they were now conjoined, would endure.

In Yugoslavia people whose experience of relative deprivation in relation to a more affluent and liberal past were easily convinced that violence had been performed against them by some agent who had 'stolen their pleasure'. Clever political

manipulation, and the possibility of presenting an earlier period's 'defensive violence' (the repression of nationalism) as an example of a "nation theft" (Zizek1990) which was in fact a 'theft of being', enabled various political cliques to come to power on the back of a popular will to destroy the antagonism which they experienced. Out of that rage, and the will to destroy the other before it destroyed 'us', were forged strong collective identities which in time - and after extreme genocidal violence against previous neighbours - gave rise to a multitude of new nations. It is, I believe, important to acknowledge that these new nations, even when they took old names, were not resurgent identity formations brought back into being by the collapse of communism but new inventions of community - far less tolerant of alterity than had been previous ones - which had been imagined and then carved out of multi-ethnic communities in response to fantasies of the violence the others would carry out on 'us' if we did not first destroy them through preemptive violence.

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I began this afterword by suggesting that violence was a force for creating integrities as well as one that simply violated, polluted and destroyed already existing entities. In the course of developing that idea I have shown that identity politics forms borders which enclose an 'I' or a 'we' and exclude - oftimes violently - others. Through examining Pierre Clastres's material on Amerindians's war-based wills to autonomy and then Simon Harrison's men's cults which crystallize identities by attacking sociality I came to suggest that communities, like individuals, draw borders not so much to assert presence but to exclude the influence of that which is perceived as threatening to the persistence of that presence. I then suggested that an entity's perception of what Laclau and Mouffe call an 'antagonism' - a presence which is believed radically to threaten the persistence of that quiddity which marks the being of an entity - may precisely provide the spur that drives an entity to mark out the boundaries of its identity and to 'defend' them with violence - a violence often manifested aggressively (pre-emptively). It is important to stress that a perception of antagonism is sufficient to impel individuals and communities to boundary marking, maintenance and defense. Identity may be far more inchoate than is the sense of threat to its persistence that an antagonism provides. Attributions of antagonisms need not be groundable, and it is often the case that an enemy is sited and a programme of 'defensive' violence inaugurated without any 'real' justification. The instance of the bloody dissolution of Yugoslavia was cited as a situation in which the state - and later ethnic groups seen as antagonistically allied with the state against the interests of   national communities - served as the *foci* around which nationalist politicians invented constituencies by mobilizing generalized dissatisfactions and both directing them towards and attributing them to the antagonism of the other. In designating an other against which destructive violence must be mobilized, an entity

realizes - through the negation of that it would negate - what it is it fights to defend.

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