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## On Crafting a Cultural Mind: A Comparative Assessment of Some Recent Theories of 'Internalization' in Psychological Anthropology

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**Abstract** This article reviews a number of recent publications in psychological anthropology that draw in varying degrees from psychoanalytic premises in order to theoretically address problems concerning the internalization of cultural meaning. The article begins with a discussion and critical comparison of Spiro's and Obeyesekere's perspectives on internalization that are in line with a number of classical formulations in anthropological and psychoanalytic theory, before turning to explore what appears to be an emerging new wave of perspectives in contemporary psychological anthropology that set out to discuss problems of internalization in the context of a complex modeling of psychological, social, and cultural processes. The article concludes with a brief discussion of where researchers may need to turn to further our understanding of 'internalization' in relation to those intrapsychic, interpsychic, and extrapsychic processes underpinning the crafting of cultural minds.

**Key words** consciousness • culture theory • empathy • internalization • psychocultural anthropology • subjectivity

### Introduction

If there is one topic of inquiry that can be said to distinguish psychological anthropology from other variants of anthropological theorizing and

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research it is arguably the problem of 'internalization' (D'Andrade & Strauss, 1992; Strauss & Quinn, 1997). Whereas researchers working in other fields of anthropology have often failed to problematize how it is that cultural knowledge is reproduced, given meaning and motivational force in the context of individual minds and bodies, psychological anthropologists have long been interested in exploring the psychological, somatic, and cultural processes underpinning the acquisition, replication, and internalization of cultural forms. Psychoanalytically inspired anthropologists in particular have played a significant role in highlighting the importance of emotion, motivation, and early childhood experience in the cultural patterning of subjective experience and social action.<sup>1</sup> Although there is a long tradition of psychoanalytically informed theorizing in anthropology, recently there has been a veritable efflorescence of theoretical perspectives drawing from psychoanalytic theory in attempts to better understand those processes subserving the internalization of cultural meaning.

In this article, I critically review five such recent theories in the psychoanalytically inspired work of Melford Spiro (1997), Gananath Obeyesekere (1981, 1990), Jean Briggs (1998), Nancy Chodorow (1999), and Douglas Hollan (2000). The article begins with a discussion and critical comparison of Spiro's and Obeyesekere's perspectives on internalization; two perspectives that can be considered in line with a number of classical formulations in anthropological and psychoanalytic theory. Next, I turn to explore what appears to be an emerging wave of perspectives in contemporary psychological anthropology that set out to discuss problems of internalization in the context of an increasingly complex modeling of psychological, social, and cultural processes (Briggs, 1998; Chodorow, 1999; Hollan, 2000). Having reviewed the work of these thinkers, I then conclude the article with a brief discussion of where researchers may need to turn to further our understanding of 'internalization' in relation to those intrapsychic, interpsychic, and extrapsychic processes underpinning the crafting of cultural minds.

## **Psychological Preadaptation, Personal Symbols, and the Internalization of Culture**

### *From Cliche to Commitment*

Long a champion of the significance of Freud's classic psychoanalytic formulations for anthropological theory and research (cf. Spiro, 1965, 1979, 1982), and importantly, one of the first anthropologists to rigorously examine the problem of 'internalization' theoretically (see Spiro, 1987/1994), Melford Spiro has set out in a recent book, *Gender Ideology and Psychological Reality* (1997), to establish a theory of cultural reproduction

and internalization that takes into account both 'pre-cultural'<sup>2</sup> (i.e. biological, social) experience and psychodynamic processes.

In this book, Spiro argues that, whereas most culture theorists have discussed cultural reproduction through the lens of *cultural acquisition*, few have examined what he holds to be the more important, and complex, question of *cultural internalization*. Where the former process refers to the ability to learn cultural knowledge, the latter process refers to an individual's ability to become personally (cognitively, emotionally, and motivationally) invested in that knowledge. Spiro points out that what is missing from most accounts of cultural reproduction is the acknowledgment that individuals will differentially internalize cultural resources such that some cultural beliefs may be held to be little more than inconsequential 'clichés,' whereas other beliefs are so deeply internalized that they are integrally connected to an actor's sense of self, morality, and world view (see also Spiro, 1987/1994).

Central to Spiro's model is the idea that the process of internalization does not act upon a *tabula rasa* mind. Accordingly, Spiro maintains that a major shortcoming of other models of cultural reproduction can be found in their failure to recognize that individual actors are not merely passive, pliable receptacles that are later filled and shaped by cultural resources. In contrast, Spiro argues that individuals are active participants in their enculturation.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, he believes that pre-given<sup>4</sup> biological and experiential residues<sup>5</sup> serve to further direct processes of acquiring and internalizing cultural knowledge systems by establishing a number of proclivities, dispositions, motivations, and susceptibilities for specific kinds of knowledge. Here the biological and experiential structuring of 'pre-cultural' beliefs and desires serves to selectively filter the acquisition and internalization of later forms of knowledge. Spiro calls this pre-cultural structuring of psychical predispositions the theory of 'psychological preadaptation.' It is for Spiro the psychological preadaptation of the individual that determines the extent to which the internalization of cultural ideas, beliefs, values, norms, and rules is facilitated or impeded (1997, p. 72).<sup>6</sup>

Spiro contends that theories of cultural reproduction that do not address the problem of internalization in the context of psychological preadaptation are at a significant disadvantage in explaining why it is that empirically false and anxiety-provoking cultural propositions are often still internalized by cultural participants.<sup>7</sup> For example, Spiro interprets the 'Ideology of the Superior Male' and the 'Ideology of the Dangerous Female' in Burma as cultural resources that may be utilized by social actors in the construction of 'culturally constituted defense mechanisms.' As he notes, although these two ideologies are empirically false and anxiety-provoking, they are still readily internalized by Burmese men. According

to Spiro, these ideologies are perpetuated in Burma – and other cultures – because they are ultimately beneficial to both the individuals who internalize them and to the culture that constitutes them. For individuals, by internalizing these belief systems they are able to partially fulfill what would otherwise be frustrated unconscious wishes and desires. For the culture, these same mechanisms serve to facilitate the reproduction of cultural forms by recruiting intrapsychic conflict in the service of internalizing cultural propositions; in the process motivating the enactment of socially sanctioned roles.

### *Personalizing Culture*

Another recent psychoanalytically inspired theory of ‘internalization’ is found in the work of one of Spiro’s most famous students, Gananath Obeyesekere. Obeyesekere’s attempt to outline a theory of internalization that bridges a Weberian view of culture with a Freudian theory of mind is found in the context of two influential books; *Medusa’s Hair* (1981) and *The Work of Culture* (1990). In these works, Obeyesekere is careful to explore *both* the fixity *and* fluidity of cultural representations and practices in terms of the mind’s structured capacities to acquire, transmit, and transform cultural knowledge. Unlike Spiro, who gives little attention to the relation of mental processes to the creation and transformation of cultural forms, Obeyesekere sets out to demonstrate the often dynamic relationship between intrapsychic processes and the generation, internalization, perpetuation, and/or transformation of culture through his discussion of the *subjectification* and *objectification* of cultural forms.<sup>8</sup> In other words, in contrast to a view in which the internalization of cultural forms is based upon the assumption that cultural artifacts somehow simply ‘mirror’ pre-given psychological structures, dispositions and/or propensities – a model that does not leave much room for an account of creativity and change in processes of cultural reproduction – Obeyesekere believes that it is possible to account for the creation and transformation of cultural forms in the context of internalization and the articulation of cultural symbols with personal experience.

In line with Spiro, Obeyesekere does argue that it is important for anthropologists to recognize that public symbols are often tied to unconscious motivation and that conversely, private symbols are often patterned by cultural dictates. In other words, Obeyesekere believes that where subjective experience is often articulated through the internalized medium of cultural symbols, cultural symbols are only ever imbued with significance once they are internalized and integrated into the context of an individual’s emotional and motivational concerns. Indeed, one of Obeyesekere’s most important theoretical contributions to anthropology is

found precisely in his concept of 'personal symbols,' which he defines as 'cultural symbols whose primary significance and meaning lie in the personal life and experience of individuals' (1981, p. 44).<sup>9</sup>

In contrast to Spiro, who seems to allow for intracultural variation primarily at the level of the emotional and motivational investment of individual actors in shared cultural propositions, Obeyesekere does not view culture to be a closed ideational system. Instead, in his estimation, there is always room for the possibility that new cultural symbols may be forged out of the crucible of personal experience. This process of transforming 'unconscious motives into cultural symbols that have significance to the individual in respect of both person and culture at the same time,' Obeyesekere terms the 'work of culture' (1990, p. 282).

Again sounding reminiscent of Spiro, Obeyesekere further argues that consciousness is shaped by cultural contents that can enable the individual to express intrapsychic conflict in the form of culturally salient images. In this respect, however, Obeyesekere holds that painful personal experiences are able to be sublimated through the internalization of cultural forms that serve to effectively mediate the 'transformation of symptom into symbol' (1981, p. 35). What would otherwise be construed as pathological psychic/somatic symptoms, personal fantasies or delusions are thus able to be validated and given intelligibility through culturally accepted interpretive frames (1990, pp. 66–67).

### *Articulating the Nexus of Individual and Cultural Representations in Spiro and Obeyesekere*

It is in this discussion of culture and psychopathology that we are confronted with one of the major differences between Spiro's and Obeyesekere's theories of internalization. For while early in his career Spiro (1965) seems to have been sensitive to the idea that the concept of 'reality testing' is dependent upon the culturally mediated behavioral environment within which that 'reality' is first constituted (see Hallowell, 1955) – a position that Obeyesekere advocates for his Sinhalese ascetics – in his later work, Spiro criticizes Obeyesekere's attempt to argue that the internalization of cultural belief systems serves to transform 'symptom into symbol' (1997, pp. 118–135).<sup>10</sup> For Spiro, Obeyesekere's ascetics evidence psychopathology as they 'confuse' their representations of objects or events in internal reality (i.e. the mind) with external reality, and are thus seemingly unable to distinguish between cultural belief and direct experience.

Spiro makes clear that although most members of Sinhala culture are able to internalize the tenets of the Buddhist belief system, it is only the rare individual that translates these beliefs into an experiential reality. It is Spiro's view that, because Obeyesekere's ascetics claim direct experiential

access to the deities and demons that help to give cultural significance to their personal suffering, they have thus conflated culturally mediated mental images with external reality itself. As I understand Spiro, it is only as long as cultural ideas and propositions remain beliefs – that is strictly symbolic representations that are not confused with everyday direct perceptual/sensory experience of the ‘external’ social and/or physical world – that we can properly speak of the experiences of Obeyesekere’s ascetics in non-pathological terms. As soon as there is any evidence for the translation of cultural beliefs into personal experience, however, we are, according to Spiro, presented with evidence of psychopathology in the form of impaired reality testing (1997, p. 130).<sup>11</sup>

In this light, it becomes apparent that Spiro’s theory of internalization is one that is largely predicated upon describing the emotional and motivational salience of cultural images, ideas, and propositions. For Spiro, cultural propositions and beliefs are just that, propositions and beliefs. Although they may be imbued to a greater or lesser extent with personal significance, these propositions and beliefs, if non-pathological, are never mistaken by individual culture bearers for the reality that they purport to represent. In contrast to this view, Obeyesekere sees internalization as a process whereby personal experience is organized in the context of cultural images to an extent where cultural templates may actually help to shape the individual’s experience of ‘reality.’ Because the cultural system itself is held to serve as the intersubjective ground for assessing what constitutes reality, it is only in reference to this system that the psychological health and well-being of an individual is able to be assessed. In other words, whereas internalization for Spiro is tied primarily to the differential binding of emotion to cultural propositions, for Obeyesekere internalization is also connected to the effects of cultural propositions on cognitive and perceptual systems.

Ultimately, although there is much to appreciate in Spiro’s thinking, his distinction between ‘mind’ and ‘external reality’ – which allows him to argue that the experiences of Obeyesekere’s Sinhalese ascetics are nothing other than pathological hallucinatory experiences in which mental representations are mistaken for the ‘external objects’ they are meant to represent – is somewhat problematic (see Spiro, 1997, p. 128). For instance, if we briefly turn to examine the phenomena of ‘causation,’ we find that it is quite difficult to parse what part of the perception of causation is imposed by the observer’s mind and what part is contributed by the objects interacting in an individual’s perceptual field.<sup>12</sup> Do we situate the perception of causation as a function of the mind (that which entertains representations) or external reality (where the objects in question are thought to causally interact)? While Spiro might certainly agree that the perception of causation is integral to developing an accurate, and thus ‘non-pathological,’ rendering

of reality, the ambiguity of the role of mental and external factors in the perception of causation makes any *simple* distinction between mind and external reality, ultimately untenable. Indeed, as Hallowell (1955) noted long ago, how individuals go about distinguishing between events that happen 'in the mind' and events that take place 'in the world' is at least *partially* a residue of their cultural conditioning.

Moreover, the very distinction between symbol and referent that Spiro relies upon in his assessment of psychopathology in Obeyesekere's ascetics does not align with some Hindu and Buddhist epistemologies, in which such distinctions are not always strictly made. Much as Hallowell (1955) has noted with regard to Ojibwa beliefs concerning the seamless relationship between natural and supernatural realms of existence, the distinction between a symbol and its referent should not be assumed a priori to be a salient distinction in all cultures, at all times, in every context. Similarly, the distinction between 'belief' and 'experience' that Spiro draws upon in his critique is rendered somewhat problematic once we turn to look more carefully at the extent to which the concept of 'belief' can be translated into other cultural idioms. As Rodney Needham's work in *Belief, Language and Experience* (1972) suggests, the concept of 'belief' understood to refer to an inner mental state that is strictly distinct from 'direct experience' is arguably absent from the conceptual and linguistic systems of many of the world's cultures (cf. Good, 1994).

It is important to emphasize that in drawing from Hallowell's and Needham's work this does not thus imply that we should thereby discount the referential function of symbols, that we should ignore the fact that there is an obdurate external reality that confronts our subjectivity, or that we should give up on the psychic unity of humankind. On the contrary, each of these propositions has obvious merits and there is much to value in Spiro's thinking precisely because he reminds us of the significance of these ideas. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge the fact that, although it may be true that there are 'beliefs' in both spirit possession and the ability to directly interact with deities in many cultures around the world, the majority of individuals in the cultures that naturalize these 'beliefs' do not thereby necessarily conflate everyday waking consciousness with the experiences generated in these contexts. In fact, in many cultures these particular varieties of experience are held to be *extra-ordinary*, and as such are often explicitly recognized as quite distinct from experiences had in everyday waking consciousness.

That said, I believe that Spiro is mistaken in setting out to pathologize those states of consciousness wherein these particular varieties of culturally grounded assumptions are translated into an experiential reality. Owing to the fact that there is an intersubjectively established naturalization of the 'non-pathological' nature of these states in many cultures,



Obeyesekere is certainly correct in his assertion that it is problematic to characterize such states as *necessarily* pathological without first giving careful attention to the cultural and interpersonal contexts within which such experiences occur.

Of course, this does not mean that Spiro is incorrect in attempting to establish some parameters by which we might begin to define transcultural dimensions of psychopathology, or that there are not instances in which the varieties of experience discussed in Obeyesekere's work might be construed to be pathological in the cultures in which they occur.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, Spiro should be commended for reminding us of the many problems inherent in pursuing an unthinking relativistic stance when investigating psychopathology cross-culturally (see Spiro, 2001).

In my opinion, the main shortcoming of Spiro's perspective, however, lies not in claiming that there are transculturally recognizable dimensions to psychopathology, but rather, that we can speak of something like 'failed reality testing' without first carefully examining how 'reality' is construed within a given cultural system. Indeed, in cultures in which there are long-standing traditions of meditation and ritual that *intentionally* and *systematically* seek to evoke alterations in states of consciousness that often blur the boundaries between inner and outer reality, it seems that turning back to examine the extent to which such varieties of experience evidence 'pathological sequelae' is perhaps a better means by which to judge their pathological or non-pathological nature (Spiro, 2001, p. 223).

In this regard, it seems that it is indeed time for anthropologists and psychiatrists to develop a theoretical middle ground wherein it is possible to link the internalization of cultural propositions to those psychological dispositions that function, not only to invest particular 'beliefs' with emotional and motivational saliency, but that may also serve to help translate those 'beliefs' into a potentially *non-pathological* experiential reality.<sup>14</sup>

## **The Complexity of Mind, Meaning, and Experience in the Context of Culture**

### *A Microanalytical Approach to Internalizing Cultural Meaning*

Turning away from the more classically grounded work of Spiro and Obeyesekere, an important contribution to theories of internalization in recent psychological anthropology is found in Jean Briggs' book *Inuit Morality Play* (1998). In this work, Briggs sets out to ground the 'internalization' of cultural meaning in the context of the 'rich detail of individual lives.' In her estimation, it is in attending to the detailed complexity of an individual's personal processes of creating meaning and engaging with his or her social surround that researchers are given an important window

upon the interdependence of cultural and individual spheres of experience and action. Much like Spiro and Obeyesekere, Briggs does argue that it is never simply the case that culture is received passively by individual culture bearers as individuals are always actively selecting and interpreting cultural forms. Accordingly, she feels that an adequate theory of 'internalization' cannot be predicated upon a generalized understanding of 'the' individual and culture, for it is never an abstract, generalized individual that creates meaning and acquires culture, but only particular individuals – with particular life-histories and particular temperaments – who do so (1998, p. 2).

In contrast to many other theorists who discuss the problem of 'internalization' in anthropology, Briggs is one of the few thinkers to ground her study in the direct observation of a child actually immersed in the process of socialization. This is important because the theorists reviewed to date have either largely ignored the concrete mechanics of socialization all together (Spiro), or have focused their attention upon the retrospective stance of adult recollections of early childhood experience (Obeyesekere). Whereas in the former case we have no account of *how* it is that individuals actually go about acquiring cultural meaning, in the latter case we are confronted with individuals who have already accumulated a lifetime of experiential residues guiding their perceptions, interpretations, and interactions with the world, which necessarily bias any account of those processes underpinning the early acquisition of cultural forms.

In this regard, it is significant that Briggs grounds her discussion of internalization within a broader examination of the multiple personal and interpersonal mechanisms utilized in Inuit society to facilitate the acquisition of cultural meaning. For example, she points out that questions addressed to a child who is behaving in an inappropriate manner – questions such as 'because you are a baby?' – serve to make a child increasingly self-conscious of his or her own actions in relation to the social surround, as well as helping to bring the child's attention to the ways in which these same actions serve to define socially sanctioned roles. Moreover, Briggs is able to make clear how it is that emotional experiences are shaped in the context of caregiver–child interactions. Here she focuses specifically upon 'dramas' in which 'lessons about attachment' are recurrently played out. Briggs argues that it is through these dramas that the child first begins to become aware of the ambiguities inherent in much of their emotional life while also later learning to gain control over their emotional reactions and their subjective states. To this end, by focusing upon the moral upbringing of one Inuit child, Briggs is able to detail many of the microstructural mechanisms underpinning the personal, interpersonal and cultural education of visceral reactions, external perceptions, sensory impressions and bodily expressions.

One of the central contributions of Briggs' work is found in her focus upon the ever-shifting, ever-changing character of meaning ascribed to any one interaction. As she argues, we cannot assume that the same event, percept or interaction will take on a similar meaning for different individuals, for a single individual on multiple occurrences across his or her life-trajectory, or even in the mind of an individual at differing moments in the course of a single afternoon. Now, while Briggs has certainly done a great service in reminding researchers of the multivocality of meaning both across and within individual minds she has perhaps overstated her case. Indeed, as Spiro importantly highlights, it is often possible to discern perduring experiential residues that recurrently guide an individual's perception, feeling and action. Individual consciousness does not merely consist of random and/or purely situationally dependent fluctuations of impressions, images, thoughts, desires and/or goals, because the present moment of immediate duration is always infused with the lingering traces of past experience which help to pattern the contours of our conscious (and non-conscious) life (see Schutz, 1932/1967; Schutz & Luckmann, 1973). There is a persistence and coherence to these residues of past experience that, although not necessarily shared between individuals, does often persist across time and across situations in the organization of a single individual's thought patterns, feelings, goals and motivations in everyday interaction. Of course, this is not to say that Briggs is mistaken in pointing out the flexibility of the meaning structures that any one individual may impose upon a particular percept, event or interaction, but only to make clear that this more dynamic view of meaning attribution presented by Briggs is also operative within certain mnemonic, epistemic, and practical constraints that have been distilled from both the multitude of experiences undergone by an individual throughout his or her lifespan and the neurophysiological structure of that individual's nervous system (Laughlin & Throop, 1999).

I believe that Briggs' most important contribution to the discussion of the problem of 'internalization' in anthropology, however, can be found in her perspicacious discussion of various modes of awareness. In viewing awareness along a continuum where discursive/propositional awareness constitutes only one possible variety of consciousness, Briggs provides us with a much more complex rendering of the multifaceted nature of the acquisition of cultural knowledge. As Briggs makes clear, an individual can in fact be aware of cultural forms of knowledge in a number of different non-propositional modes. Here Briggs is thinking not only in terms of the various sensory modalities with which knowledge may first be encoded – be it through visual, haptic, kinesthetic, olfactory, auditory or gustatory channels – but also in terms of the way in which this information is organized, stored and retrieved in individual minds and bodies. Although she

does not build upon this insight much further, she does allude to the fact that differing cultures may choose to exploit different means of encoding, organizing, storing, and retrieving knowledge in different modes of awareness. For instance, where 'western' culture is supposed to value and engender 'verbal thinking,' other cultures may favor and engender visual (imagistic), olfactory or other varieties of 'thought' (1998, p. 17). Furthermore, she is careful to make it clear that a child is 'aware of many things before they can use language' (1998, p. 16). Not unlike Spiro – or Chodorow as we will see below – Briggs thus makes the important observation that there are indeed many varieties of experience that are internalized and inscribed in the child's awareness before they are capable of construing the contours of their life-world in terms of linguistically mediated cultural conceptions. In this light, she points out that the knowledge that we have about self and world at one level of awareness need not correspond to the knowledge we have at other levels. This is significant as it allows for the ever-present possibility for conflict to arise intrapsychically between those cultural and personal ways of knowing encoded in differing modes of awareness (see also Throop, 2002).<sup>15</sup>

### *Subjectivity, Feeling, and Culture*

Much like Briggs, Nancy Chodorow in her book *The Power of Feelings* (1999), provides us with an admirable attempt to detail the workings of internalization in the context of the complexities and vicissitudes of individual subjectivity. For Chodorow – a psychoanalytically trained sociologist well versed in psychological anthropological theory – a key to understanding the multifaceted nature of this process lies in gaining insight into those innate human capacities tied to the creation of personal meaning; namely, processes of transference, projection, introjection, and unconscious fantasy (1999, p. 14).

In this book, Chodorow attempts to position herself between cultural determinism and psychoanalytic universalism. According to Chodorow, where culturally deterministic accounts in anthropology tend to be anti-psychological<sup>16</sup> at base and are therefore unable to account for the manifold organization of cultural forms in subjective experience, psychoanalysis tends to be enmeshed in a number of debilitating pre-theoretical (i.e. taken for granted) cultural assumptions that often lead to misguided attributions of universal properties to the functioning of culturally informed minds. In both cases, individual subjectivity is understood to be determined in its totality either by cultural or psychic forces and, as such, inter- and intra-individual variation is all too often largely ignored.

Drawing from the likes of Loewald, Klein, and Winnicott, Chodorow believes that an important step toward reformulating a more accurate

model of individual subjectivity and processes of internalization lies in coming to appreciate the important role that transference plays in all aspects of life. By focusing upon transference, Chodorow hopes to begin reformulating many of the long-held psychoanalytic assumptions about relationships between past and present, between fantasy and external reality, and between creativity and determinism. She makes it clear that in this regard she is highlighting the significance of a 'third space' in which personal and cultural dimensions of thought, feeling, and action find their expression in the context of the transference complexities of social interaction.

After detailing what she perceives to be an internal conflict in psychoanalytic theory over the relative import of the extra-clinical residues<sup>17</sup> of a determinant past versus the intraclinical emergence of a co-created present, Chodorow points out that transference – that process whereby 'our inner world of psychic reality helps to create, shape and give meaning to the intersubjective, social and cultural worlds we inhabit' – is instrumental for developing any adequate theory of culturally mediated subjectivity (1999, pp. 14, 33). Chodorow argues that in this regard it is necessary to re-evaluate the relationship between past and present in an attempt to gain a better understanding of the ongoing tension between the structuring of present experience in light of the past, and the vicissitudes of the present moment emergent in the flux of ongoing interaction.

Chodorow points out that even though those theorists who have focused upon processes of transference and countertransference in the clinical encounter have acknowledged many of the problems inherent in linking the analytic present to the infantile past, she holds that the overall bias in psychoanalysis has been to view the past as a fixed objective foundation that provides for the structuring of the present moment (1999, p. 35).<sup>18</sup> While she believes that it is true that the 'past is drawn into the present' – that culture and history (both personal and collective) play a role in structuring the field of present perceptions, thoughts, feelings, goals and actions – she argues that it is also true that the present moment is importantly shaped both by the arising intersubjective field of interaction and by the individual's 'inner-life' which is never simply a strict replica of 'that which is given and exterior' (1999, p. 5). In other words, Chodorow holds that in any given interaction each participant draws from intersubjectively shared cultural and linguistic resources, accumulated personal history, affect, and fantasy, and upon the emergent possibilities generated in the 'here and now' that are created in the confluence of intrapsychic process and social interaction (1999, p. 20). What is significant about this reading of the relationship of present to past is that Chodorow is able to make space for the agency of the social actor to emerge. By viewing the past less as a determinant causal structure and more as a contributing factor to the

multi-layered temporality within which social action unfolds, Chodorow is able to provide an account of internalization that does not thereby eliminate the indeterminacy of interaction in the present moment, nor the unique response of creative individual participants in the field of emergent social action.

This is a delicate balancing act, however; one that Chodorow is not always able to maintain. For example, although she does repeatedly argue for the value of a 'both/and' position with regard to the constraint of the past and the emergence of the present by building upon Loewald's idea that the causal trajectories of transference and countertransference do not flow from past to present but more accurately from the unconscious to the conscious, that the differentiation between subjective and objective realms of existence is not given but created through processes of primary externalization and internalization, and that the processes of boundary maintenance are ongoing throughout an individual's entire life cycle, she often seems to question the extent to which we can ever truly postulate a 'given,' 'signified,' 'actual,' or 'objective' past (1999, pp. 45, 49, 52; for more on this issue see Garro, 2000, 2001; Kirmayer, 1996; Lambek & Antze, 1996; Prager, 1998). This question revolves around the problems inherent in parsing the transferenceal present from the infantile past (1999, p. 49).

Although this tendency to overemphasize the emergent nature of social action is certainly admirable in as much as it helps to refocus our attention upon the necessity of recognizing the role of individual agency in contributing to the ever-shifting patterns of interaction in each arising of the 'here and now,' ultimately it leads Chodorow to an all too indeterminate rendering of subjective experience. Much like with Briggs then, there is not enough recognition of the roles that perduring experiential residues play in the patterning of an individual's actions, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. While it is certainly true that psychological 'life is not a seamless whole any more than culture is,' and that cultural systems are articulated in the context of the creative self-consciousness and agency of individual actors, it is never simply a mass of purely situationally dependent, emergent, loosely patterned, and/or fluctuating impressions that serve to constitute an individual's moment to moment awareness. Individual awareness, while certainly not merely a simple replication of cultural categories or external reality, does, however, derive a significant coherence from the patterning proclivities of past experience (both personal and cultural) (see Throop, in press).

I believe that another important contribution found in Chodorow's theoretical stance lies in her emphasis upon the influence of non-verbal, non-linguistic, and non-discursive aspects of experience and meaning. This emphasis is twofold. First, she asserts that cognition is always infused with emotion and unconscious fantasy. Second, she argues that meaning

is importantly structured by non-linguistic experience accrued in the context of the unique constellation of particular caregiver–child matrices. In this light, much like Spiro and Briggs, Chodorow holds that language does not simply determine those meaning structures that are imposed by individuals upon their worlds of experience, for ‘language itself develops in and gains meaning from this idiosyncratic emotional and fantasy context’ (1999, p. 58). Here then, the ‘primary process and emotional saturation of words gradually becomes intertwined with secondary process articulation’ (1999, p. 61) and ‘neither emotion nor unconscious fantasy is originally linguistic’ (1999, p. 72). Accordingly, Chodorow asserts that because personal meaning is pervasively imbued with non-linguistic aspects of emotion, sensation, and fantasy, theorists must come to recognize that ‘language often only approximates the feeling of inner psychic reality’ (1999, p. 77). And moreover, that it is time to acknowledge ‘a referential rather than an exclusively discursive view of the psyche’ (1999, p. 180). In this regard, Chodorow is able to provide a definitive critique of culturalist approaches in sociology and anthropology that often do not adequately recognize that emotions ‘may be culturally recognized or unrecognized, but, they are also directly felt and become implicated in unconscious aspects of self and world’ (1999, p. 171).

Of all of Chodorow’s many contributions, the acknowledgment of non-verbal, non-discursive, and non-linguistic dimensions of subjective experience is a critical insight for anyone interested in pursuing the development of an adequate theory of internalization. In accord with Briggs’ multiple levels of awareness, Spiro’s call for the recognition of precultural experience, and Obeyesekere’s emphasis upon preconscious, unconscious, and hypnomantic states of awareness, Chodorow provides us with yet more evidence of the necessity of recognizing the complex layering of subjectivity according to a number of different experiential modalities. When we situate this insight in the context of similar observations Chodorow notes in the work of Turner concerning sensory and ideational poles of meaning, LeVine with regard to the overlay of reflective consciousness upon ‘more intuitive, lived emotional experiential meanings,’ Schachtel in reference to his views on nonschematized and schematized experience, and Levy in terms of his distinction between primary perceptual awareness and secondary conceptual experience (Chodorow, 1999, pp. 188–191), we find that a multi-modal, multi-layered account of human consciousness and its implications for the internalization of cultural forms is indeed quite long overdue.

### *Multiplex Minds and Cultural Meaning*

An important contribution toward establishing such a model is found in Douglas Hollan's recent article, 'Constructivist Models of Mind, Contemporary Psychoanalysis, and the Development of Culture Theory' (2000). Hollan's main argument in this piece is based upon the assumption that any adequate theory of culture must be predicated upon an understanding of the relationship between cultural processes and 'the fluidity and complexity of the psychological states that underlie' them (2000, p. 538). In Hollan's formulation, there is the recognition of both the fluctuating nature of social interaction (self- 'not me'-object relations) and the transitional nature of consciousness (conscious-preconscious-unconscious relations). Much like Spiro, Briggs, and Chodorow, he clearly allows room for non-linguistic, non-conceptual, and 'cognitively starved' dimensions of experience, which allows him to highlight the many potential 'sources of intrapsychic conflict in human life' (2000, p. 542). Through developing a complex model of the relationship between the conscious and unconscious dimensions of the mind, which he stresses are seldom organized into discrete or independent realms, but instead are held to coexist in ever-shifting and fluid processes of interpenetration, Hollan is able to detail those intrapsychic processes contributing to the 'personalization of meaning.' Here Hollan gives us a way to understand just why it is that 'cultural values, schemas, and narratives are never internalized wholesale' for ways of knowing are always organized according to personal constellations of meaning, motivation and feeling that are always complemented by multivariate forms of personally and culturally shaped ways of 'not knowing' (2000, p. 543). At the same time, however, Hollan argues that he does not wish to sacrifice the persistence of cultural forms at the altar of an exaggerated characterization of the fragmentation and dissociation of human consciousness. He points out instead that there are always limits to both the integration and fragmentation of awareness and self-coherence.

Ultimately, I believe that Hollan offers an important corrective to many of the theories of internalization that are prevalent in the discipline of anthropology today (both within and without psychoanalytic theoretical strains). I believe that in comparison with Spiro, who focuses primarily upon intracultural variation in the context of differences in the articulation of personal motivations and cultural beliefs, Hollan presents us with a model of 'internalization' that takes into account not only the differential patterning of motivation and belief, but, further the dynamic complexities of human awareness, experience, *and* social interaction. Moreover, in contrast to Briggs and Chodorow, Hollan does not overstate the open-ended flexibility of individual thought, feeling, motivation, and action. With Obeyesekere he seems able to balance the influence of intrapsychic,



interpsychic, and extrapsychic processes, while also setting out to highlight the importance of recognizing those numerous factors contributing to any one moment in which a culturally informed mind works to shape, and in turn be shaped by, its experiential confrontation with social, cultural and physical worlds.

### Summary and Discussion

In summary, throughout this review we can observe a gradual shift in theoretical perspectives that can be understood as lying along a gradient that moves from pre-given constraint to emergent creativity. While it is true that all of the authors reviewed here have set out to explore how 'internalization' functions to differentially inscribe cultural contents into individual minds and bodies, there seems to be a great disparity in the extent to which each scholar views the role of individual agency in guiding, altering and/or patterning these processes. Moving from Spiro to Obeyesekere we saw a gradual shift in emphasis from a relatively more predetermined (i.e. social and biological) structuring of internalization to relatively more personalized formulations. Moving from Briggs to Chodorow to Hollan, we witnessed an increasing extension of Obeyesekere's call for a more nuanced treatment of the articulation of subjective experience and cultural resources. In each of these more recent models we were confronted with a view of consciousness as organized according to multiple streams of intersecting, parallel and/or conflicting registers of thought, feeling and motivation (see also Shore, 1990, 1996).<sup>19</sup> And in each of these models the role of individual variation, agency, and personal meaning is highlighted as a central problem for any theory concerned with 'internalization' and the cultural patterning of subjective experience.

Before concluding the article I would like to now turn to a brief discussion of what I deem to be some of the most important insights to be drawn from this literature. First, in contrast to what seems to be a prevalent trend in much of anthropological theory to privilege discursive and linguistic models of experience, the models reviewed in this article importantly acknowledge how non-linguistic, non-discursive, and non-verbal mental contents also contribute to the structuring of subjective experience in any given culture. As Spiro makes clear with his concept of precultural experience, Chodorow points out with her championing of non-linguistic feelings, sensations and imagery, Briggs argues with regard to non-propositional modes of awareness, Obeyesekere emphasizes with his careful attention to preconscious, unconscious and hypnomatic states of awareness, and Hollan recognizes in the context of numerous 'cognitively starved' experiences, mental life should never simply be reduced to linguistic, discursive and/or verbalizable contents (see also Howes, 1991; Kirmayer, 2000).

Second, an emphasis on non-discursive modes of awareness is further tied to a shared emphasis on exploring the implications of the multiform nature of human awareness for the development of an adequate account of the acquisition, transmission, and internalization of cultural forms. While it is true that this insight clearly has its roots in Freud's early and influential attempts to detail a structural trichotomy of mind in terms of its conscious, preconscious and unconscious regions, I think that it is of particular interest that many of these more recent models of mind in contemporary psychological anthropology seem to be moving away from Freud's tendency to focus primarily upon those non-conscious aspects of mind that he understood in terms of active unconscious repression (cf. Johnson, 1998). Many of these contemporary theorists have instead emphasized how multiple forms of awareness may co-exist and co-arise in an individual's stream of consciousness without necessarily positing the active structuring of conscious, preconscious and unconscious mental contents and/or processes through repression. Ultimately, I believe that these more recent models of the mind give us a richer account of the intersection of mental and cultural processes, as they greatly extend the potential for dissonance and resonance to arise in the confluence of multiple modes of awareness that are not strictly separated from one another by what some scholars, perhaps mistakenly, characterize as the impermeable barriers implied in Freud's structural model of mind (Obeyesekere, 1990, p. 63).<sup>20</sup> These new models also make clear the possibility that these various modes of awareness may be differentially impacted by cultural resources and as such may provide a way to account for intrapsychic variation in the cultural conditioning of mental contents and processes.

A further contribution of this contemporary work in psychological anthropology lies in what seems to be an emerging interest in detailing the ambiguity and ambivalence that are part and parcel of much of human experience and everyday life. In particular, with the work of Chodorow, Briggs, and Hollan we find that plenty of analytical space is left for exploring how it is that conflicted, inconsistent, shifting, and ambiguous experiences are able to arise from the often imperfect fusion of subjective, intersubjective and cultural realms. Again, this is tied to the more complex models of mind and interaction that are put forth by these various theorists in their attempt to demonstrate the limits of what have previously been all too simplistic renderings of the cultural shaping of human experience in much of anthropological theorizing. To recognize that an individual's motivations, beliefs and feelings may be overdetermined and richly suffused with conflicting and ambivalent remembrances, expectations, and concerns is to recognize the limits of any theoretical orientation that erects its theoretical edifice upon the putatively stable

foundations of socially pliable, uniform, and predictable social actors (see also Throop & Murphy, 2002).

We also find in this work an important push for re-evaluating the significance of introspective and empathetic methodologies in the context of cross-cultural research. As the writings of Obeyesekere, Briggs, and Chodorow attest, the field of transference and countertransference that arises in the context of ongoing interaction is in itself a rich field for investigation (see also Devereux, 1967).<sup>21</sup> Attending to the fact that investigators and informants bring to any interaction sets of accumulated experiential residues that serve to at least partially pattern present forms of thought, feeling, behavior and perception, is crucial both to developing an understanding of the ways in which present observations and interactions are colored by the past and to enhancing our understanding of those very processes of meaning making that subserve the perpetuation of projecting and introjecting personal and cultural biases upon the situation at hand (see also Crapanzano, 1980).

This introspective and empathetic perspective can serve to inform ongoing research in at least two ways. First, by helping to generate an increased recognition of the role that transference processes play for both researcher and informant in any given context of interaction, this work can lead researchers toward developing a somewhat less distorted view of those cultural and personal processes they are working to understand in the field. This is not to claim that introspective methods are not themselves in many ways limited and/or flawed, or that they ensure that a completely 'objective' understanding of a particular culture or situation is able to emerge once they are employed. Of course, complete 'objectivity' from the perspective of any one individual's subjectivity is an epistemological impossibility.<sup>22</sup> What needs to be assessed here, however, is not the tenability of achieving an 'objective' stance, but the desirability of working to reduce (as much as possible) overtly distorted accounts of ongoing interaction with our informants. Without attention to the various ways in which our minds work to perpetuate processes of transference (attention that is derived at least partially through careful introspection of the contents and contours of our own subjective reactions to ongoing interaction with our informants) researchers risk conducting investigations that merely reflect their own biases, expectations, prejudices, and concerns. As Chodorow makes clear in citing Kracke, by taking an introspective stance researchers are able to continually work to remain 'as open as possible to what is different about the structure of the other person's thinking, to keep to a minimum the intrusion of his or her own presumptions, preoccupations, or predilections' (1999, p. 210). In this way, researchers are able to increase the space within which the person they are observing and/or interviewing is able to emerge (see Hollan, 1997, 2001).

Second, with Chodorow, I also believe that we must acknowledge the efficacy of empathy in the context of working to develop insight into any form of ongoing interaction with our informants. Without recognizing the possibility for some form of mutual intelligibility between interactants (no matter how attenuated) anthropological and clinical endeavors are relegated to exercises in futility (see Throop, 2002). While it would be foolish to believe that any researcher is ever able to transparently understand either her own or her informants' personally and culturally constituted life-worlds, it is equally foolish to believe that because of this perduring non-transparency no mutual understanding between researcher and informant is ever possible. Indeed, as Obeyesekere suggests, although we cannot simply assume a direct isomorphism between our thoughts, perceptions, feelings, and motivations with those of our informants,<sup>23</sup> we should similarly not rule out the ever-present possibility that our own concerns to some extent reflect those of the people we work with and learn from in the field.<sup>24</sup> Ultimately, this is where introspective and empathetic models can be construed to be complementary, for empathy can be understood as based upon the ability to introspectively 'read' the counter-transferential reactions of one's own mind in light of the statements and/or behaviors brought forth by another mind – a process that perhaps inspired Kohut to view empathy as a form of 'vicarious introspection' (see Cohler, 1992, p. 282).

In the end, this introspective and empathetic perspective is predicated on the notion that, while it is true that our inner life importantly shapes those sensory impressions defining our connection to an extrapsychic world, it is also the case that external reality is able to at least partially impress its structure upon our minds. Here then, I believe that it is possible to secure a middle ground where we come to understand that what is given to awareness is both shaped by the personal and cultural frames that we bring to bear in our apprehension of the given's thematic presentation within awareness, and is able to shape those self-same processes through the qualities that inhere in the given as a quasi-extrapsychic phenomena (see also Throop, 2002). As Chodorow puts it, we must come to accept the idea that not only does the intrapsychic field of projection and introjection influence the way we in which we experience the external world, but 'the external world [also] . . . partially creates and "doubles" the inner one' (1999, p. 208).

In this light, what is available to awareness often resides at the intersection of 'pre-given,' 'given,' 'created,' and 'co-created' levels of perception, imagination, memory, and meaning. In other words, what we derive from our interaction with others is seldom simply personal fantasy projected whole cloth upon the actions and expressions of those others, nor is it the direct imprint of their intentionality and activity upon our internal world.

Instead, it is in the confluence of partially created, partially received percepts, concepts, ideas, memories, feelings, motivations, and actions that we are given an opening (however attenuated) within which to work to begin developing an empathetic understanding of another's personally and culturally informed perspective.<sup>25</sup>

## Conclusion

This review confronts us with two central problems that deserve more careful theoretical attention by those who are interested in working further on investigating processes of 'internalization,' namely, the problems of 'time' and 'memory.' As I believe Chodorow, Briggs, and Hollan at least implicitly make clear, the way in which we conceptualize time and memory plays a crucial role in helping to define our position with regard to ongoing debates in culture theory over structure and agency, determinism and flexibility, and constraint and creativity. While I believe that Chodorow, Briggs, and Hollan have each done an excellent job in working to show the complexities that emerge when we attempt to inject temporality and memory back into our understanding of the organization of thought, feeling, motivation, and action in the experience of particular individuals, ultimately there is much more to be said in this regard. In the end, I fear that a limitation found in much of this work lies in its insufficient attention to the role that different forms of memory (e.g. episodic, semantic, and procedural) and different temporal orientations (e.g. past, present *and* future) play in the articulation of cultural resources and subjective experience. I believe that some of this can be attributed to the under-theorization of time and memory in anthropological theory more generally. In this light, it might be helpful for theorists interested in the problem of 'internalization' to add to the insights garnered from some of the perspectives reviewed above by turning to explore how the unfolding of various temporal orientations might be linked to various types of memory (semantic, episodic, procedural, external, autobiographical),<sup>26</sup> and to various modes of awareness. By paying attention to the intersection of various memory systems, various temporal orientations, and various modes of awareness, I believe it will be possible to begin addressing questions concerning whether narrative accounts elicited in the field are held to reflect the cultural dictates associated with the communicative pragmatics of recounting personal experiences to other individuals (familiar or strange), or whether these forms of expression are indicative of the partial cultural patterning of propositional knowledge that serves to inform autobiographical memory through the narrative structuring of a life into a coherent form (see Garro, 2000, 2001). Or perhaps, it will be found that this material reflects more accurately the 'imprint of culture on

perceptual processes' (Garro, 2000) in the actual real-time reliving of the experiences narrated, thus indexing the influence of cultural categories on variants of episodic modes of recall.<sup>27</sup> That said, I believe that in the end this recent work in psychological anthropology has much to offer as it highlights a number of important parameters that must be seriously considered in the formulation of any model that purports to detail the complex relationship between cultural forms and subjective experience.

### Notes

1. In this regard, the impact of Freud's early writings on the Oedipus complex and the formation of the superego through the introjection of parental values and ideals on current accounts of internalization in psychological anthropology cannot be ignored. The basic premise that mental structures like the superego are formed through a process of observing and then internalizing parental norms, goals, values, and ideals, the idea that these internalized psychic structures are able to recruit and pattern the individual's emotions and motivations such that they are often able to self-regulate their thought and behavior in culturally sanctioned ways, and the view that there are often conflicts between the cultural norms crystalized in the parental introject and the desires of the child, have all clearly provided important theoretical contributions to many of the accounts of internalization found in the field.
2. According to Spiro, the term '*culture* refers to that subset of ideas, norms, and values which are found in social groups as a consequence of social transmission and hence are socially shared in varying degrees' (1997, p. 6). Spiro can speak of 'pre-cultural' experience due to the fact that his definition of culture is predicated on the notion that 'the culture of a social group can be distinguished from the patterned social relations that characterize its various institutional domains – economic, political, familial, and so on' (2001, p. 219).
3. As Spiro explains, it is necessary to work toward increasingly complex understandings of processes of enculturation that move away from overly simplistic models based on the passive reception of culture, for, 'When the actor is brought in – not the actor denoted by such vapid terms as *intentional subject* or *culturally constructed self* or *social person* but an actor with desires and fears, hopes and anxieties, loves and hates, conflicts and defenses, the kind of actor we know ourselves and the people we study to be but who nevertheless seldom appears in our culture theories – then complexity unfortunately cannot be avoided' (1997, p. 6). It is important to note that in emphasizing the idea that individuals are active participants in their enculturation, Spiro is not speaking solely of conscious, intentional action on the part of those actors. Nor is he referring to action strictly in terms of behavior and/or practice. Instead, for Spiro, 'action' refers primarily to mental activity, which can be either conscious or unconscious. In his words, 'cultural internalization is the product of two types of mental action, cognitive and motivational, each of which may be either conscious or unconscious' (1997, p. 5).
4. In general, when using the term 'pre-given' in the context of this paper, I am

referring to any extra-situational constraints – be they biological, cultural, or social – that serve to, at least partially, structure the flow of ongoing lived experience. In this particular case, however, what is 'pre-given' for Spiro consists specifically of both biological constraints and 'pre-cultural' social experiences accrued in early (most often pre-verbal stages of) childhood. As he explains, 'Cultural novices are typically children, who, beginning at birth and prior to their acquisition of culture, undergo a wide range of social experiences. These intense social (but pre-cultural) experiences constitute, according to some theorists at least, a determinative influence on personality development. . . . Children's other initial desires, besides their biologically acquired ones, and all their initial beliefs are not culturally, but experientially, constituted. That is, they are constructed by the children themselves from their own (usually social) experiences. I call these experientially acquired desires and beliefs pre-cultural' (1997, p. 56).

5. Throughout the article I utilize the term 'residue' as a short hand for memory. In light of the distinction between five varieties of memory outlined below (see note 26), 'residue' is most generally employed in reference to semantic, episodic, procedural and autobiographical varieties of memory. When speaking of early childhood experience, or other forms of non-propositional, non-verbal, experience, however, 'residue' denotes primarily episodic and procedural forms of memory.
6. Without this concept, Spiro holds that theorists cannot account for why it is that there is clearly intracultural variation in the internalization of cultural beliefs that can range from mere acquaintance, to cliché, to genuine saliency, to powerful emotional attachment and conviction (1997, pp. 8–9).
7. One potential problem with Spiro's theory of internalization lies in what I read to be his tendency to emphasize propositionally grounded cultural knowledge and mental representation. Even though Spiro acknowledges the fact that a great deal of cultural knowledge is acquired through the implicit, indirect means of participation and observation and not only through explicit instruction, and even though he never states that all forms of knowledge are necessarily represented propositionally, he does tend to discuss the internalization of cultural knowledge primarily in the context of it being represented propositionally in the mind of the culture bearer (cf. Fiske, n.d.). As he puts it, although in many cases cultural knowledge is 'not conveyed in the form of propositions, still, that is the form, I believe, in which novices typically represent them in their minds' (1997, p. 7). While I believe that it is most likely *not* Spiro's intention to put forth a propositionally biased account of processes of internalization, I believe that, his particular account aside, it is important to highlight the fact that propositionally grounded models of internalization are rendered questionable in the context of the phenomenological description of many mental states. As even a cursory examination of many forms of mental content reveals, images, feelings, sensations and embodied knowledge can often be just as much a part of 'mental representation' as propositional statements (see also Throop & Murphy, 2002). In fact, it seems that in everyday practice there is much that

remains non-propositional at the level of awareness. Also, there seems to be abundant evidence for the existence of cultural knowledge that cannot be expressed in propositional form; be it cultural knowledge that is encoded in specific skills (i.e. Ryle's 'knowledge how'), or everyday beliefs that are not reflectively encoded in linguistic or propositional modalities. It seems to me that in this respect at least, relying primarily upon propositional knowledge when discussing processes of internalization is significantly limiting, for it ultimately draws upon an overly cognitivist model of human mentation and action.

8. According to Obeyesekere, *objectification* is that process whereby subjective experience is expressed, projected, and externalized in a public idiom (1981, p. 77), whereas *subjectification* is that process whereby 'cultural ideas are used to justify the introduction of innovative acts and meanings.' (1981, pp. 123–124). In the case of objectification it is personal symbols – public symbols invested with personal meanings and motivations – that mediate between individual and cultural realms, whereas in the case of subjectification it is the justification of novel subjective images in the context of already accepted cultural ideas and practices that serves to articulate individual and cultural realms (1981, pp. 136–137).
9. Here Obeyesekere makes an important distinction between personal and psychogenetic symbols. In the case of the former, Obeyesekere is referring to symbols which, although drawing from cultural imagery, are imbued with 'unconscious, deep motivational and intracommunicative significance' (1981, p. 46). In the case of the latter, he is referring to symbols which, although originating from 'the unconscious or . . . derived from the dream repertoire,' have no deep motivational significance (1990, pp. 13–14).
10. Spiro's characterization of Obeyesekere's view of culture and psychopathology seems to refute Castillo's (1994) claim that Obeyesekere believes that his ascetics are hysterics. This particular critique of Obeyesekere is found in the context of an article where Castillo argues that dissociation theory provides a more satisfying account of the phenomena of spirit possession in Southeast Asia than psychoanalytically grounded theories of repression based hysteria. Although I too believe that dissociation theory may have some important insights to offer us in understanding the phenomena of spirit possession cross-culturally, it seems to me, that Spiro has read Obeyesekere correctly when he charges him with viewing the Sinhalese ascetics as successfully dealing with intrapsychic conflicts through cultural resources. In other words, in *Medusa's Hair* Obeyesekere does not view spirit possession to be simply a case of hallucinatory psychopathology, a case of repressed hysteria or a case of a dissociative trance state that can be traced directly to early childhood trauma. In contrast, for Obeyesekere, brute 'symptom' has been effectively translated into rarified 'symbol,' and as such can no longer be considered pathological.
11. As Spiro (2001, p. 223) makes clear, 'For opponents of normative cultural relativism, the first problem with this argument is its conflation of a belief with an experience, a fallacy that Devereux (1956) pointed out decisively long



ago. Thus, although the *belief* that deceased relatives may call from the after-world might be culturally normative – that is, culturally constituted and, hence, socially shared – this does not necessarily imply that the *experience* of hearing a deceased relative's voice is psychologically normative – that is, psychologically normal. That the belief is culturally normative is a fact, but that the experience is psychologically normal is a judgment regarding that fact, and it is the validity of the judgment that is in dispute' [emphasis in original].

12. This question in philosophy can be traced back at least to the time of David Hume, who argued in his *Treatise on Human Nature* (1740/1961) that 'causation' is never given directly in perceptual experience, but is only ever a post hoc imposition upon experience by the mind. According to Hume, this post hoc attribution of causation stems from an individual's repeated perception of the regular conjunction between successive pairs of objects or events in the perceptual field. More recently, Hume's position has been challenged by Mandelbaum (1977) and Michotte (1963) who both hold that the apprehension of causation in the everyday life-world involves an inherent awareness of interrelations among elements and phases of a process, and is not merely a case of post hoc attribution of a cause–effect co-variation among distinct events. In other words, they argue that it is not a retrospective imposition, but an a priori structure of the mind that allows for the perception of causation to occur. Whether or not either position is correct, it is clear in both accounts that the internal workings of the mind cannot be so easily divorced from the perception of causation in external reality.
13. Indeed, as one anonymous reviewer of an earlier version of this article notes, it is important to emphasize the fact that personal symbols may indeed have 'regressive' or pathological entailments, and that it is certainly not always the case that intrapsychic conflicts are able to be healed simply through the personalization of cultural symbols.
14. For instance, if we look at dissociation as a psychological capacity that can range along a continuum that, on one end accounts for an individual's ability to take on disparate social roles, and at the other end engenders the ability to experience 'spirit attacks,' I feel that there may in fact be a way to theoretically account for not only the motivational salience of these cultural beliefs, but also their manifestation in immediate experience.
15. To extend some of Briggs's insights here, I think that it possible to envision the patterning of attention (see Csordas, 1993) directed to various modes of awareness as played out along a number of different time scales. First off, in the vicissitudes of real-time interaction it is possible to imagine how multiple modes of awareness could co-arise and intersect in the context of an individual's subjective experience. Second, it is also possible to view these various modes of awareness as organized according to different temporal residues that pattern thought, feeling and action. For example, where an individual's focal awareness might be patterned according to the goals and motivations elicited in the immediacy of ongoing interaction, peripheral sensory and/or somatic awareness may be organized by residues of past experience that

extend back to extra-situational mnemonic traces. In this light, it is possible, just as Briggs points out in reference to her Inuit informant's emotional experience, that multiple temporally organized personal and/or cultural templates that are simultaneously operative in different forms of awareness may serve to selectively pattern an individual's moment to moment confrontation with the world.

16. Chodorow argues that culturalist accounts in anthropology tend to be anti-psychological in as much as 'these accounts are unable to conceive theoretically, even as they describe ethnographically, individual psychological processes of personal meaning creation, nor can they acknowledge theoretically that emotion-laden self-experience can be inextricably personal and cultural at the same time. There is no room for a psychological constructionism, for personally as well as culturally based interpretive capacities, for meanings that can be nonverbal as well as verbal, or for a verbal expressiveness that, in its particular, situated enactment, is not entirely culturally determined. . . . In the view of these theorists, cultural practices and meanings, but not psychological structures, processes, or meaning creation, characterize us as human' (1999, p. 161).
17. The distinction between 'extra-clinical' and 'intra-clinical' is simply in reference to a distinction between those memories, past experiences, and fantasies that are brought into the clinical encounter by both the patient and the analyst ('extra-clinical residues'), and those that emerge within the context of the clinical encounter itself.
18. The reader should note that a reviewer of this article has suggested that Chodorow may be somewhat off the mark in her characterization of psychoanalysis as biased toward a view the past as a 'fixed objective foundation.' The reviewer argues that Freud's writings on 'fantasme' in the context of the psychogenesis of symptoms, his notion of 'après-coup,' and his article on screen memory, each point to a more nuanced understanding of the ongoing interpenetration of past and present.
19. Such a multi-modal view of consciousness is also held by a number of cognitive psychologists; see for instance Paivio (1971, 1986, 1991) and Carey (1996).
20. As a reviewer also made clear, it is important not to be unfair to Freud by characterizing the division between id, ego, and superego in terms of 'impermeable barriers.' In the words of the reviewer, Freud's 'very understanding of the dream work, of symptoms, of all of psychic life rests on the very idea that signifiers move from one system to another (Freud speaks here of "translation"). Notions of displacement and condensation contribute to the disguise of unconscious images and representations . . . while conscious representations also are drawn into the unconscious due to their inscription within complex chains of signifiers. What is however central in psychoanalysis (if one retains the notion of unconscious) is the fact that the relation of one system to another is not a transparent one.'
21. Here it is important to note that I do not mean to simply equate transference and countertransference with introspection and empathy, nor do I mean to

argue that introspection and empathy are able to give us unproblematic, easily circumscribed, or immediately transparent access to transference and countertransference phenomena. As I argue in the context of an article that explores the merits of Wilhelm Dilthey's 'descriptive psychology' for the anthropology of consciousness, there are clearly limits to introspective and empathetic methods, especially with 'reference to the more inaccessible realms of our psyche.' (Throop, 2002, p. 9). In this regard, I hold with Dilthey, that introspection should be 'supplemented with the examination of the projective end products of mental activity,' what Dilthey termed 'objectified mind' (2002, p. 9). In other words, introspective methods must always be complemented with a careful examination of the objectified expressions of one's own mind and others' minds, as an indirect but important 'means by which to access those parts of psychic life that are not given directly to the purview of conscious introspection' (2002, p. 9). As Victor Turner put it in the context of one of his many important discussions of the significance of Dilthey's thought for anthropological theory, 'we can know our subjective depths as much by scrutinizing the meaningful objectifications "expressed" by other minds, as by introspection. In complementary fashion, self-scrutiny may give us clues to the penetration of objectifications of life generated from the experience of others' (1982, p. 14).

22. Indeed, because individual 'subjectivity' is construed to be 'of the mind,' it is thought to be that which is never impartial. Subjectivity seems to inherently denote something 'personal,' 'partial,' 'biased,' and 'distorted' (Natter, Schatzki, & Jones, 1995). It is perspectively prejudiced knowledge/perception of self and world. In contrast, 'objectivity' is held to be that which supposedly exists independently of the mind; it is 'detached,' 'impersonal,' and 'unprejudicial' (Natter et al., 1995). Because all knowledge is mediated through the mind it seems unlikely that there is much knowledge that is 'objective' in this strict sense of the term. Although, perhaps through developing rigorous methods of 'intersubjective' assessment we can on occasion filter out enough bias to allow us approximate 'objectivity' as an ideal.
23. As Hollan notes, 'the use of our own bodies to gain access to the visceral experiences of others . . . though potentially of help to us here, is fraught with interpretive pitfalls. Although I think I greatly enriched my understanding of Toraja talk about suffering when I joined them in harvesting rice, the fact is that such work was even more backbreaking and exhausting for me than for them. . . . Such work also brought back to me memories of childhood summers spent on my grandmother's farm in south Texas where I would stand in a trailer at the back of a cotton stripper. . . . Do such visceral sensations and emotionally charged memories from south Texas, triggered by my agricultural work in Toraja, help me to apprehend the subjective experiences of my Toraja subjects? Perhaps. But they may also, perhaps, lead me away from such experiences and set ablaze a chain of associations and bodily reactions that are peculiar to my own life' (2001, p. 58).
24. Drawing from D'Andrade's schema theory, Robert Paul importantly notes that an empathetic stance need not necessarily be grounded in such

'mysterious' conceptions as 'intuition,' 'communing' with another consciousness, or the ability to 'see into the other's inner being' (1995, p. 18). Instead, it is often the case that the cultural schemas which provide 'skeletal outlines or scenarios of routinized chains of action that are typical in the society in certain situations' are used to interpret the psychic and somatic states of another individual (1995, p. 18). That said, I believe that we should be careful to also acknowledge the extent to which other's intentions and motivations can serve to selectively impress upon and shape our own feeling states, thought processes, and emotions, which may perhaps provide for us a mediated glimpse at the psychic and/or somatic states of another.

25. Here I am in agreement with Amelie Oksenberg Rorty's position that to 'admit that as anthropologists at home and abroad we find ourselves in an endless number of particular, practical situations in which we have only a faltering, rough guess of the psychology of Those Others – to admit that we are often wrong or biased – is not to raise a general skeptical problem. That we are often mistaken does not mean that we are always mistaken; that understanding is difficult does not mean that it is impossible; that we standardly construe the psychology of others in cognitive terms does not mean that psychological functioning consists of a sequence of propositional attitudes; that cognition is central to psychological activity does not mean that those activities are sufficiently explained when – and only when – their propositional contents have been identified; that our accounts of how we came to understand are often empirical, various, and particular does not mean that we do not understand how we came to understand' (1995, p. 221).
26. It is possible to distinguish between at least five different types of memory (see Fiske, n.d; Garro, 2001; Hutchins, 1995; Tulving, 1983). These include: (1) semantic memory, (2) episodic memory, (3) procedural memory, (4) external memory, and (5) autobiographical memory. These various forms of memory can be briefly defined as follows: *semantic memory* encodes knowledge about self and world in the form of propositional representations and statements (James's [1890] 'knowledge about,' Ryle's [1949] 'knowledge that'); *episodic memory* encodes the phenomenal, imagistic, and emotional entailments of personally experienced events; *procedural memory* encodes embodied and practical knowledge about self and world in the form of non-representational patterns of action and motility (Ryle's [1949] 'knowledge how'); *external memory* both extends mental mnemonic processes to the culturally shaped world of material objects and tools that often serve to mediate human experience *and* accounts for how it is possible for memory to be guided by the intentionality of other minds in the context of social interaction; and finally, *autobiographical memory* seems to draw from each of these various types of memory in order to form a narrative structure that organizes and gives personal and cultural meaning to an individual's lived experience. With these distinctions in hand it becomes easy to see how various theoretical approaches in anthropology have differentially drawn upon each of these memory systems in their attempts to account for cultural acquisition, transmission, and production. For instance, where cognitive anthropology has

traditionally relied upon a model of culture predicated upon the functioning of semantic memory (see D'Andrade, 1995), anthropologists drawing from practice theory and theories of situated cognition have attempted to offer a corrective to this perspective by relying upon those cultural forms that are encoded in procedural and external memory systems. Ultimately, I believe that an adequate anthropological theory of culture and mind will have to deal with each of these different memory systems and their impact on the internalization of cultural forms.

27. Indeed, episodic memory is not itself a monolithic category tied exclusively to the imagistic, sensory or phenomenal re-experiencing of events. In contrast, it seems that the episodic recall of a particular event may often be tied to the re-living of the emotional responses linked to the event without necessarily accessing the perceptual and sensory content also associated with that particular event at the time the experience was first encoded. In this sense, I believe that it might be fruitful to postulate an affective form of episodic memory that is capable of being encoded and retrieved somewhat independently from the recalled perceptual and/or sensory content. Here it might be useful to distinguish between 'affective' and 'imagistic' variants of episodic memory to account for this mental capacity to dissociate emotional response from perceptual and sensory imagery in the re-experiencing of previous occurrences. In other words, while 'affective' and 'imagistic' episodic memories can be construed as part and parcel of the episodic memory system, they may also indeed reflect somewhat independent sub-systems or varieties of episodic memory. Of course an individual may also have access to the propositional description or narration of a past experience through semantic and autobiographical memory with little or no episodic content of either the affective or imagistic variety.

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