

FREUD, FERENCZI, AND FREIRE: LIBERATION PSYCHOLOGY AND THE
PRACTICE OF PSYCHOANALYTIC THERAPY

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Abstract

Psychoanalysis has not enjoyed sufficient attention in the theory and practice of Multicultural Psychology, and is often seen as either adversarial or apathetic to the interests of social justice and culturally competent clinical work with ethnic minority populations. This disconnect is partly the result of a lack of knowledge about the history of social progressivism in the early psychoanalytic movement, as well as the transformation of psychoanalysis into a tool of social conformity in the post-WWII United States. Also unacknowledged is the influence of psychoanalysis on Liberation Psychology, a social justice-oriented movement in Latin American psychology which served as an inspiration and theoretical foundation to Multicultural Psychology. In order to address this historical and theoretical impasse, this dissertation will initiate a conversation between psychoanalysis, Liberation Psychology, and Multicultural Psychology. By placing psychoanalysis in dialogue with two of the components of Liberation Psychology—Liberation Theology and Paulo Freire’s Critical Pedagogy—it will be argued that there is an emancipatory ethic in analytic theory that mirrors, and in some cases directly informs, Liberation Psychology’s social justice discourse. In turn, Liberation Psychology will be shown to have presaged many of the developments in contemporary psychoanalytic thinking on intersubjectivity, mutual recognition, and enactments. Acknowledging the psychoanalytic structure of Liberation Psychology side by side with the emancipatory potential of psychoanalysis yields a series of insights related to power, privilege, relationality, and culture, which can be used to develop a psychoanalytically informed Multicultural Psychology, and develop more nuanced conceptions of cultural competency. A case example will be used to illustrate a relational psychoanalytic model of cultural competency which emphasizes the role of

cultural attunement, cultural negotiation, and the repair cross-cultural ruptures when attunement and negotiation is impaired. Having delineated this psychoanalytic approach to cultural competency, implications will be drawn for culturally competent practice, theory, and training.

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Table of contents

Abstract..... ii

Acknowledgements..... iv

Introduction

Old questions and new horizons 1

 Liberation Psychology: Theology, epistemology, and praxis8

 Concientizacion: Critical consciousness, dialogue, and relationship.....11

 The problem of fatalism: One person’s “culture” is another’s “oppression”?14

 Psychoanalysis and Liberation Psychology: Beginnings of a dialogue17

Chapter I

A preferential option for the repressed: Freud through the eyes of Liberation Theology24

 The unconscious and the Jewish “other”: Psychoanalysis in its social context26

 Liberation Theology and the preferential option for the Other30

 Hermeneutics of suspicion as turn to the “underside” of the unconscious35

 From the inside-out to the outside-in: Repression as psychic and social metaphor.....38

 Synthesizing the historical and the clinical: A preferential option for the repressed.....41

 Recovering our historical memory: A personal coda.....45

Chapter II

A psychotherapy for the people: Ferenczi, Freud, and psychoanalytic therapy with underprivileged populations.....	48
Tenacious healer, relentless advocate: Ferenczi's social passion	50
The origin, meaning, and effect of the 1918 Budapest Speech.....	53
The development of a "psychotherapy for the people"	57
Gold, copper, and the "other": A Ferenczian take on analyzability.....	60
Elements and alloys: An outline.....	66
Conclusion: Ferenczi's contribution to a psychotherapy for the people	69

Chapter III

A psychoanalysis for liberation: Reading Freire, reading psychoanalysis	71
Humanization and connectedness: Freire's relational vision	73
Banking versus problem-posing systems of education: An intersubjective view of pedagogy	77
Intersubjectivity and dialogue: Subjects in the world	82
Cousin concepts: Intersubjectivity and mutual recognition	85
Breaking the bonds of domination: Thirdness in the therapeutic space.....	93
The analytic third and the social third: A socio-cultural vision for psychoanalysis	97
Liberation psychology and psychoanalysis: A family reunion	101
A psychotherapy for the people: A case illustration	103

Conclusion.....	107
Conclusion	
Not a destination but a departure: An outline for future scholarship.....	110
Review of central arguments.....	110
An outline for future scholarship	116
The monstrous kernel of the Liberationist ethic.....	127
“a cure through love”: A coda.....	131
References.....	133

Introduction

Old Questions and New Horizons

...the fundamental horizon for psychology as a field of knowledge is *concientizacion*... In asserting that *concientizacion* ought to be the principal feature in psychology's horizon, we are proposing that the task of the psychologist must be to achieve the de-alienation of groups and persons by helping them attain a critical understanding of themselves and their reality. Psychology has taken it as given that individual consciousness should be de-alienated, that is, that those mechanisms which block consciousness of personal identity and lead a person to act as an estranged or alienated being, 'a crazy,' should be eliminated or controlled... psychology has not addressed the question of the mechanisms that block consciousness of an individual's social identity, causing him or her to act like a dominated being or a dominator, an oppressive exploiter or a person who is marginalized and oppressed.

—Ignacio Martin-Baro, *Writings for a Liberation Psychology* (1994, p. 39; 41)

The purpose of this dissertation is to reinitiate a dialogue between Liberation Psychology and psychoanalysis. By placing these two seemingly disparate discourses in conversation with one another, I will outline a series of ideas and principles which benefit not only psychoanalysis but also other schools of psychotherapy as it regards the mental health treatment and care of underserved populations. It will also seek to enrich the tradition of Multicultural Psychology in North America by rekindling its foundations in Liberation Psychology. In this introduction I will discuss the major problems the dissertation will address, as well as the goals it seeks to fulfill. I will briefly introduce the origins of Liberation Psychology, and then describe its complicated relationship to psychoanalysis and Multicultural Psychology, with the intent to challenge and reinvent those relationships. To this end, the latter portion of the introduction will bring up an unexamined tension between Liberation Psychology and Multicultural Psychology.

Liberation Psychology is a movement in Latin American psychology that was developed by Jesuit priest and social psychologist Ignacio Martin-Baro (1994) in the midst of the social and political upheaval of the Salvadoran Civil War (1980-1992). A synthesis of Liberation Theology,

Paulo Freire's (1972; 1973) critical pedagogy, and social psychology, Martin-Baro's Liberation Psychology emerged as a critique of Latin American psychology's conformity in the face of widespread political repression, and its dependency on North American psychology's individualistic, ahistorical, and apolitical orientation. Drawing on Liberation Theology's "preferential option for the poor," Martin-Baro called on all of psychology—whether social, clinical, or educational—to stand on the side of the oppressed people of Latin America, and join with them in the struggle for social justice. Inspired by Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy, Martin-Baro collaborated with marginalized communities in El Salvador to develop research projects that empowered them to articulate their experience of political dislocation, and develop a critical consciousness of how those experiences were related to oppressive power structures. These projects culminated in the development of the University Institute for Public Opinion in 1986, through which Martin-Baro studied public opinion about the civil war, U.S. military involvement, and the Salvadoran government. Martin-Baro in turn published this research not only in academic venues, but also made it available to the public, allowing previously disavowed and repressed opinions to see the light of day, stimulating open discourse, critical reflection, and a greater public resistance to socio-political repression in El Salvador. As a result of these efforts, Martin-Baro was targeted by the Salvadoran government, and on the night of November 16th, 1989, he was killed along with five other liberation theologians and two employees on the campus of the Universidad Centroamericana of San Salvador by US-trained Salvadoran troops. As his closest friends and colleagues were slain, Martin-Baro cried out over the gunfire: "Esto es una injusticia!" "This is an injustice!"

Liberation Psychology is widely recognized as an inspiration and foundation for North American Multicultural Psychology (Arredondo, 2003; Ivey, 1995; Ivey & Zalaquett, 2009;

Vera, 2003). Multicultural Psychology refers to a broad, interdisciplinary network of scholars and organizations committed to conducting research and providing services that meet the mental health needs of historically marginalized and underserved communities, such as ethnic minority and immigrant communities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities (LGBTQ), women, and the poor. Hence, a social justice orientation has been stated to be a core value of Multicultural Psychology (Ivey & Collins, 2003; Sue, 2001). However, save for a handful of scholars (e.g. Ivey, 1995; Vera, 2003) there has been little articulation of the theoretical underpinnings of Liberation Psychology, or of Liberation Psychology's application to the applied work of psychotherapy with diverse populations. Furthermore, there is an ambiguous relationship between the broader emancipatory goals of Liberation Psychology and actual clinical processes in psychotherapy. This dissertation will describe the clinical relevance of Liberation Psychology to psychotherapy with diverse, and all too often oppressed, populations. It will unpack the thinking behind Liberation Psychology by taking a closer look at two of its "theoretical engines": Liberation Theology (Gutierrez, 1988) and Critical Pedagogy (Freire, 1973). By revealing the underlying framework of this school of thought, certain values and ideas relevant to cross-cultural work will become apparent. In terms of the scope of this dissertation, there will be an emphasis on articulating insights for working with ethnic minority populations, with which I have the most clinical experience.

Given my theoretical orientation as a psychoanalytically oriented clinician, a second area of concern in this dissertation is the place of psychoanalysis and other relational psychotherapies (e.g. humanistic, emotion-focused, existential) in Multicultural Psychology's cultural competence discourses. There is a general skepticism in the field of cultural competency about the applicability or relevance of relationally oriented treatments to diverse populations, in spite

of the burgeoning literature on working relationally across race, class, gender, and sexual orientation (Altman, 2009; Perez-Foster, Moskowitz, Javier, 1996). Within the cross-cultural counseling field, this can be traced back to Sue & Sue's (1977) landmark paper, which opened up initial dialogues on cultural competency and the provision of mental health services to non-white ethnic minorities, immigrants, and the poor. Sue & Sue (1977) argued that clinical processes central to psychoanalytic and relational therapies—such as emotional expression and reflection, the attainment of insight, self-exploration, the discovery of underlying feelings, an emotional bond with the therapist—were “inappropriate” for poor patients of color (p. 424). For example, encouraging patients of color to reflect on their feelings may lead them to feel “confused, alienated, and frustrated” (p. 424), since this process reflects more Western, Eurocentric values. Sue & Sue argue that that many patients of color expect “[i]mmediate solutions and concrete tangible forms of treatment (advice, confession, consolation, and mediation)” (p. 425). As such, counselors and clinicians are encouraged to be more “action-oriented” and skills-focused in practice when working with diverse populations.

A general consensus operating almost at the level of “common sense” in mainstream cultural competency discourses is that relational treatments project cultural values that are incongruous with ethnic minorities, while other treatment orientations such as cognitive-behavioral therapy or family systems therapy are more culturally congruent (Inclan, 1985; Interian & Diaz-Martinez, 2007; Rogler et al., 1987; Sue & Sue, 1977; 2008; Sue & Zane, 1987). Although a full survey of this literature, with attention to every ethnic minority group, is beyond the scope of this dissertation, I wish to give two examples in relation to Latinos, who are my own community and the one which I have been most involved with clinically.

Writing in the 80's from a family systems perspective, Inclan (1985) sought to describe the "value orientation" of first-generation, poor Puerto Rican migrants in the United States, and outline the most culturally congruent mode of treatment. In contradistinction to psychoanalysis' emphasis on the past, Inclan states that "poor Puerto Ricans tend to exhibit behaviors that are expressions of a present-time value orientation" (1985, p. 326). Whereas Anglo-Saxon culture exudes values of self-assertion, of mastery over nature, poor Puerto Ricans "are governed more by a value of subjugation to nature" (p. 330). With this fatalistic value of self-subjugation and passivity, the universe of poor Puerto Ricans is described as "rigidly stratified," with God reigning at the top and boundaries keep everyone in their place at the bottom. Within this value universe, "people tend not to challenge but rather to accommodate to the existent hierarchies and conditions" (p. 331). Such values of fatalism, submissiveness, and a preference for hierarchical relationships make poor Puerto Ricans a poor fit for "nondirective" and "insight-oriented" therapies. Rather, therapies that emphasize the present, the concrete, and foster more hierarchical, active therapists are argued to be more in line with the value orientation of poor Puerto Ricans. To this end Inclan promotes structural family therapy as more culturally congruent. Another example is more recent, but reveals little shift or modification in the narrative of the capacities of Latinos in relation to psychoanalytic therapy. Interian & Martinez (2007), in articulating their own cognitive-behavioral approach for treating depression in Latino patients, posit that insight-oriented, psychodynamic therapies are not compatible with the needs and values of Latinos, who expect a problem-solving and directive approach—features argued to be reflective of cognitive-behavioral therapy.

Such arguments about the compatibility or incompatibility of different psychological treatments with different cultural groups depend on a binary, static, and ahistorical construction

of each of these terms. Psychoanalytic therapies are past-oriented, emphasize self-exploration, and are non-directive. Cognitive-behavioral therapies and structural family therapies are present-oriented, emphasize problem-solving, and are directive. Similarly, ethnic minorities—and in my specific case, Puerto Ricans and other Latino communities—are present-oriented, expect immediate solutions, are passive and desiring of direction/advice, etc. However, if we entertain the *possibility* that there is greater diversity *within* different cultural groups as much as between them, or that there exist different types and forms of cognitive-behavioral therapy, psychoanalysis, and family systems therapy, then this type of binary thinking becomes untenable. More specifically, if it is the case that ethnic minorities are perfectly capable of making use of insight in psychotherapy, or if our definition of psychoanalysis entails something more flexible and complex than being “insight-oriented,” then we may need to reconfigure just how we think about the relationship between cultural competency and psychoanalysis. My desire to question this narrative notwithstanding, it must be acknowledged that it did not arise in a vacuum, nor do I want to imply that psychoanalysis itself is not at fault for this turn of events.

It must be noted that papers on cultural competency which take this binary opposition between psychoanalysis and the treatment of ethnic minority and other disempowered groups, whether Sue & Sue in the 70’s, Inklan in the 80’s, or Interian & Martinez in the past decade, do so in response to a historical injustice. Inklan (1985) eloquently and incisively summarizes the crux of the problem,

The revolutionary insights of Freud were received so enthusiastically that psychoanalytic theory became heralded as a methodology for understanding all spheres of life and all peoples. As with global expectations, the promise became tempered by reality. One area in which psychoanalytic practice proved limited was in reaching poor and minority group peoples. ‘They’ were not verbal, motivated, insightful, or able to delay gratification. ‘They’ tended to act-out, be concerned with material things, and project causality to external sources. (p. 330)

Inclan draws attention to the historical exclusion of ethnic minorities and the poor from psychoanalytic treatment based on the so-called “criteria of analyzability.” The criteria of analyzability emphasized an explicitly verbal mode of communication, the capacity for insight, and impulse control as necessary requirements for patients to be admitted into psychoanalysis or psychoanalytic treatment. Such criteria have gone in hand with negative stereotypes and reactions by white, middle-upper class therapists toward minority and lower-class patients (Siassi & Messer, 1976). This has led to a troubling history in North American psychoanalysis, where these criteria, alongside ethnic-racialized stereotypes, have served to marginalized diverse populations from psychoanalytic treatment and even psychoanalytic training (Altman, 2009; Wachtel, 2002).

What I find problematic about Inclan and other writers who discuss the incongruity between psychoanalysis and cultural competency is that while they rightly point out the potential for the analyzability criteria to discriminate against non-white populations, instead of critiquing and deconstructing the idea that ethnic minorities “don’t do insight,” “aren’t verbal,” and etc, they *reify* it and accept it as a given reality. As we will discuss further in Chapter II, psychoanalysis in North American has certainly contributed to its own marginalization from cultural competency discourses and Multicultural Psychology. However, this dissertation will nuance this story by arguing that this was not always the case. Psychoanalysis in its inception was neither unavailable, nor exclusive of the poor and ethnically “other” (Danto, 2005).

This dissertation will challenge the view that psychoanalysis is necessarily antagonistic to the progressive causes of Multicultural Psychology through a historical and philosophical analysis of psychoanalytic theory and practice. It will show that there are values and ideas within psychoanalysis that are quite simpatico with the goals of cultural competence. Furthermore,

through this dialogue between Liberation Psychology and psychoanalysis, it will be argued that psychoanalysis contributed to the birth of Liberation Psychology, and thus both share certain values in common, theoretically, historically, and practically. The dissertation will provide a re-reading of psychoanalytic history, theory, and practice through the lens of liberation theology, and will put forth an integration of liberation psychology and psychoanalysis.

Liberation Psychology: Theology, Epistemology, and Praxis

In the remainder of this introduction I will introduce Liberation Psychology proper, and in so doing highlight not only certain values which are profoundly psychoanalytic, but also raise a heretofore unexamined tension between Liberation Psychology and Multicultural Psychology. Ignacio Martin-Baro's (1994) call for a Liberation Psychology transcended the immediacy of his context as a social psychologist, demanding that *all* of psychology, including clinical psychology, be transformed in the interest of social justice (p. 19). Writing in the 70's and 80's in El Salvador, Martin-Baro criticized Latin American psychology's scientific mimicry and dependent mirroring of North American psychology. He warned of "false dilemmas" imported from the North, such as the conflicts between humanistic and behavioral psychologies, or phenomenological and empirical approaches to psychology. He argued that a psychology of the people must concern itself with the *needs* and *experiences* of the people, not an allegiance to a theoretical orientation, a particular method of inquiry, or even one's own professional advancement.

In looking for a foundation for Liberation Psychology, Martin-Baro (1994) looked not to the behavioral sciences but to theology, specifically Liberation Theology. Martin-Baro drew upon Liberation Theology's "preferential option" for the poor and oppressed—that Truth is to be found among the destitute and brokenhearted—as the ethical bedrock of Liberation Psychology.

Martin-Baro writes that “it is only the poor who offer the objective and subjective conditions for opening up to *the other*, and above all, to *the radical other*” (p. 26, my emphasis). The preferential option for the oppressed, which will be explored in greater detail in Chapter I, posits that what is meaningful, what is important, what enriches us, is to be found *outside* the horizons of our world, whether our psychic world or our social one. Inspired by the preferential option, Martin-Baro argued that psychology required an epistemology that was both ethical and gnoseological. This new epistemology “has to be from below, from the same oppressed majorities whose truth is to be created” (p. 27-28). Martin-Baro (1994) is quick to clarify that this perspective is “from” the oppressed, not “for” them. He draws on Paulo Freire’s critical pedagogy in arguing that this “is not a matter of thinking for them or bringing them our ideas or solving their problems for them; it has to do with thinking and theorizing with them and from them” (p. 28). Just as in Liberation Theology it is from the poor that one finds the presence of God, “a psychology of liberation has to learn that only from the oppressed will it be possible to build and discover [their] existential truth” (p. 28). To take a perspective from below does not mean that the psychologist must discard all of their knowledge, tools, and research. Rather the psychologist relativizes and decenters that knowledge, placing it in dialogue with the experiences of oppressed people. It is “from below” that research questions are generated, that treatment options are chosen, and that theories are developed or rejected. Liberation Psychology places a premium on the psychologist’s investment and immersion in the experiences of the subaltern, the marginalized, and oppressed.

Having set forth the ethical and epistemological stance of Liberation Psychology, Martin-Baro stated three urgent tasks of any emancipatory psychological project. Firstly, Liberation

Psychology promotes the “recovery of historical memory” as a primary goal. Recovering historical memory

has to do with recovering not only the sense of one’s own identity and the pride of belonging to a people but also a reliance on a tradition and a culture, and above all, with rescuing those aspects of identity which served yesterday, and will serve today, for liberation. Thus, the recovery of a historical memory supposes the reconstruction of models of identification that, instead of chaining and caging the people, open up the horizon for them, toward their liberation and fulfillment. (p. 30)

For Martin-Baro, one of the symptoms of oppressive conditions is fatalism, a passive accommodation to a seemingly God-given and unchangeable present. The first step toward overcoming fatalism is not only opening up the people’s minds to an emancipatory future, but recovering the memory of their individual and collective past. This is not a return to an over-idealized past which never was, or a retrieval of a fossilized culture which does not speak to one’s present subjectivity, but a critical excavation of those elements which make up the individual, familial, and communal self’s continued survival. Only by scrutinizing and reconnecting with ones roots can one take stock of where one comes from and on whom one depends. It provides one with a series of resources from which to construct a more robust, nuanced, and flexible identity (Alschuler, 2006). Hence, “[t]here is no true self-knowledge that is not an acknowledgement of one’s origins, one’s community identity, and one’s own history” (Martin-Baro, 1994, p. 218).

Side by side with the recovery of historical memory is the de-ideologizing of everyday experience. For Martin-Baro (1994), knowledge is a social construction defined by what is “known” and what is “not-known.” For all people, but especially for marginalized groups, life is “burdened by the lie of a prevailing discourse that denies, ignores, or disguises essential aspects of reality... a fictional common sense that nurtures the structures of exploitation and conformist attitudes” (p. 31). Ideology functions to structure subjectivity, and mark the boundary between

what is allowed to enter awareness and what is dissociated, unarticulated, or rendered verboten, maintaining the status quo. To de-ideologize consciousness is to establish a critical distance from that which appears to be “common sense,” part of one’s daily habits and ways of seeing the world, posing it as a problem to be discussed and explored. When what is previously seen as “natural” is recognized as something that is “not the whole story,” a space is opened up for reflection in which *other*—previously disavowed or unarticulated—stories come into focus. For many marginalized people and groups, this may include their own histories and experiences which have been covered over in order to maintain unjust conditions. In this very sense, “[t]o de-ideologize means to *retrieve* the original experience of groups and *return it to them* as objective data. People can then use the data to formally articulate a consciousness of their own reality” (Martin-Baro, 1994, p. 31, my emphasis). De-ideologizing lifts the veil of lies which clouds consciousness, and creates space for people’s own subjectivity, for lost or dissociated experiences, to be brought to life by bringing them into contact with their lived reality. This “healing through consciousness” (Ricoeur, 1970) takes place in the context of a new relationship based in dialogue, a dialogue which recognizes the other as a subject.

Concientizacion: Critical Consciousness, Dialogue, and Relationship

Consciousness in all of its psychological and political dimensions is a key focus of inquiry in Liberation Psychology, just as it is in psychology in the broader sense. Martin-Baro (1994) defines consciousness as “the knowing or not knowing of self, through the world and through others, with praxis coming before mental knowledge” (p. 38). Consciousness is not some static substance existing in the individual subject, but an intentional process that is constantly revealed through relations with the world and with others, including “private” representations and feelings but also habits, behaviors, and social realities. More importantly, “the knowledge

that counts most is not explicit and formalized knowledge, but rather the knowledge inherent in everyday praxis, usually implicit, structurally unconscious, and ideologically natural” (p. 29). What is “not known” (e.g. not conscious, inchoate, dissociated, repressed) is usually represented not in words but in the subtle, non-verbal behaviors through which we relate to the world around us. And that which operates outside of awareness has tremendous importance insofar as it aids or hinders the self-definition, humanization, and objective realities not only of individuals but also entire communities.

Given the importance of consciousness—and what is inside or outside its boundaries—Martin-Baro (1994) asserts that “that the fundamental horizon for psychology as a field of knowledge is *concientizacion*” (p. 39). “Concientizacion” or “concientizacao” is a term Martin-Baro draws from Paulo Freire (whom I’ll discuss in more detail in Chapter III), referring to a critical consciousness which joins the psychological dimension of personal consciousness with the communal, social, and political. Originally coined by Freire in the context of literacy education, *concientizacion* “involves more than the possibility of people reading and writing the alphabet; it opens the possibility of their being able to read about themselves and write their own history... achieving a critical understanding of themselves as well as of their world and where they stand in it” (Martin-Baro, 1994, p. 18; p. 41). What is meant here is not a critique of “false consciousness” in the sense of consciousness itself being a lie. It is not the simple sentiment that *this* (overt, explicit) consciousness is “false” while what is outside of it is “true,” but that what is false is the notion that what is readily conscious is “the whole story,” whole and complete. *Concientizacion* appreciates the truth embedded in what is left out, and that reflecting on what is excluded transforms the self by broadening the horizons of consciousness.

By gradually decoding the implicit realities of one's world, one becomes aware of oppressive mechanisms operating in day to day life, and begins to deconstruct "the consciousness that mythifies that situation as natural, and opens up the horizon for new possibilities for action... which at the same time makes possible new forms of consciousness" (Martin-Baro, 1994, p. 40). A new experience of one's reality as open, malleable, and changeable leads to a new understanding of oneself. One begins "to discover themselves in their mastery of nature, in their actions that transform things, in their active role in relation to others" (p. 40). Interestingly, at this juncture Martin-Baro draws a parallel between the psychodynamic therapist's focus on addressing those defense mechanisms which block the patient's awareness of their inner life, and the liberation psychologist who draws attention to defense mechanisms which mutilate the consciousness of a marginalized person, internalizing social scripts which maintain their subjugation by alienating them from their own sense of personhood (p. 41). A psychologist of liberation, then, is concerned with the various psychological, cultural, social, and political mechanisms which operate to distort consciousness and keep one's immediate experience from focus. It involves a concern for dissociated experience, the experience of the outcast. Exploring and articulating these experiences through dialogue, new material emerges which allows for new forms of consciousness. This process of *concientizacion* disrupts fatalistic thought processes and behavior, creating the possibility of a new, transformative experience.

The discussion of consciousness up to this point should not be taken to mean that *concientizacion* is a purely intrapsychic or individual process. Nor is it something that the Liberation Psychologist "installs" in the mind of an oppressed person or community, as one installs a program into a computer. This would be a relationship between a dominant subject and a controlled object. *Concientizacion* "...assumes an escape from the reproductive machinery of

the relationships of dominance and submission, *for it can be realized only through dialogue*” (Martin-Baro, 1994, p. 42, my emphasis). Individual self-knowledge and self-acceptance is only possible through changes in the type of relationships that make up the self, changes that subvert the subject-object, active-passive, oppressor-oppressed dichotomy. It is through a relationship that is grounded in dialogue, in negotiation and moment to moment responsiveness between subjects—not objects—that *concientizacion* can occur. For Martin-Baro this dialogical, intersubjective process of change is the same whether we are addressing the teacher-student relationship or the therapist-patient relationship. Just as oppressive relations between the self and the world lead to distortions in the self, so too do affirming, empowering relations lead to repair, rejuvenation, and new self-states. Using the specific case of victims of war trauma in Central America, Martin-Baro argues that the clinical encounter has to involve *concientizacion*, “a process that returns the word to these human beings, not only as individuals, but as part of a people,” by addressing the way that identity is distorted by the enactment of oppressor-oppressed prototypes (p. 43). A psychotherapist influenced by Liberation Psychology would take care not to impinge their reality upon the patient, recycling a pattern of domination and submission, but seek to establish the relational conditions under which the patient can rediscover their experience by putting it into words, learn to “read” those words, and through this reading become the author of a new narrative.

The Problem of Fatalism: One Person’s “Culture” is Another’s “Oppression”?

Briefly touched on in this review of Martin-Baro’s (1994) thinking was the concept of fatalism. Fatalism, or *fatalismo* as it is discussed in the Multicultural Literature on Latinos (see for example, the section on Latinos in McGoldrick et al., 2005) and Latin Americans, is a way of construing the world “in which everyone’s fate is already predetermined and everything happens

inescapably. Human beings have no choice but to defer to their destiny and submit to the lot that their fate prescribes for them” (Martin-Baro, 1994, p. 200). People with a fatalistic orientation feel they can do nothing to change their lot in life, as it is instituted by forces outside their control, such as God or the state. Negative emotions such as sadness or anger are seen as pointless and distracting, as one is to bear one’s cross bravely and without complaint. “Fate” is accepted in order to avoid problems or conflicts with others. Passivity is encouraged not only as a virtue, but as a way of surviving punishment from the authorities. One’s life horizons are narrowed to the present, with the here and now being the only thing that counts; “Knowing the past or predicting the future serves only to confirm the inevitability of fate” (p. 201).

What is interesting about reading Multicultural Psychology’s interpretation of fatalism or *fatalismo* side by side with Liberation Psychology is how strikingly different they interpret this phenomena. For much Multicultural Psychology, fatalism is a cultural trait endemic to various ethnic minorities, Latinos amongst them. As a cultural trait, it is to be respected, and psychotherapies are to respond in kind. Hence we see the call for psychotherapies which have an “active” therapeutic approach vis-à-vis the passive, fatalistic patient, with the assumption that to do otherwise is to be culturally incompetent. For Liberation Psychology, fatalism is a symptom of oppression and marginalization. It is the result of structural injustice and the ideological apparatus which serves to maintain inequality between the powerful and the powerless. Fatalism provides the oppressed with a way of making meaning of their surrounding misery, while installing in their psyches the very fears and distortions which serve the interests of the powerful. It would not be unfair to say that from a Liberation Psychology perspective, Multicultural Psychology’s normalization, perhaps even elevation of Latin American fatalism to the level of common sense, represents a serious injustice. I read this normalization in light of Martin-Baro’s

indictment that “[i]n practice, ideological acceptance of fatalism amounts to acceptance of the oppressive social order” (p. 216).

This tension, between what Liberation Psychology scrutinizes as a problem to be reflected on, and what Multicultural Psychology sees as a core cultural value, is virtually untouched in the literature. Rather than become mired in discussions about the relative “passivity” or “activity” of different cultural groups, Liberation Psychology asks us to consider what kinds of psychotherapeutic relationships will foster a more holistic consciousness, a more integrated sense of self, a greater awareness of political dynamics, and a greater sense of freedom, in patients who are from historically marginalized communities. It asks us to place culture in a dialectical relationship with its immediate social, economic, and political context. This would be an important remedy to the danger of reducing issues of power and privilege to matters of “cultural difference.” Liberation Psychology also warns us against being complicit with oppressive forces by accepting fatalistic attitudes among underprivileged groups as somehow culturally natural. Martin-Baro (1994) asserts that in spite of behavioral signs of docility, oppressed people are never completely tamed, never completely convinced of their inferiority or powerlessness before “reality.” From time to time, oppressed people make subtle, albeit emergent and tentative, challenges to the powers and authorities that dominate them. Rather than a desire for change being a foreign artifact outside of their culture, Martin-Baro writes that “There is no need to sow the seed of rebellion to throw off an unjust fate; it is already there in the spirit of the colonized and can sprout forth when circumstances are right” (p. 217). What is required is a different relational context, one that recognizes the subjectivity of oppressed people, and holds out the possibility of change, of transformation, of another reality beyond a prescribed “fate.” In keeping with this spirit, this dissertation will eschew Multicultural

Psychology's emphasis on cultural differences, and will follow Liberation Psychology's emphasis on power relations and the subject-object, oppressor-oppressed dialectic.

Psychoanalysis and Liberation Psychology: Beginnings of a Dialogue

Liberation Psychology, as reviewed in this dissertation, holds a number of values and concepts that reflect the influence of psychoanalytic theory. Chapter III will unpack the different psychoanalytic tributaries flowing into Liberation Psychology and Martin-Baro's work. These values include,

1. A concern for what is cast out, rendered unspeakable, or unarticulated in consciousness, and how rediscovering what is "outcast" can enrich and expand consciousness.
2. A tilt toward the past—especially what is lost or disconnected from one's past—is of inestimable importance. The past grounds identity, and recovering the past by making it alive in the present provides new resources for reconstituting the self in new, more flexible ways, paving the road for a future. The process of recovering lost memories and experiences allows the ghosts of the past to be transubstantiated into the ancestors of the present (Loewald, 1960).
3. A conviction that it is through relationship that consciousness is transformed. Consciousness is torn, ruptured, impaired, and wounded in relationship, and it is in relationship that it is repaired, made whole, and healed. The place of the "other" reveals the background and foreground of change. Consciousness becomes stagnant in the face of domination, but through dialogue with another subject who takes the self as a subject, not an object (Benjamin, 1988), the unspeakable is put into words, the outcast is brought into the light, and the inchoate takes on form and presence.

These values flowed into Liberation Psychology through the work of third-world therapists and post-colonial thinkers who brought psychoanalytic theory to bear on the experiences of oppressed, colonized, and disempowered people. These writers include—among others—Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi, Enrique Pichon-Riviere, and Paulo Freire (Watkins & Shulman, 2008, p. 58). These third-world theorists were drawn to psychoanalysis because they perceived in it a progressive spirit which was relevant to the realities of subaltern people. And it will be the goal of this dissertation to make this progressive spirit manifest.

Chapter I will involve a dialogue between Latin American Liberation Theology, Black Theology, and the social and intellectual history of psychoanalysis. The central theological tenet of these theologies, of God's "preferential option for the oppressed," will become the lens through which psychoanalytic theory and history will be re-read. A brief historical excursus will establish the social context in which Sigmund Freud and the first generation analysts lived and worked. More specifically, the social position of Jews in fin-de-siècle Europe as "other" to the white Christian ideal will be highlighted. Freud's Jewishness placed him in the position of the "other," of one cast outside the bounds of Victorian society. It is from the position of the "other," of "exteriority" (Levinas), that Freud developed psychoanalytic theory.

In tragic and ironic fashion, a group of marginal people (Jewish people) who were oppressed in society began articulating a theory about what is repressed in the psyche. The (white, Christian) "ego" is seen as suspect by the analyst, who turns instead to its repressed underside, and sheds a light upon the feelings, memories, and object-relations which are cast out of conscious awareness. And it is the process of bringing these two into contact, the conscious and the unconscious, that serves as the foundation of analytic practice. A parallel will be drawn here with liberation theology's preferential option, as the theologian (or God, or the prophets)

takes society as suspect, and turns toward the “outside,” toward the underside of history (Dussel), to shed a light upon the despised and abject other: the widow, the poor, the orphan, the nonwhite, female, and non-heterosexual. Psychoanalysis will be shown to exude a kind of ethic, a “preferential option for the *repressed*” which parallels liberation theology’s “preferential option for the *oppressed*.” Liberation theology and psychoanalysis then share a concern for what is cast out, marginalized, excluded, repressed inside and outside, in psyche and society. This sensibility holds important insights for clinical practice and social reflection.

Chapter II will continue this historical review by exploring the concern for social justice on the part of the first generation of psychoanalysts, and how this concern influenced psychoanalytic theory and practice. The development of psychoanalytic technique will be traced to the dialogues between Sigmund Freud and Sandor Ferenczi, dialogues which took place in the context of psychoanalysis’ encounter with poverty and destitution in the wake of World War I. These dialogues, which served as precursors to contemporary, especially relational, psychoanalysis, also inspired Freud’s call for greater psychoanalytic engagement with the poorest and most vulnerable. This incited the early psychoanalysts—overwhelmingly left-leaning Marxists, communists, and social democrats—to “sharpen in all directions the sense of social justice” (Freud) by engaging in political activism, experimenting with clinical technique, and by promoting short-term, more affordable treatments. The relevance of this history for clinical work with diverse populations will be discussed, and aspects of contemporary psychoanalysis (countertransference, enactment, new relational experience) will be understood in light of Freud and Ferenczi’s responsiveness to the underprivileged.

Heeding Watkins & Shulman’s (2008) call for the inclusion of third world depth psychologists within the psychoanalytic corpus, Chapter III will trace the lineage of

psychoanalysis starting with Freud, flowing through post-colonial theory (Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi) the interpersonal-cultural school (Erich Fromm, Herbert Marcuse), and into Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, whose work served as a core theoretical engine of Liberation Psychology. Having located the tributaries flowing into Liberation Psychology from psychoanalysis, it will be argued that Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy can be read as a "historico-cultural-political psychoanalysis" (as Erich Fromm once commented to Freire) through comparison with contemporary relational theory. Placing Freire in dialogue with relational psychoanalysis draws out the implicit role of affect in the politics of critical pedagogy, and embeds the affective nature of the therapeutic encounter in the realm of the political. Freire's ideas regarding intersubjectivity, the teacher-student relationship, and critical consciousness will be seen as pre-dating relational psychoanalytic reflection on mutual recognition, enactment, and the social third (Jessica Benjamin, Neil Altman). Freire emerges from this dialogue as a proto-relational theorist, crafting a bridge between psychoanalysis and Liberation Psychology.

Implications will be drawn for clinical practice, emphasizing the potential for the teacher-student and therapist-patient relationship to provide an affective space for political empowerment and critical consciousness. These ideas provide a useful framework for reflecting about cultural enactments, and for resolving them within the therapeutic relationship. A case example will be provided to illustrate the concepts explored through the dissertation. By engaging the psychoanalytic origins of Liberation Psychology, psychoanalysis itself will stand poised to reclaim lost voices of healing and liberation.

In the concluding chapter I will summarize the points made in this dissertation. Firstly, returning to Multicultural Psychology's roots in liberation Psychology has the potential to act as a broader, more cohesive framework for cultural competence discussions. Secondly, a socially

aware psychoanalysis founded on Liberation Psychology has very particular—and very important—contributions to make to our discussions of culturally competent practice by emphasizing the role of the therapist’s identity, awareness of self and unconscious biases, and reflection-in-relation when conducting cross-cultural therapy. These are tools and skills that while emanating from a psychoanalytic perspective, can be useful to a variety of schools of psychotherapy (Cognitive-Behavioral, Systems, Humanistic, etc).

In joining together Liberation Psychology and psychoanalysis we must find our contemporary approaches to talking about culture and responding to our diverse patients incomplete, wanting, and in need of reform. Bringing together these two perspectives in this dissertation is essentially an attempt to deconstruct my education, and rediscover the original drive of those who came before me. What earlier generations of culturally and socially conscious psychologists, social workers, and other mental health practitioners called for was deeper and more radical than cultural competence, or even an expansion of services to “diverse” populations. They correctly identified the intrapsychic manifestations of broader social forces, of marginalization, of discrimination, of immigration and failed immigration policy, of communal decay and stagnation. They called for justice. Unfortunately, this call for justice became diluted and rendered to a distant and subordinate role to that of cultural competency. Training and public policy has emphasized the adaptation of services to different racial and cultural populations. It has not fully acknowledged the need for mental health services to join with these populations in the pursuit of social justice. For some it is assumed. For others it hovers in the background, an expected secondary result of “cultural competence” work. For many I fear it is either irrelevant or non-existent. Complacency, ignorance, and compromise exist side by side in cultural competency discourses, over time turning a cry for revolution into a whisper for inclusion.

As critical as this conclusion aims to be of what has come before and of what currently is, it is my hope that it will come across as a love letter to the teachers, supervisors, and mentors who have inspired me, and to the patients I have treated, and whose symptoms call out to me:

I was hungry, did you feed me?
 I was thirsty, did you give me to drink?
 I was a stranger, did you invite me in?
 I was naked, did you clothe me?
 I was sick and in prison, did you visit me?

My goal is not so much to criticize, condemn, and put down, but to call us back to a set of values and a way of thinking about diversity that I have felt muddled by the discourse of cultural competency. So that it is not tokenism, not the trade in stereotypes or narrow thinking about ethnic identity, but “*justice, justice you shall pursue*” (Deuteronomy 16:20). This is what I have heard in the therapeutic ruptures I have experienced with all my patients, but especially my patients of color:

I was depressed, and you did not make my heart glad

I was anxious, and you did not soothe my soul

I was in need, and you injured me

But with each interpellation, each calling out of my therapeutic misstep, of the impasse emerging in the therapeutic dance, was the final test: *I am thirty and hungry for justice, will you repent and be just toward me?* Repentance can be seen as the ultimate act of reparation in words and in action. It is that moment when we take responsibility and acknowledge our contribution to the breach in the relationship. It is restorative justice *in the trenches*.

We have feared this breach in our relationship with our ethnic minority clients. We fear ruptures, and have developed a variety of strategies with which to “ensure” that ruptures will “never” happen. But no treatment manual, no workshop on “working with X community,” no

amount of knowledge, not even of our own psychic world and its vulnerabilities, will prevent cultural ruptures from happening. We have distanced ourselves from this reality. We have forgotten this truth, and with it the need for justice. Justice, especially *reparative and restorative justice*, reminds us of how we have fallen short, how we have failed our patients and communities, and of the need to respond to this lapse in connection. It is precisely because of this lapse-in-justice that the Hebrew prophet Isaiah chastises Israel, calling it back to a fundamental ethical imperative, “Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow” (Isaiah 1: 17). Although throughout this dissertation I will have paralleled the theologian, the therapist, and the prophet as calling attention to what is “other,” I feel that it is our patients who seek to remind us of this reality session after session. In the end it is their cry we are compelled to hear. Heeding this cry is the first step toward justice.

Chapter I

A Preferential Option for the Repressed: Freud through the eyes of Liberation Theology

Nor is it perhaps entirely a matter of chance that the first advocate of psychoanalysis was a Jew. To profess belief in this new theory called for a certain degree of readiness to accept a situation of solitary opposition—a situation with which no one is more familiar than a Jew.
—Sigmund Freud (1925/1961, p. 222)

The fact that *all* of Freud's early associates were Jewish guaranteed that psychoanalysis would remain marginal. The Jews were the racialized 'other' in European life of the period... Under these conditions, the Jewish composition of psychoanalysis guaranteed that all analysts regarded the dominant culture as hypocritical—an assumption shared by all oppressed or marginalized groups for obvious reasons.
—Eli Zaretsky (2004, p. 70)

It may be that a chorus [in psychoanalysis] will emerge to call for a 'preferential option for the poor' and to proclaim that psychotherapeutic neutrality—as well as political neutrality—is impossible, especially in the polarizing social conditions of the United States.
—Nancy Caro Hollander (1997, p. 237).

Colleagues often ask me—a student practitioner of clinical psychology and former seminarian who is Christian, Puerto Rican, and committed to issues of social justice—why psychoanalysis? Why make it part of my clinical work? Are its values not in conflict with my culture? Does Freud's stand on religion not contradict my beliefs as a Christian? What could the hundred-year old theory of a Victorian, bourgeoisie, European man possibly contribute to discussions of social justice? This will be an attempt, however immature and incomplete, to answer these questions, and argue that psychoanalysis conveys an ethics and a *telos* which deepens my faith, speaks to my experience as an ethnic minority, effectively guides my clinical work, and enriches my reflections on social justice. Although it is understandable to be suspicious of such claims given psychoanalysis' social origins as a product of the misogynistic, heterosexist, racist, and classist discourses of the Victorian era, I invite the reader to consider an-

other story to be told, a story which complements and nuances this story. In what follows I argue that this prevailing narrative lacks awareness of psychoanalysis' marginal origins, and the role of Freud's own racial identity as a Jew in crafting and producing that marginality.¹ This lack of awareness at the same time belies the robust social amnesia that has gripped not only the public imagination regarding the origins of psychoanalysis, but in many ways the social imaginary of psychoanalysis itself (Jacoby, 1986). In the midst of an embodied economic crisis, and the ever-present inequalities of our current national and global economic system, it becomes all the more pertinent to examine our origins as a field of clinicians and theorists, and undertake a recovery of our historical memory in order to make our collective unconscious, conscious.

Hence, I wish to recover the historical memory of psychoanalysis as a progressive psychological project constructed by an oppressed ethnic group—by Jewish people in fin-de-siècle Europe. I will argue that imbued within its origins, within its very theoretical machinery and history, psychoanalysis was a science of the marginal, and needs to be rediscovered—or reinvented—as such. While this may at first appear to be a far-fetched and even utopian argument, I will employ Latin American Liberation Theology (Gutierrez, 1988), Black Theology (Cone, 1970; 1975/1997), and Liberation Philosophy (Dussel, 1985; 1996) as a composite lens through which to re-read the origins of psychoanalysis, and unearth a progressive core. Although a conversation between Liberation Theology and Freud—who was an avowed atheist—may seem impossible, one may find a certain liberationist ethic in psychoanalysis, as well as a psychoanalytic “ethic” in Liberation Theology. It is this impossible ethic which marks the contours of an impossible profession.

¹ What it means to be a Jew or “Jewishness” is a source of much debate. In the United States Jewishness is conventionally defined in terms of religious affiliation, while various past and present social movements have also sought to understand it as an ethno-cultural or racial classification. This paper emphasizes Jewishness as an ethnic as well as racial category in the 19th century world.

The Unconscious and the Jewish “Other”: Psychoanalysis in its Social Context

Although a full treatment of psychoanalysis’ cultural and historical origins is beyond the scope of this chapter, I want to draw on the groundbreaking works of sociologists and historians such as Sander Gilman and Elizabeth Danto, in order to paint—albeit in broad strokes—a picture of the social forces shaping and framing psychoanalysis in relation to its “Jewishness.” The rise of the Enlightenment in late 18th century Europe led to the emancipation of the Jews from confinement to the ghetto, and the lifting of anti-Semitic laws which sustained socio-economic segregation between the Jewish people and the broader gentile world (Salberg, 2007, p. 199-200). Although emancipation led to greater social mobility, it also went in hand with what Geller (2007) refers to as the “pre-Shoah double-bind”: the pressure on Jews to assimilate into Aryan society, along with the belief that they are not only incapable of doing so, but that to even attempt to integrate would threaten Aryan identity. The Jewish people, Sander Gilman (1993b) writes, “had been historically classified as an exclusionary stereotypical category with a status analogous to that of women... The Jew defined what the Aryan was not... The Jew became the projection of all the anxieties about control present within the Aryan” (p. 9). The Aryan ego needed the Jew to “function as exemplary other, as the always already antitype,” but the transgression of the Jew from the periphery to the center of the Gentile world “fomented a crisis” (Geller, 2007, p. 48). Anti-Semitic populism and new forms of anti-Semitic racism arose to continue oppressing the Jewish people, rendering them “both inside and outside Western society: newly ‘emancipated’ and able to claim influential positions, yet still victims of social exclusion” (Frosh, 2005, p. 1).

The scientific, cultural, and political world of Freud’s era made a series of equations between Jewishness, femininity, homosexuality, blackness, and disease on the one hand, and

Aryan-ness, masculinity, heterosexuality, whiteness, and health on the other. Sander Gilman (1991) states that “the idea of seeing the hysteric was closely bound to the idea seeing the Jew—but very specifically the male Jew. ... [Hence t]he Jew is the hysteric; the Jew is the feminized Other, the Jew is seen as different, diseased” (p. 333). As such, not only Jewish minds but Jewish bodies were seen as prone to pathology. Racially, the Jew occupied “the ‘lowest’ rung on the *scala naturae*, the scale of perfection, of eighteenth-century biological science,” (Gilman, 1993a, p. 12) and was a prime example of the “dark-skinned” races. Within that category, both the Jew and the African were “seen as equivalent dangers to the ‘white’ races” (Gilman, 1993b, p. 19). It was believed that the Jew had black skin, an inherent quality that “was as much a sign of their illness as was their hair” (Gilman, 1993b, p. 20). Jews were black. This identification of Jewishness and blackness was itself reflected in the late 1930’s by writers such as Jesenska, who referred to the Jews as “the Negroes of Europe” (cited in Gilman, 1993b, p. 20).

Schopenhauer himself, echoing the anti-Semitism of his day, ascribed to the Jew a “primitive” and atavistic smell, reducing them to the status of an animal (Geller, 2007). In this reduction of their humanity the Jew is made an example of biological degeneration from the Aryan masculine ideal (p. 73). Thus the Jewish smell was at the same time a feminine smell. Brickman (2003) would add that in this equation of the Jew with the primitive, an association with the “primitive” African would follow, an enslaved association which collides with the unconscious in Freud’s own work. Freud connects the unconscious with avoided odors when he writes, “To put it crudely, the [unconscious] memory stinks just as in the present the object stinks; and in the same manner as we turn away our sense organ (the head and nose) in disgust, the preconscious and the sense of consciousness turn away from the memory. *This is repression*” (cited in Geller, 2007, p. 78; cf Freud, 1930/1961: 46n, 53n, my emphasis). That which is

repressed, that which we turn away from and cast out, becomes unconscious. But again, to evoke the unconscious, the repository of primitive aggressive and sexual drives, not only calls forth the repudiated feminine, but also those 19th and 21st century “others” most associated with a rambunctious, rapacious, threatening, and aggressive sexuality: the Jew and the Black (Brickman, 2003; Geller, 2007). How did Freud respond to the experience of Jewish oppression—his own marginality—and how did this affect the development of psychoanalysis?

Sigmund Freud’s life mirrored the collective struggle of many post-emancipation Jews. Originally from Galicia on the fringe of the Hapsburg Empire, his family migrated to Vienna when he was four years old, seeking better economic opportunities. This was not initially forthcoming, as the Freud family established itself in the district of *Leopoldstadt*, where the majority of poor Jewish emigrants resided. It was in this district—seen in the Viennese “popular imagination” as the quintessential Jewish ghetto—that the young Freud experienced unstable housing, chronic poverty, and the earliest lashes of anti-Semitism (Geller, 2007, p. 50; Gilman, 1993b: 15-16; cf Freud, 1936 & Holmes, 2006, p. 216; Rozenblit, 2010). “For the young Freud,” Gilman writes, “being Jewish meant being seen as different, as diseased, as culturally incomplete. The category of race had a real meaning for Freud throughout his life, and it was closely associated with the field of science” (Gilman, 1993b, p. 16). Alongside everyday racism, Freud experienced discrimination in his professional life, facing barriers to greater social mobility time and again on account of being Jewish. It was anti-Semitic racism that led Freud—and other Viennese Jews—to be excluded from the fields of law and medicine, paving the way for his turn to psychiatry and the development of psychoanalysis.

Jewishness was both a source of pride as well as stigma for Freud, and it was the conscious and unconscious interplay between these two facets of his experience that formed the

genetic-traumatic knowledge of psychoanalysis. On the one hand, Freud saw his Jewishness as that which provided him with the resilience to withstand ongoing criticism and rejection from the dominant culture, and which freed him from prejudices which would have restricted his openness to the unconscious (Freud, 1925/1961). On the other hand, Freud also harbored a fear that psychoanalysis would be marginalized as being a “Jewish science,” and sought to cover over this fact in a variety of ways (not the least of which was giving Carl Jung, a gentile, greater prominence in the predominantly Jewish psychoanalytic movement). Displaying the very ambivalence of the psyche, Freud consciously and unconsciously upholds and subverts anti-Semitic discourses and its attending evils—misogyny and heterosexism—through the interpretive transformations of psychoanalytic theory (Brickman, 2003; Frosh, 2005; 2008; Geller, 2007; Gilman, 1993a; 1993b; Salberg, 2007).

In the very genesis of psychoanalysis as a theory and a treatment—Freud’s earliest case studies, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, and *The Interpretation of Dreams*—one finds the stories of young Jewish women caught in the societal contradictions of patriarchy and anti-Semitism, of Jewish men torn by the push and pull of ethnic pride and assimilation, and of strained relations between Jews and Gentiles (Blum, 2010; Decker, 1992; Geller, 2007). In the clinical case studies that gave rise to psychoanalytic theory, Freud omits the ethnicity of his Jewish patients, preventing any possible association between their hysteric or nervous conditions and their Jewishness. The themes of sexual perversion, mental illness, primitivity, criminality, and aggression become the cornerstone of psychoanalytic discourse through Freud’s de-linking of these traits from Jews and universalizing them to all humanity (Frosh, 2005; 2008; Geller, 2007; Gilman, 1993a; 1993b). Hence Gilman (1993a) writes, “What [is] being worked out (at least in part) within the rhetoric of

psychoanalysis is a complicated answer to the stigmatization of the Jew, especially the Jewish male, in the science of the nineteenth century” (p. 8).

Psychoanalytic theory operated as the atavistic mirror from which 19th century society recoiled in disdain. To borrow from clinical language, Freud as a Jew acted as the “blank screen” which received the projections of white-Aryan society around animality, sexuality, aggression, and perversion. As the “analyst,” Freud’s writing functioned as a type of “counter-transference,” returning the repressed content, the projections of society, back to those who thought themselves free of the unconscious, free of the toxic Jewish other. What is seen as the pathological nature of the Jew becomes the pathological nature of humanity projected upon the Jew. Taking this line of thought to its extreme, Freud consciously and unconsciously engaged in a “return to sender,” returning the repressed to the ego, in order that it be included and integrated into a split and brutalized consciousness. It becomes the lot of psychoanalysis, then, to critique the totality of modernity, and reveal to it its suppressed underside in the hopes of reconciliation.

Liberation Theology and the Preferential Option for the “Other”

Before unpacking what exactly I mean by this, I would like to introduce at this point three discourses of Liberation Theology that are relevant here: Latin American Liberation Theology, Black Theology, and Liberation Philosophy. I hope to use these discourses to frame a foundational ethic that flows throughout psychoanalytic history, from the outcast position of the Jew, to the analyst’s concern for the repressed within, and argue for a psychoanalytic concern for the oppressed without. As mentioned in the introduction, the essence of Liberation Theology is captured in the doctrine of God’s “preferential option for the oppressed.” The preferential option refers to a strand of tradition in the Judeo-Christian scriptures which emerges in the Mosaic

literature (the *Torah*), the Prophets, and the Christian Gospels, in which Divinity is revealed among those who suffer egregious injustice at the hands of the powerful.

From a Liberation Theology perspective, the “chosenness” of the enslaved Hebrews represents an archetype—indeed, a “light unto the nations” (Isaiah 42:6)—to those who are marginalized and oppressed. Gustavo Gutierrez (1988) and James Cone (1970), founders of Latin American and Black Liberation Theology, respectively, argue that the election of the Hebrews is inseparable from the Exodus. The Exodus is the theological proof *par excellence*, through which God takes a stand with those who are oppressed, and joins with them in their struggle for liberation through Moses the liberator and law-giver. Thus, Gustavo Gutierrez (1988) sees the preferential option for the oppressed as ingrained in what he refers to as the Mosaic legacy (p. 167). This legacy emerges again and again throughout the scriptures, particularly in the writings of the prophets. Biblical scholar John Sawyer (1993) notes that in the Deuteronomic tradition, the figure of Moses functions “as the supreme prototype for Israelite prophecy” (1993, p. 16). Whenever Israel prioritized cultic ritual and neglected the ethical mandates of the Mosaic legacy, “there arose again and again,” as Freud (1939) himself writes,

an unending succession of men... seized by the great and powerful tradition which had gradually grown in darkness, and it was these men, the Prophets, who sedulously preached the old Mosaic doctrine: the Deity spurns sacrifice and ceremonial; he demands only belief and a life of truth and justice” (p. 175, p. 76)

Thus Freud and Liberation Theology concur in an interesting way as they appraise the prophetic criticism of ceremony in favor of justice. Sawyer (1993) adds, “[s]acrifice without justice is worthless; and justice for the prophets means protection of the underprivileged members of society” (p. 44). Sawyer observes that the Hebrew word for righteousness—*tsedaqah*—often goes in hand with the word justice in the prophetic literature. *Tsedaqah* as a concept can be translated as “a righteous act on behalf of the oppressed,” as well as “justice” in a more abstract

sense (Sawyer, 1993, p. 45). Therefore prophets practiced *tsedaqah* by “acting righteously” on behalf of the other: the widow, the orphan, the poor, and the stranger in the land of Israel.

Indeed, social ethicist Daniel Maguire (2005) claims that “[t]o practice *tsedaqah*, you must *love* the alien” (p. 43).

A central marker of otherness in Black Theology is James Cone’s articulation of “blackness” as an ontological and physiologico-historic category. While Gutierrez originally wrote within the context of economic exploitation and post/colonialism in Latin America (and later included other categories of oppression, such as race and gender), Cone wrote from a North American context dealing with the economic, cultural, and social oppression of the historic African-American community. Hence, a focus on racism and the dynamics of the “color line” was and continues to be a salient angle of inquiry for Black Theology.

Blackness refers firstly to a physiological trait, representing the historic black community in North America that has been a victim of structural racism. But for Cone blackness also functions ontologically as a sign for all oppressed people. In reflecting on the genocide of the indigenous people of the Americas, the persecution and brutalization of Jews, Latinos, and all people of color in the first and third worlds, Cone (1970) concludes that “Blackness... stands for all victims of oppression who realize that their humanity is inseparable from man’s liberation from whiteness” (p. 28). It is in this spirit that Cone asserts that “God is black.” To say theologically that God is black is to assert that “God has made the oppressed condition his own condition. This is the essence of the biblical revelation. By electing the Israelite slaves as his people and by becoming the Oppressed One in Jesus Christ, God discloses to men that he is known where men experience humiliation and suffering” (p. 121). By grounding Jesus’ soteriological purpose in his Jewishness, Black Theology affirms his blackness; Jesus “*is* black

because he *was* a Jew. The affirmation of the Black Christ can be understood when the significance of his past Jewishness is related dialectically to the significance of his present blackness” (Cone, 1975/1997, p. 123). It is through God’s identification with the blackness of the Jewish people that Israel operates as a light to the oppressed people of the world (cf. Isaiah 42: 6-7).

Within Liberation Theology, there is perhaps no stronger affirmation of Christ’s identification with the poor and the stranger than in Matthew 25:31-46, where Jesus teaches about the advent of the “Son of Man,” who in the end of days turns to the righteous and calls upon them, “I was hungry and you gave me to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink. I was a stranger, and you took me in. I was naked, and you clothed me. I was sick, and you visited me. I was in prison, and you came to me.” When the righteous ask the Son of Man whenever did they do these things, he responds: “whatever you do for the least of these, *you did for me.*” Notice here the convergence between a concern for the alien and downtrodden with *responsiveness* to their unmet needs. It is in this vector that we introduce one of the great refinements of Liberation Theology’s preferential option as an option for the *Other*, as articulated in Argentinian philosopher Enrique Dussel’s (1985; 1996) philosophy of liberation.

Inspired by the work of Emmanuel Levinas, Dussel (1996) equates the position of “exteriority,” outside the contours of the self, outside the “totality” of modernity, with the position of the poor as Other to the rich, of woman as Other to man, queer to straight, black to white. Speaking to the immediacy of his context as a Latin American philosopher, he writes “We [Latin Americans] were conscious of being the ‘other face’ of modernity” (p. 21). He traces the birth of modernity to the advent of colonialism in the “new world” (but also in Asia), creating a relationship of domination between the “center” of Europe and the “periphery” of the non-white

world. European powers positioned themselves as an “I” in relation to a fantasized “it,” questioning whether these “Other people” were in fact human; humanity defined in terms of the rational European subject. In the case of indigenous Latin Americans, if they were not truly human, then they “were suited to forced labor; if not irrational, then at least they were brutish, wild, underdeveloped, uncultured because they did not have the culture of the center” (Dussel, 1985, p. 3).

Dussel (1985) argues that before the ego cogito “there is an ego conquiro; ‘I conquer’ is the practical foundation of ‘I think’” (p. 3). It is in this act of instituting a ego-as-centrality that Europe considered itself “the archetypal foundational ‘I’” (p. 8). Dussel unpacks the multiple iterations of this imperialistic ego:

From the ‘I conquer’ applied to the Aztec and Inca world and all America, from the ‘I enslave’ applied to Africans sold for the gold and silver acquired at the cost of the death of Amerindians working in the depths of the earth, from the ‘I vanquish’ of the wars of India and China to the shameful ‘opium war’—from this ‘I’ appears the Cartesian ego cogito. (p. 8)

This ontological splitting between an ego-center and an Other-periphery did not appear out of thin air. Rather, it paralleled a dialectical process operating within the boundaries of Europe itself—the exclusion and denigration of the Jew as non-white foil to the white-Aryan ideal.

It is from this position of the *Other* (the poor, female, queer, non-white, the stranger) that Dussel (1996) argues that the Levinasian *autrui* appeals from the exteriority of the center, “[f]rom a ‘beyond’ of the horizon of the world, the Other irrupts ‘into the world,’ demanding justice. This is the ethical stance par excellence, the face-to-face stance” (p. 53). This demand erupts as a cry, a howl, a supplication emanating from unbearable pain and suffering. The cry paralyzes us, terrifies us, takes hold of our ego, beating at its doors like an enemy at the gates, “I am naked, I am homeless, I am sick, I am a foreigner, I am in prison, I hunger and thirst for justice!” The philosophy of liberation arises from the periphery of the oppressed, “from the

shadow that the light of Being has not been able to illumine. Our thought sets out from non-Being, nothingness, otherness, exteriority, the mystery of no-sense. It is, then, a ‘barbarian’ philosophy” (Dussel, 1985, p. 14). The ethic of Liberation Theology is both this call and response. It is the cry of the Other, but also the response of the self held captive by the Other’s interpellation. The self’s ethical act lies in its responsiveness to the need of this terrifying other, “of shortening the distance between someone who can accept or reject us, shake our hand or injure us, kiss or kill us. To approach in justice is always a risk because it is to shorten the distance toward a distinct freedom.” (p. 17). Approaching the Other involves pushing past our fears of its unbearable toxicity. For Dussel, the self answers the call of the Other by bearing this toxic, traumatic kernel, entering into a new relationship with it, carrying out an act of justice.

Liberation Theology points to a concern for what is rendered “Other” in society. It connects this concern for the oppressed other to the Mosaic legacy operating in the Hebrew Scriptures and its particular incarnation in Christian theology through the figure of the Christ, framing it as a core ethical imperative cutting across the Judeo-Christian tradition. Black Theology in particular sees the ontological blackness of the Jewish people—blackness as a symbol for those who are oppressed—as a sign of their chosenness by God. This blackness marks the epistemological location of the outcast, and endows the Other and self (who responds to the cry of the Other) with a particular type of hermeneutics; a hermeneutics of suspicion.

Hermeneutics of Suspicion as Turn to “the Underside” of the Unconscious

Paul Ricoeur (1970) in *Freud and Philosophy* articulated just such a view of psychoanalysis as a “hermeneutic of suspicion,” a process of questioning the “illusion and lies of consciousness,” in order to open up our horizons “for a more authentic word, for a new reign of Truth by the invention of an art of *interpreting*” (p. 32; p. 33). Psychoanalysis aims to extend

consciousness by bringing it into contact with the repressed; interpretation catalyzes the advent of the Other by providing an-Other perspective that challenges the limits of consciousness (cf. Ellman, 2009, p. 598; 603-604). Ricoeur (1970) sees this “healing through consciousness” (p. 35) as taking place through the critical reappraisal of the horizons of one’s world, as mediated by the Other-person of the analyst. This critical consciousness (cf. Freire, 1972; Martin-Baro, 1994) develops through “[t]he dispossession of the ego... [revealing that] the home of meaning is... something *other* than consciousness” (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 55, my emphasis). The ego is problematized as a construct dependent on that which it avoids and excludes, revealing that the “I” is dependent on the *Other*. In this relationship the focus of truth is tilted toward the unconscious through an “archaeology of reflection,” in which analyst and analysand join together to critically examine that which was ejected beyond the contours of consciousness (p. 411).

Expanding the hermeneutics of suspicion to include its underpinnings in Freud’s Jewishness, Stephen Frosh (2005) writes that psychoanalysis is “a process of *decentring* because it removes the ego from the centre of personal psychology and replaces it with the unconscious (and, in Freud’s ‘structural’ theory, the Id or ‘It’), which reveals with great intensity the *alien* core inside each one of us” (p. 206, my emphasis). The alien is an internal and external other that is both feared and desired, fantasized and sexualized, and the Jewish people—including Freud and the early psychoanalysts—functioned as the *sine qua non* alien of 19th century Europe, “[becoming] the carriers and recipients of culture’s repressed underside” (p. 59). This leads Frosh to state that in the unconscious,

otherness itself has a ‘Jewish’ feel to it; the hidden recesses of sex and aggression are easily identified with anti-Semitic paradigms. It is not, then, that the Jew is just a convenient scapegoat upon whom these inner urges can be projected; it is rather that just as psychoanalysis is ‘Jewish’ in important ways, so is the unconscious it has discovered

and invented. *All otherness in the West is Jewish, including that inner otherness that is unconscious desire.* (p. 215)

Given the equations in Black Theology and Freud's cultural milieu between Jewishness and blackness, it could also be argued that the unconscious has a "black" feeling to it, that the sexual/aggressive depths of psyche and society permeate with the otherness of the non-white world (Brickman, 2003). Freud's "blackness" as a Jew placed him in the world of the alien, into the unconscious world teeming with abject associations which always already render the "personal" political, social, and cultural.

Drawing on psychoanalysis' epistemological position in theorizing about analytic work in inner city contexts, Neil Altman (2009) writes that psychoanalysis

was a black thing, given the predominance of Jews... [and as] a black thing in a white society, psychoanalysis attained the power of the outsider to gain perspective to critique, to see in the dark. A large share of the value of psychoanalysis derives from the ability of Freud and his followers *to bring to light that which was disavowed and repressed* (p. 122; p. 123, my emphasis)

The position of the outcast provided Freud and the first generation of analysts with a kind of "night vision"—as Altman (2009) refers to it—able to hold society's manifest consciousness suspect, to enter the darkness of its repressed underside and see in the dark, revealing the repressed elements that lie in its unconscious borderlands. Returning to Dussel but mixing in some Anzaldua, psychoanalysis sheds a light upon the Other who was crossed by the borders of the ego (Anzaldua, 2007), rendering those borders more permeable, granting the alien Other a "travel visa" or "permanent residency" in consciousness, echoing the spirit of the age-old Vedantic phrase, "thou art *that*."

It is this epistemological and ethical impulse in psychoanalysis that I see as analogous to Liberation Theology's "preferential option for the oppressed." It is this suspicion of ego and society, and responsiveness to the avoided and outcast, that I term psychoanalysis' "preferential

option for the *repressed*.” This preferential option for the repressed flows between the lines of Freud’s clinical and social texts, defining the repressed as that which the ego wards off, but also functioning as a metaphor for those who are oppressed, exploited, and excluded in society. The relationship between “inside” and “outside” functions like Lacan’s Möbius strip, in that tracing the trajectories of one inevitably blends into the other. Freud’s (and the early analyst’s) Jewishness and experience of oppression flowed into the concept of repression, which itself attracted a diverse array of progressive thinkers, activists, and professionals who saw in repression an intrapsychic analogue to oppression in everyday life. Psychic repression then becomes a tool for understanding social oppression, bringing the process full-circle.

From the Inside-out to the Outside-in: Repression as Psychic and Social Metaphor

Psychoanalysis exuded a revolutionary concern for otherness in both psyche and society. This otherness in turn can be said to have *interpellated* the Others of Victorian society—Jewish minorities, feminist thinkers, queer reformers, leftist radicals—who were compelled to respond and *connect* with that otherness. The first audience to Freud’s ideas on dreams and the unconscious were members of the B’nai B’rit, a socially conscious Jewish fraternity, and the members of the first generation of psychoanalysts were predominantly Jewish, left-leaning Marxists, communists, socialists, and social democrats (Danto, 2005; Klein, 1981; Makari, 2008). As Freud’s theories on repression and sexuality entered mainstream debates on Austro-German socio-political life, various leftist thinkers, artists, and non-physicians were drawn to psychoanalysis. Given the tortured relationships between sexuality, gender, and race, to comment on any of these—particularly sexuality—was to implicitly comment on all three. This was not merely a matter of access to sexual pleasure. For Freud to argue that the repression of sexuality leads to illness was to effectively enter headfirst into debates around race and gender

(Gilman, 1993b; Makari, 2008). As described above, to draw attention to sexuality was to trigger related anxieties around racial and gender identity. And it was Freud's discovery of repression and that which is repressed which laid the foundations for leftist applications of psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic social engagement.

Makari (2008) observes that feminist and gay rights activists of the time drew on the idea of repression to examine the ways in which society's gender and sexual norms fomented a double consciousness in human subjectivity, arguing that "[c]ivilization made a pathological split between day and night, above and below, the socially sanctioned and the sexual" (p. 143; cf. Danto, 2005). Freud himself would publish his first socially engaged essay in 1908, "Civilized Sexual Ethics and Modern Nervous Illness," warning about the dangers of socially imposed repression. Following Freud's lead, those among the first generation of psychoanalysts participated in movements dedicated to penal reform, advocacy for the rights of women and homosexuals, economic reform for the poorest and vulnerable, and greater social welfare for disenfranchised Jews (Danto, 2005; Makari, 2008). Freud believed that society would resist psychoanalysis because it drew attention to "shameful" and oft-forgotten realities, but if society could accept these repressed aspects of itself, then the possibility of change would be in the horizon (Makari, 2008).

Following World War I, psychoanalytic social engagement became more pronounced, as Freud clamored to "sharpen in all directions the sense of social justice" in psychoanalysis (Freud, 1920/1955, p. 267). Elizabeth Danto's (2005) groundbreaking historical analysis returns to us this much forgotten chapter of psychoanalysis. At the 1918 Budapest Congress Freud (1919/1955) called for the development of public out-patient clinics where free treatment would be provided for the poor. He ushered in a new era of clinical experimentation in psychoanalytic

technique, and called on psychoanalysts to commit themselves to care for the mental and material well-being of the poor, invoking the image of Emperor Franz Josef, a revered reformer and advocate of Jewish minorities and the poor (Danto, 2005; Makari, 2008). This was to be a “psychotherapy for the people,” therapeutic to both psyche and society (Danto, 2005). The development of this “psychotherapy for the people” and its implications for contemporary practice will be further discussed in Chapter II.

During the years between 1918-1938—which Makari (2008) refers to as the “great flowering” of psychoanalysis (2008, p. 299)—Freud wrote some of his most political and socially conscious treatises. In *The Future of an Illusion* Freud (1927/1975) revealed himself a proto-postcolonial theorist (Jonte-Pace, 2006) by exploring how the oppressed internalize a identification with the ruling class which maintains the status quo (Freud, 1927/1975, p. 14-17). Freud argued that suppressed classes experience ambivalence toward the oppressor class, in which they both harbor hostility for their exploitation and at the same time see in the oppressors their most cherished ideals. By instilling their values within the masses, the powerful could transform them “from being opponents of civilization into being its vehicles” (p. 14). In Freud’s scheme religion—specifically white Christian religion (p. 24; p. 48)—operates as the institutional/ideological apparatus *par excellence*, keeping the oppressed from revolting by restricting the use of the critical intellect, promising a “life in the afterlife” in return for renouncing freedom on earth. However, Freud claims that by rejecting the illusions of religion, “and concentrating all their liberated energies into their life on earth, [the suppressed classes] will probably succeed in achieving a state of things in which *life will become tolerable for everyone and civilization no longer oppressive to anyone*” (p. 63, my emphasis). Later, in *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930/1961) Freud writes that

The first requisite of civilization... is that of justice—that is, the assurance that a law once made will not be... an expression of the will of a small community—a caste or a stratum of the population or a racial group—which, in its turn, behaves like a violent individual towards other, and perhaps more numerous, collections of people. The final outcome should be a rule of law to which all... have contributed by a sacrifice of their instincts, and which leaves no one... at the mercy of brute force. (p. 42)

Here one can hear here the voice of a Jew, a member of a people who have faced injustice and who have been left at the mercy of brute force by a society which behaves violently toward the Other. Once again alluding to the delicate association between sexuality and the oppressed, Freud writes that “civilization behaves towards sexuality as a people or a stratum of its population does which has subjected another one to its exploitation. Fear of a revolt by the suppressed elements drives it to stricter precautionary measures” (p. 51). The imposition of repression against sexuality and all of its associated metaphors of otherness (the Jew, poor, woman, queer, black, etc) “becomes the source of serious injustice” for Freud (p. 51).

Lastly, in perhaps his most complicated text, *Moses and Monotheism*, Freud (1939) returns to the question of religion. Turning from the white Christian religion which restricts the intellect and leads the oppressed to identify with the oppressor in *The Future of an Illusion*, he considers its opposite as found in the Mosaic legacy of the Jewish religion. One must remember that—especially at this point in history—to say “Christian” was to say “white” in the same breath. In the same manner, to say “Jew” or “Jewish” was to say “(non-white) Other” (Gilman, 1993a; 1993b). Whereas the White/Christian religion of the oppressor binds the intellect, the Jewish religion from Moses to the Prophets promotes “an advance in intellectuality” which concerns itself with truth and justice, with the poor and the widow, with the repressed. As Richard Bernstein (1998) points out, “Freud emphatically affirms that it is this [intellectual and spiritual] character that has held the scattered people together. It has enabled the Jewish people *to survive, to resist brutality*” (p. 116, my emphasis). It is *this* ethic which sustains an oppressed

people and aids them in their survival. Freud, although Godless, believed that his Jewishness fostered a resilience grounded in the tradition of the prophets—a tradition that speaks truth to power, that brings a light unto the shadow, that seeks not only to know the truth but *respond* to the truth. As scholars have noted, Freud had a strong identification with the figure of Moses, and saw psychoanalysis as an inheritor of the Mosaic legacy of truth and justice (Bernstein, 1998; Blum, 1991; Klein, 1981). In this sense, Freud saw psychoanalysis as a descendant of the Mosaic Legacy that formed the character of the Jewish people (Bernstein, 1998).

Synthesizing the Historical and the Clinical: A Preferential Option for the Repressed

And so we end with Moses, prophets, justice, and Jewishness, bringing together bits and pieces of themes and plots, all orbiting around the elusive claim of a history forgotten and found. But what does any of this mean? What possible connection could such complex tributaries have to the theory and practice of psychoanalysis, let alone psychoanalysis with diverse and non-dominant populations? In this section I will attempt a synthesis of this historical material, and explore the common bodies into which these tributaries flow.

My first thesis is that out of Freud's own anxieties and struggles with a world which saw his Jewishness as abject, a compromise formation emerged—the compromise formation we call psychoanalysis. An external conflict between Freud, Jewishness, and a violently racist world became an internal conflict between the conscious and the unconscious, or between the super-ego and the id—with the ego carrying out the will of the super-ego, to repress, disavow, and *turn away from the "it."* Yet precisely through psychoanalysis we find Freud attempting to establish contact with the lost and compartmentalized regions of the psyche. The “hermeneutic of suspicion” which takes consciousness as “not all there is” in order to shed a light into the

unconscious, is the first element of the “preferential option for the repressed.” Related to this hermeneutic or preferential option, are the clinical ramifications of psychoanalysis: The analyst practices a preferential option *for the patient*, and *the patient’s unconscious*, with the understanding that it is out of the what the patient “leaves out” that a site of truth is to be found. Similarly, and as reflected by contemporary psychoanalytic theory (to be expanded on in Chapters II and III), to take the unconscious seriously is to acknowledge that the *analyst has an unconscious*. Hence, a preferential option for the unconscious would imply an option for the analyst’s unconscious as well. To summarize, the psychoanalytic project calls upon the analyst to make a preferential option for what is dissociated, repressed, and cast out in the analyst-analysand dyad, insofar as it facilitates the analysand’s self-discovery. We are always listening to the rhythm, the ebb and flow of the analysand’s discourse—their free associations. We not only follow the course of the narrative, but also where that narrative breaks, falters, and becomes disjointed—we listen for the slips-of-the-tongue and aporias of consciousness. Those moments interest us and arouse our attention, drawing us closer to material that lies at edge of conscious awareness. Through empathy, reflection, and interpretation, we play with those boundaries, and hopefully through dialogue with our patients clear the way for the emergence of the Other within. Analytic training instills precisely this preferential option for the repressed.

My second thesis is that through this preferential option, the psychoanalyst operates as a type of prophet. I noted above how Freud identified with Moses and the prophets, an identification that informs the position of the analyst. In the same way that the prophets of the Judeo-Christian scriptures draw attention to the poor, the widow, and the stranger at the gates, so too does the analyst act as a catalyst for the stranger at the door of our own consciousness. The analyst is not only the handmaiden of the Other through their interpretation of defenses or

reflection of affect, but radically incarnates this Other through the transference relationship. The Other within takes on flesh before the patient's eyes. To borrow from Daniel Maguire's social ethics, the analyst opens up an opportunity to practice *tsedaqah*, to reintroduce the patient (and also the analyst) to the alien, and enter with it into a new relationship. To "love the alien" dovetails with Freud's remark to Jung, "Our cures are cures of love."

Lastly, my third thesis is that the structure of psychoanalysis is not merely an internalization or individualization of societal contradictions. Rather, it is a creative compromise formation developed in light of the social dialectics of Freud's time, but which in turn provides new insights into those dialectics. As argued above, the early psychoanalysts and their allies drew on psychoanalytic theory to critique political institutions, challenge conventional social norms, and mount arguments aimed at improving the lot of the destitute of the Victorian era. Psychoanalysis, employed as a tool of social critique, yielded a preferential option for the repressed not limited to the internal world of the psyche, but expanded to include those "repressed" by the injustices of society. Psychoanalysis, understood in its totality, calls for a critique of the lies of consciousness and society, and a turn toward what is left out, whether we are talking of affects, internal objects, or self-states ghettoized in the mind, or human beings—the poor, the nonwhite, the non-straight or trans-gendered, the female—ghettoized in the inner city, marginalized in public policy, or cast out in our communities.

I have attempted, however clumsily, to create and discover a tradition emerging from and speaking to the margins, opening up my horizons and hopefully those of others to lay hold of a legacy and a tradition that belongs to all psychoanalysts. It is, in many ways, our legacy and our *challenge*. It is a tradition of social criticism. It is a tradition of progressivism. It is a tradition of social justice. It is not a perfect parchment, torn as it is by legacies of colonialism, racism,

heterosexism, and patriarchy, but it is *ours*; ours to struggle with, ours to reinterpret, ours to wrestle with. As explored through Liberation Theology, psychoanalysis as a science of the marginal is pregnant with *tsedaqah*. As a process of hearing the call of the neighbor, the alien, the outcast, the inner and outer Other, psychoanalysis calls for a preferential option for the repressed, lifting them out of the margins through the expansion of consciousness in psyche and society.

Recovering our Historical Memory: A Personal Coda

This historical memory expands the contours of the what we can imagine psychoanalysis to be, and creates more space for ethnic-racialized minorities such as myself, allowing for a deeper and more intimate connection to Freud and psychoanalysis. To assert that Freud was a Jew, and psychoanalysis a “Jewish science,” is for me to recognize the role that marginality played in the origins of our field. It is—to draw again on Black Theology—to recognize *its blackness* as a product of an oppressed people. To discover that immigration, racism, poverty, and discrimination all formed part of the genetic-traumatic foundations of psychoanalysis is to encounter an otherness that resonates with my own. As a Latino, I’ve been feared as an abject other that causes the degeneration of the fabric of society and threatens the social order. As a result, I am denied being and rendered a non-being. I cry and howl out of the pain that I experience, calling out to any subject who will hear my plea. Freud also cried as a Jew; Freud wept. I suspect it was Freud’s own cry that sensitized him to the interpellation he heard from his patients’ unconscious, meeting otherness with otherness in the rawest form of Levinas’ face-to-face relation: one in which analyst and analysand must encounter and survive sharing their *Other* face in the encounter—the face of the unconscious. This encounter between Others, Others who approach one another with fear and trembling, is invariant in the analytic project. Just as Freud’s

otherness drew him to the otherness of the unconscious, tilting his ears to the call of the Other, so too did other Others respond to Freud and psychoanalysis—Other Jews, Other women, Other queer people.

I count myself among those Others drawn to the otherness of the unconscious, of psychoanalysis, of Freud himself. But perhaps it is more accurate to say that I was not so much drawn to psychoanalysis, as I was *called* by it, enraptured by the interpellation of something that is beyond me, but which resonates with and drives me. It is like feeling that there is something alive and terrible moving beyond the light, beyond the veil of the seen. I edge toward it with curiosity and trepidation, not knowing if the darkness will embrace me or consume me, kiss me or kill me. Groping in the dark, I sense *it*. Just where *it* was I will be—always one step behind. Suddenly *it* grabs me and turns my body to face it, in the dark. It demands a response which is bodily, spiritual, affective; complete. It demands an ethical act. I open my mouth to speak, but my words fail me. So I invite *it* to speak, and *it* speaks the Truth, its words emanating a brighter light which reveals me, reorienting me towards my own shadow. This is an option for the repressed, for the voice of the Other within and without. This option emerges in my clinical work with every patient, with every transference, every interpretation, every countertransference, every empathic reflection, every rupture, and every act of repair. It grows past the consulting room and into my activism in the community when I do outreach, when I inform, when I raise awareness, and when I witness. It flows from my activism and into my faith, when I lift my voice to the Almighty, when I leave my pain at “the foot of the cross,” when I bend my knees before the Other “who loved [me] first, who empowers [me] to see [myself] and everyone else as a subject, not just now for the duration of this life, despite everything that looks to reduce [me] to a

mere object, but as subjects for all time, subjects in eternity” (paraphrasing Ulanov, 2001, p. 146).

Tracing this option betwixt, between, and beyond Freud, let us hear this call to awaken the conscience of society, and achieve “a state of things in which life will become tolerable for everyone and civilization no longer oppressive to anyone” (Freud, 1927/1975, p. 63). In conclusion, it is interesting to note that James Cone defines a Christian theology of liberation “as that discipline which seeks to analyze the nature of Christian faith in the light of the oppressed” (Cone 1970, p. 18). One wonders if a “psychoanalysis of liberation” might not be defined as that discipline which seeks to analyze the nature of the unconscious in the light of the oppressed. In Makari’s (2008) words, this calls for an emancipatory “practice of psychoanalysis: it would be a revolution from the couch” (P. 245).

Chapter II

“A Psychotherapy for the People”:

Freud, Ferenczi, and Psychoanalytic Therapy with Underprivileged Populations²

...at the foundation of our Institute we referred to the inspiration we received from a lecture delivered by Professor Freud to the Congress at Budapest on “The Paths of Psycho-Analytic Therapy.” He warned us then to be ready for the moment when the public conscience would awake and the State would regard it as a pressing duty to make provision for the mental well-being of its citizens, no less than for the preservation of their lives and the promotion of their health. Public centres and Institutes would then be founded, the business of which would be to make psycho-analytic treatment accessible to wide circles of people... these words of Freud were spoken—half as prophecy and half as challenge...

—Max Eitingon (1923, p. 254)

Freud’s (1919/1955) distinction between the “pure gold” of analysis and the “copper” of direct suggestion is often invoked to mark the boundaries of orthodox psychoanalysis, and separate it from the more “base” elements of supportive psychotherapy. The “pure gold” of psychoanalysis refers to a long-term, interpretive approach in which abstinent analyst and repressed analysand meet more than twice a week in an open-ended therapy. The “copper” of direct suggestion traditionally refers to any and all therapeutic methods that fall short of this “gold standard,” such as the supportive elements of the therapeutic relationship, interventions spanning the gamut from Relational/Interpersonal psychoanalysis to cognitive-behavioral therapy and different varieties of short-term therapy. These alternative therapies are defined as “other,” denigrated in relation to the idealized method of cure. This application of Freud’s words, however, ignores the context in which he coined them, and the two-sided and conflicted purpose

² An earlier form of this chapter was originally published in *Contemporary Psychoanalysis* (Gaztambide, 2012a). It is reproduced here with permission from the editors.

for which they were developed. The context of these terms is his 1918 keynote at the Budapest congress, “Lines of Advance in Psychoanalytic Therapy,” in which he explored the modification and application of psychoanalysis to the poor and underprivileged who, until the 1920s, were generally marginalized from psychoanalytic treatment. The purpose of distinguishing between “pure gold” and “copper,” in turn, serves a double function of both exclusion and inclusion, segregating psychoanalysis from the pragmatic realities of psychotherapy, while calling for their integration in order to forge what Freud referred to as a “psychotherapy for the people.”

The context of this chapter is the ever-changing face of psychoanalysis in the United States. Recent developments in psychoanalysis in the U.S. have fostered the growth of Relational theory and practice, which highlights the interpersonal context of the analytic relationship as well as the role of the analyst’s subjectivity in the transference-countertransference dance (Aron, 2001; Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983; Wachtel, 2008). Increasing economic and political pressures (especially from managed care companies) have led to the proliferation of short-term psychodynamic therapies that take place once a week over the course of 12 to 40 sessions, and emphasize greater therapist activity and the formulation of a focus to guide treatment (Crits-Christoph, Barber, & Kurcias, 1991; Messer & Warren, 1995; Tosone, 1997). Finally, clinical work with diverse populations has fostered an increasing awareness of race, class, culture, and social justice in the analytic process (Altman, 2009; Leary, 1997; Perez-Foster, Moskowitz, & Javier, 1996; Pogue-White, 2002). The purpose of this article is to contextualize the historical origins of each of these concerns—Relational theory and practice, short-term psychodynamic therapy, diversity and social justice—in the modification of psychoanalysis in clinical work with the disenfranchised. Freud’s 1918 keynote speech ignited the fires of social justice among the

early analysts, and brought him closer to one of his most esteemed, yet undervalued, colleagues—Sándor Ferenczi.

Ferenczi has only recently been recognized for his contribution to psychoanalysis, today “created and found” as a forerunner of Relational psychoanalysis and short-term psychodynamic therapy (Neil Altman, personal communication). The reach of his influence, whether direct or indirect, can be felt throughout the whole of psychotherapy; as Freud recognized, Ferenczi “made all analysts into his pupils” (Freud, 1933/1964). Echoes of Ferenczi’s ideas can be found in streams as diverse as object relations theory, self psychology, Interpersonal and Relational psychoanalysis, humanistic psychotherapy, and short-term psychodynamic therapy (Aron & Harris, 1993; Marmor, 1980; Messer & Warren, 1995; Rachman, 2007).³ Although the history of Freud and Ferenczi’s relationship is tumultuous and tragic, their dialogues served as the anvil on which a “psychotherapy for the people” was crafted. It is out of this dialogue that I hope to extract some possibilities for thinking about psychoanalytic work with diverse, and all-too often underprivileged, populations. I invite us to engage in what Liberation Psychology calls a “recovery of historical memory” (Martin-Baro, 1994). This entails rediscovering those elements of our tradition that open the horizon for a more dynamic and flexible psychoanalysis, a psychoanalysis that is responsive to the needs of the non-White, the poor, and oppressed.

Tenacious Healer, Relentless Advocate: Ferenczi’s Social Passion

In Ferenczi’s writing, one finds ongoing self-scrutiny and reflection on the challenges posed by the power difference between analyst and analysand, and how this inequality must be negotiated in cases of severe trauma. Arnold Rachman (2007), a psychoanalyst who pioneered the resurgence of interest in Ferenczi’s life and work, notes that Ferenczi’s clinical experiments

³ Although this is beyond the scope of this article, an argument can be made that Ferenczi’s work foreshadowed some of the technical innovations of cognitive-behavioral therapy. See below.

with empathy and mutuality were based on meticulous observations of the therapeutic relationship, especially the patient's moment-to-moment reactions to the therapist. These experiments, ranging from "active" intervention to the provision of reparative emotional experiences, pioneered the psychoanalytic treatment of complex trauma, and "laid the foundation for a relational perspective in psychoanalysis" (p. 76). It should come as no surprise, then, that before joining the psychoanalytic movement Ferenczi's professional life involved clinical work with poor and oppressed populations who were victims of chronic trauma from the broader society (Rachman, 1993). Although Ferenczi, like Freud, was embedded in cultural streams of patriarchy and misogyny, and no less likely to repeat its ideologies wholesale (Meszaros, 1993), one can nevertheless discern that he struggled with these discourses. It is through this struggle that Ferenczi in turn challenged and critiqued them.

Ferenczi, who was Jewish and raised in a household of progressive values, began his clinical work in hospitals devoted to work with the poor and marginalized members of Hungarian society at the time. The populations Ferenczi served often included men and women who were persecuted due to their sexual orientation, or were pushed into such destitution that prostitution became the only means for survival (Rachman, 1993). Perhaps the best known patient from Ferenczi's preanalytic days is "Rosa K," a lesbian woman who was condemned as a "cross dresser." The publication of his therapeutic relationship with Rosa K was the first article written in Hungarian calling on the medical community to recognize the humanity of male and female homosexuals, and to reject theories that pathologized and dehumanized them (Rachman, 1993).

Ferenczi saw Rosa K during his clinical tenure at St. Elizabeth's Hospital for the poor in Budapest. Rachman's (1993) moving depiction of their encounter is suggestive of Ferenczi's later clinical developments:

Ferenczi described the sad fate of Rosa K in an empathic way; it is clear from his description of her that he was attempting to understand her, not to judge, moralize about, or categorize her. Hunted, incarcerated, and oppressed by everyone, Rosa K, like most homosexuals at the turn of the century, was socially isolated and emotionally unstable when she met the young Ferenczi. The attitude of her family, the medical community, and society at large toward Rosa K was universally negative, rejecting, and condemning. But Ferenczi viewed this "cursed" woman as a person. (p. 82)

In order to better understand her experience of interpersonal and systemic trauma, Ferenczi encouraged her to write an autobiography, which he used therapeutically. Ostracized by her parents, mocked by her peers, unemployed and harassed by the police, forced into homelessness, poverty, and discriminated against, her relationship with Ferenczi may have been her first experience of recognition from an-other. Rachman (1993) states that "[t]his early perspective of 'the other in the treatment process' was to become a significant theme in Ferenczi's clinical work" (p. 84), work that would redefine psychoanalysis into a transformative relational encounter grounded in empathy.

Ferenczi's clinical and social concerns for those who were oppressed increased after he joined the psychoanalytic movement, when he reflected on the sociopolitical implications of psychoanalysis soon after his first meeting with Freud (Moreau-Ricaud, 1996). In 1908, Ferenczi openly advocated for the rights of homosexuals, urging his analytic colleagues to "take sides against the unfair penal sanctions which homosexuals are subjected to in many countries, especially in Germany, but also in our country" (cited in Rachman, 1993, p. 84). Likewise, in a 1911 publication, Ferenczi diagnosed alcoholism as a symptom of "social neurosis," which could be cured only by addressing its social etiology in psychoanalysis and in society. Even earlier, in

1903, he presented a paper defending the rights of exploited medical workers, advocating for better wages and improved working conditions (Sziklai, 2012).

Politics and society were also vibrant topics of conversation in Ferenczi's correspondence with Sigmund Freud. In a 1910 letter, Ferenczi attempted to dissuade Freud from his belief in the inherent destructiveness of human beings by arguing for the role of social factors in human suffering. Reflecting on a related insight by Carl Jung, Ferenczi drew attention to the parallels between anti-Semitic and anti-Black racism, writing to Freud that "[t]he persecutions of [B]lacks in America [is because] [B]lacks represent the unconscious of [White] Americans. Thus, the hate . . . against one's own vices . . . could also be the basis for anti-Semitism. It is only since my analysis that I have understood the widespread Hungarian saying: 'I hate him like my sins'" (cited in Meyer, 2005, p.19). These social reflections were, in turn, tied to clinical observations, as Ferenczi intuited that in psychoanalysis "we investigate the real conditions in the various levels of society, cleansed of all hypocrisy and conventionalism, just as they are mirrored in the individual" (Ferenczi, 1910).

The challenge of the here-and-now relationship between therapist and patient, and the role of empathy, were clinical questions that took their earliest form in Ferenczi's experiences with oppressed individuals. The "ethics of truth and justice" (Borossa, 2007) present in Ferenczi's clinical and social thought were further nurtured by Freud's own social awakening, and the direction in which he would take psychoanalysis at the 1918 Budapest Congress.

The Origin, Meaning, and Effect of the 1918 Budapest Speech

Freud and Ferenczi's dialogues from 1910 through 1918 led to a deeper commitment on Freud's part to expand the scope of psychoanalysis to consider the plight of the masses rendered destitute in the wake of World War I. The ideas that would later become part of his 1918 keynote

speech were first put to paper in the summer prior to the Budapest Conference, during Freud's stay in the home of Anton von Freund. Von Freund, a friend and training analyst to both Freud and Ferenczi (Danto, 2005), spoke with Freud about donating part of his fortune to help create a psychoanalytic clinic for the poor in Budapest. Although the first psychoanalytic free clinic would actually be built in Berlin, Freud would later write that von Freund's vision would "sharpen in all directions the sense of social justice" within psychoanalysis (Freud, 1955b, p. 267). Freud's Budapest speech was influenced not only by von Freund's plans for a community-based clinic, but also by Ferenczi's experiments with time-limited therapy and "active" intervention during World War I. Based on these experiments with "active treatment," Freud envisioned new directions and challenges in psychoanalysis, and reflected on their implications for work with the underprivileged.

In "Lines of Advance in Psychoanalytic Therapy," Freud (1919/1955) referred to Ferenczi's "active technique" as a step forward in psychoanalysis's evolution as a treatment. "Active technique" involved two types of interventions. The first was what Ferenczi termed "admonitions," in which patients were encouraged to gradually expose themselves to their phobia-inducing or anxiety-provoking objects within and outside the session, thus exposing them to the avoided affect associated with those objects. The second set of interventions involved "prohibitions," in which patients were instructed to cease self-soothing or compulsive behaviors in order to experience the defended-against anxiety without incurring the feared catastrophe. These techniques—presaging exposure, response prevention, and desensitization-based behavior therapies by almost a century—were to serve as supplements to an interpretive method, as they allowed repressed thoughts, affects, wishes, and memories to emerge into consciousness in order to be worked through psychoanalytically. Their application was highly dependent on the patient-

therapist bond, which created a safe space within which the feared situation could be enacted, without the expected traumatic result (see also Ferenczi, 1920/1926). Although cautious about the analyst's increased role in "active therapy," Freud welcomed the application of these interventions as outlined by Ferenczi (1919/1955, p. 165).

Turning from the clinical to the social, Freud (1919/1955) addressed "the vast amount of neurotic misery which there is in the world, and perhaps need not be" (p. 165). Lamenting psychoanalysis's inability to serve the majority of displaced and poor people after World War I, he foresaw a future in which "the conscience of society will awake," and compel it to take responsibility for their psychological as well as material well-being. Probably as a result of Ferenczi and von Freund's influence, Freud proposed the creation of outpatient clinics staffed by psychoanalytic clinicians, where "treatments will be free" (p. 165). At such clinics, analysts would "be faced by the task of adapting [psychoanalytic] technique to the new conditions" (p. 167). Freud suggested that clients who lacked formal education should be provided appropriate psychoeducation, demystifying psychoanalysis and making them active participants in treatment. He further intuited that for such treatments to be successful, it would be necessary to address the client's economic as well as psychological needs, "[combining] mental assistance with some material support, in the manner of the Emperor Joseph" (p. 167), a revered advocate of Jewish minorities and the poor.

Concluding his speech, Freud (1919/1955) made a critical prediction about the future of psychoanalytic treatment with the many impoverished people of the postwar world, one that was to cast its shadow over the whole of psychoanalytic discourse on relationship and technique:

It is very probable, too, that the large-scale application of our therapy will compel us to alloy the pure gold of analysis *freely* with the copper of direct suggestion; and hypnotic influence, too, might find a place in it again, as it has in the treatment of war neurosis. But, whatever form this *psychotherapy for the people*

may take, whatever the elements out of which it is compounded, its most effective and most important ingredients will assuredly remain those borrowed from strict and untendentious psycho-analysis. (p. 167–168; emphasis added)

Sociologist and historian Elizabeth Danto (2005), to whom we are indebted for bringing the history of social justice in psychoanalysis to light, has chronicled the remarkable effect of Freud's speech on the psychoanalytic movement. In the vibrant period between 1918 and 1938, the first generation of analysts responded to Freud's words "half as prophecy and half as challenge" (Eitington, 1923), opening clinics in Berlin, Vienna, London, Paris, and elsewhere, offering *pro bono* or sliding-scale psychosocial relief for the poor, developing new treatment methods, and participating in various feminist, homosexual rights, and socialist-Marxist movements seeking social change in post-World War I Europe (Danto, 2005). In order to meet the needs of a broader range of people, psychoanalytic practitioners such as Franz Alexander, Max Eitington, Ernst Simmel, and Sándor Ferenczi experimented with time-limited treatment and "active" interventions that increased the use of overt behavioral change strategies and the role of the therapeutic relationship (Danto, 2005). Freud appeared to encourage such explorations, although his ambivalence toward findings discrepant from his own was nevertheless notable (Haynal, 1993, p. 60; cf. Giampieri-Deutsch, 1996).

Freud's keynote is striking both for its progressive energies and its conservative pull. Freud welcomed the therapeutic interventions developed by Ferenczi, even to the point of seeing in them the future of psychoanalytic technique, yet rendered them subservient to his "classical" approach. Hence, Freud simultaneously called for the integration of his "analysis" and Ferenczi's "direct suggestion," while delegitimizing, denigrating, and devaluing the latter as "copper" and defining the former as "pure gold." Going a step further, Freud remarked that although these "copper" innovations may be welcome, perhaps even necessary, in providing services to

impoverished populations traumatized by the ravages of war, the *real* ingredients of change would be analytic interpretations (i.e., “pure gold”). Reflecting Freud’s hesitant downgrading of the intrapsychic (i.e., transference and interpretive) type of psychoanalysis to the advice-giving and even directive kinds of psychotherapy, this passage has been criticized—not unjustly—as laying the groundwork for later stereotypic statements about the poor not being “analyzable” or capable of *real* psychoanalytic work due to lack of ego-strength and psychological mindedness, and, therefore, in need of a baser, more “supportive” and directive therapy (Altman, 2009; Wachtel, 2002). I will return to this problem of “analyzability” when I examine the implications of this controversy for contemporary work with underprivileged populations.

In coining the terms “pure gold” and “copper,” Freud set the “terms of engagement” (Paul Wachtel, personal communication) between what would be seen as “strict and untendentious” psychoanalysis and those degradations that would become its various “others,” such as “psychodynamic” and short-term therapy, “supportive” therapy, and emerging relational trends in analytic theory. On the other hand, these terms also functioned inclusively, and they allowed Ferenczi and other first-generation analysts to play with the boundaries of technique and create something new. As long as analysts understood these terms, did not stray too far from Freud’s position, or argue that these new approaches were of equal value to analytic interpretation, they could experiment freely with technique. This back and forth between either/or and both/and betrays a deep ambivalence we have inherited from Freud. A no less ambivalent example of Freud’s enthusiasm and reserve for the development of technique, followed by eventual excommunication, is Ferenczi and Rank’s monograph, *The Development of Psychoanalysis* (1925).

The Development of a “Psychotherapy for the People”

Aided by Freud’s encouragement, Ferenczi and Otto Rank initiated further clinical experiments on therapeutic activity and the role of the analyst in the healing process (Haynal, 1993; Rachman, 2007). In *The Development of Psychoanalysis* (1925), Rank and Ferenczi expressed their concern that clinical technique remained frozen in time while psychoanalytic theory soared to new insights (p. 2). Seeking to correct the atrophy of technique, they revisited Freud’s earlier technical paper, “Remembering, Repeating, and Working Through” (1914), and created a series of reversals in their understanding of analysis. Although Freud emphasized the role of cognitive remembering, Ferenczi and Rank (1925) attributed the primary mechanism of change to “repetition” (p. 4), the enactment of the patient’s core conflicts within the analytic session.

“The creation of the analytic situation,” Ferenczi and Rank write, “really *exposes* the patient a second time to his infantile trauma . . . [reliving] the Oedipus situation in the relation of the patient to the analyst, in order to bring it, with the help of the patient’s insight, to a new and more fortunate conclusion” (p. 20, 54; emphasis added). The patient’s forbidden wishes, feelings, and thoughts were to be enacted in relation to the analyst, consciously reexperienced, and allowed a “partial gratification” (p. 19) through the analyst’s empathic responsiveness. Bringing the core conflict to a “new and more fortunate conclusion” (p. 54) makes new emotional and historical material available to consciousness, allowing the transition from repetition to remembering. Prioritizing repetition in relation to the therapist also placed “affective factors of experience” (p. 62) at the center of the change process, effectively reversing the relationship between pure gold and copper, as insight is framed as an important *result* of new

emotional experiences, and intellectualization as a resistance that must be overcome by experiencing avoided affect within a responsive relationship.

Ferenczi and Rank (1925) conclude their text by anchoring their technical recommendations in Freud's Budapest speech (p. 58). Revisiting Freud's suggestion that psychoanalytic knowledge be conveyed to impoverished patients in simple and straightforward terms, Ferenczi and Rank likewise suggest that "[t]he reduction of the method to more simple actual facts . . . would [make it] much easier for doctors . . . to acquire psycho-analytic knowledge" (p. 63). It is not only the uneducated poor who would need the intricate nature of psychoanalytic theory to be "boiled down" to the pragmatic terms of the therapeutic process, but educated doctors and physicians as well! But simplifying the esoteric nature of psychoanalytic theory and concretizing its precepts into pragmatic interventions would have another purpose for Ferenczi and Rank: it would "shorten and simplify the treatment" (p. 63). With the repetition of the core trauma in the transference, its subsequent transformation into remembrance through relational-affective reexperiencing, and provision of a corrective experience to the patient's catastrophic expectations, a path is carved for the setting of treatment goals and a focus on those particular areas in a person's psychic life in which they experience difficulty.

Finally, citing Freud's opinion that the "the pure gold of analysis might be freely alloyed with the copper of direct suggestion" in the modification of psychoanalysis with the poor, Ferenczi and Rank (1925) argue that psychoanalysis no longer needs to exist in "splendid isolation" from other therapeutic methods. They wonder "if the point were finally reached when other psycho-therapeutic methods which had proven themselves useful according to analytic understanding . . . were legitimately combined with psycho-analysis" (p. 64). In this regard, Ferenczi and Rank may qualify as the first assimilative integrationists (Messer, 1992), as they

consider employing nonanalytic methods by “assimilating” them within a broader psychoanalytic perspective.⁴ Rather than being subservient adjuncts to psychoanalysis, as it was understood at that time, “other psycho-therapeutic methods” were to be integrated on an equal level.

Ferenczi and Rank’s *The Development of Psychoanalysis* (1925) could in many ways be read as “The Development of a Psychotherapy for the People.” It is a direct descendant of Freud’s “Lines of Advance in Psychoanalytic Therapy” (1919/1955), in which he highlights the increasing importance of the analyst’s activity in treatment. This acknowledgement of the analyst’s role is the result of applying the underlying principles of “active” intervention to the therapeutic relationship itself. What began as a series of techniques employed to expose patients to the avoided affect, anxiety, and pain elicited by objects in the world (a technique we associate today with behavioral exposure therapy), was now influencing the way Ferenczi and Rank thought about the patient-therapist relationship. The therapeutic relationship *itself* would be the context in which patients are exposed to disowned affect and desire through the person of the analyst, who provides a corrective experience through their empathic, nonretaliatory responsiveness. Ferenczi and Rank here cite the application of psychoanalysis to the poor as a source of their technical recommendations, applying those insights in a way that affectively deepened the transference relation. Hence, their monograph is a product of the progressive energies unleashed by Freud’s own reflections on the future of analytic technique, and their application to the vast numbers of impoverished people in post-World War I Europe.

Ferenczi and Rank’s (1925) monograph destabilized the relationship between classical psychoanalysis and other treatment modalities by contextualizing insight in affect, memory in enactment, and repetition in relationship, thus, redefining and “refin[ing] the gold of

⁴ Paul Wachtel’s (1997) work is a contemporary example of psychotherapy integration, as he assimilates cognitive-behavioral interventions within psychoanalytic therapy.

psychoanalysis itself” (Szecsody, 2007). Their work proved to be an important precursor to the development of Relational psychoanalysis and short-term dynamic therapy. Both traditions trace their lineage to Ferenczi and Rank’s text and, although they might disagree on the place of short-term therapy in psychoanalysis, they would both agree on the crucial role of the here-and-now relationship, and the mutative power of the analyst’s attunement to the patient’s affective experience (Tosone, 1997; cf. Aron, 1993; 2001). It is a key element of these two traditions, an element that can be traced back to the disjunctions and conjunctions of Freud and Ferenczi’s dialogues on psychoanalytic technique and their application to underserved populations. Ferenczi’s contributions, based in part on these dialogues, emerged from a process of clinical experimentation that attempted to meet the needs of a variety of traumatized, oppressed, and socially marginalized populations (Rachman, 1993).

Gold, Copper, and the “Other”: A Ferenczian Take on Analyzability

Ferenczi’s continued elucidation of a relational perspective after 1925 echoed an “ethics of truth and justice” (Borossa, 2007), demonstrating his ongoing focus on the power difference between the therapist (who represents the social order) and the patient (whose symptomatology is the result of flawed relationships with that social order). In his seminal article, “Confusion of Tongues” (1949/1988), Ferenczi took a radical step forward in theory and practice:

Gradually, then, I came to the conclusion that the patients have an exceedingly refined sensitivity for the wishes, tendencies, whims, sympathies and antipathies of their analyst, even if the analyst is completely unaware of this sensitivity. . . . The analytical situation—i.e. the restrained coolness, the professional hypocrisy and—hidden behind it but never revealed—a dislike of the patient which, nevertheless, he felt in all his being—such a situation was not essentially different from that which in his childhood had led to the illness. . . . The setting free of [the patient’s] critical feelings, the willingness on our part to admit our mistakes and the honest endeavor to avoid them in [the] future, all these go to create in the patient a confidence in the analyst. (p. 198–200)

Ferenczi noted that patients who were repeatedly abused and invalidated often develop an exquisite perceptiveness of others' internal states. If the analyst experiences and then disowns his or her negative countertransference to such patients, there is a risk of communicating these reactions unconsciously through one's behavior. Denying these reactions in turn invalidates the patient's reality and ruptures trust in the analyst, repeating the original traumatic event with significant caretakers. But, by owning their countertransference reactions, disclosing them to the patient, and validating their reality, the analyst provides a corrective experience that increases the patient's trust in this relationship. It is precisely this process of rupture, reconnection, and repair that, Ferenczi argued, leads to the curative power of the therapeutic relationship, influencing much relational thinking on enactments (Aron, 2001; Benjamin, 2004; see Chapter III). This relational, two-person perspective has powerful implications for work with the underprivileged or culturally different, especially with regard to the criteria of analyzability (Altman, 2009; Wachtel, 2002).

The criterion of analyzability refers to a cluster of attributes that define the "kind" of people that can be effectively treated in psychoanalysis. These include psychological mindedness, ego-strength, verbal intelligence, frustration tolerance, and impulse control. Those who have these traits are considered treatable by the "pure gold" of psychoanalysis, whereas those who do not are referred to the "copper" of supportive or less intensive psychotherapy—another therapy for "other" people. Altman (2009) and Wachtel (2002) argue that such criteria have been used to exclude ethnic minorities and the poor from psychoanalytic treatment, leading to sociocultural enactments in which practitioners decree that non-White, lower income populations are less amenable to analytic treatment and more responsive to, for example, more "directive"

cognitive-behavioral approaches or family systems approaches.⁵ What is interesting about the so-called analyzability criteria is that it places the onus of engaging in the psychoanalytic process squarely on the patient, especially if the patient is a racial or socioeconomically different “other.” The analyst’s role in defining analyzability is entirely obscured.

Speaking from a relational perspective, Altman (2009) argues that “[d]iscussions of analyzability, in which lower-class patients often end up on the unanalyzable side, may reflect the analyst’s psychic defensive operations” (p. 92). What might be framed as the patient’s inability to engage in the analytic process may, in fact, reflect the analyst’s inability to engage the patient. The analyst’s wish to be a competent, empathically attuned listener may be frustrated by biases and reactions operating outside of his or her awareness. In turn, the analyst’s difficulties and insecurities in making empathic contact are projected upon the patient, who is then deemed unanalyzable (Frosch, 2006). In a parallel spirit, contemporary Freudian analyst Allan Frosch (2006) writes that “the analyst’s *idea about* psychoanalysis is an essential variable that contributes to our concept of analyzability. And the analyst’s ideas are always shaped by desire. Wishes and defenses organize our perception of the world, including the world of who is or is not analyzable” (p. 51; emphasis added). How we think about what psychoanalysis is, or is not, defines who we will and will not treat, because those we can treat are more likely to be “like us,” making us feel safe and competent, whereas those we cannot treat, the “not-me,” make us feel unsafe, incompetent, and uncomfortable. “Analyzable” and “unanalyzable” inevitably become shorthand terms for who gets the pure gold or the copper, distinguishing the “me” from the “not-me.” To take this intersubjective reality into account would mean redefining analyzability as something that “is dependent on . . . a reciprocal relationship that allows for the

⁵ See Brown’s (2009) insightful commentary on this dynamic.

development of mutual trust” (Frosch, 2006, p. 52). Thus, analyzability is not determined by the supposed ego-strengths or deficits inherent in the patient, but is a function of each therapist-patient dyad’s capacity to establish a trusting relationship. Given the asymmetrical nature of this relationship (Orange, 2010), it becomes imperative that we examine the unconscious assumptions that may impede the analyst’s empathy, attunement, and understanding of the culturally different patient. In keeping with Ferenczi’s thinking, the onus of analyzability—or at least a great deal of the responsibility for setting the conditions for psychoanalysis—falls on the subjectivity of the therapist.

A useful framework for thinking about this topic is Derald Wing Sue’s (2010) work on “microaggressions.” Microaggressions are often unconscious, “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities . . . that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial, gender, sexual-orientation, and religious slights and insults to the target person or group” (p. 5). Whereas members of privileged groups (e.g., White, male, cisgendered, heterosexual, middle-upper class, able, etc) are usually unaware of these implicit transactions, members of nondominant groups over time develop a finely tuned hypervigilance of such exchanges. All too often, people of minority backgrounds may detect that a microaggression has taken place, whereas the more dominant person—in our case, the psychotherapist—invalidates the minority’s experience either by being unaware of a misstep, ignoring its impact on the other, or explicitly denying that anything problematic has transpired. The ethnic minority, the poor person, the transgendered, the female, or the nonheterosexual suddenly finds his or her internal reality usurped, leading to “a great deal of self-confusion and pain,” as described by Kathleen Pogue-White (2002, p. 405). Reflecting on her experience as a woman of color, Pogue-White writes that “[e]rring on the side of wariness and vigilance” (p. 405) is an adaptive defense

utilized by people who have been victims of prejudice and injustice, a sentiment that runs parallel to the experiences of chronically traumatized people.

Having reviewed the empirical literature available in the 1970s, Siassi and Messer (1976) concluded that White, middle- and upper-class therapists often hold negative stereotypes of the poor, unconscious attitudes that affect the interpersonal interaction and impair therapeutic empathy. These stereotypes can lead impoverished patients to experience rejection and drop out of treatment. Contemporary research has shown that this tragic reality still exists, showing that therapists who act out their prejudices corrode the therapeutic relationship. If this is not addressed, the chances that a minority patient will leave treatment are greater, further adding to the dropout rate for ethnic minorities in general (Gaztambide, 2012b). Although the issue of therapist responsiveness and attunement is not limited to work with underprivileged populations, it is especially relevant to them. Questions of power, rupture, attunement, and trust are central to cultural competence (Gaztambide, 2012b), and one can find each of these topics reflected in Ferenczi's (1949/1988) later thinking. His awareness of the patient's sensitivity to the therapist's often subtle negative reactions provides a clinically useful way of addressing microaggressions and cultural enactments in the here-and-now (Altman, 2009; cf. Sue, 2010). Ferenczi calls attention to the inevitability of the therapist taking on the role of perpetrator vis-à-vis the patient, and reminds us of the need for critical self-reflection and honest self-disclosure in order to reconnect with the patient, repairing the injury provoked by therapeutic missteps. His later development of the concept of mutuality suggests that paying attention to cultural prejudices, accepting them when they arise, and owning them with our patients will help restore trust in the therapeutic relationship and make the work of analysis possible. Attention to cultural misattunements may reveal that the "unanalyzable patient" is a product of the therapist's

unconscious assumptions about the patient based on cultural or socioeconomic biases that derail the work of analysis. And, if the work of psychoanalysis is to make the “unconscious, conscious,” then the task of a “psychotherapy for the people” is to make the unanalyzable, analyzable.

Elements and Alloys: An Outline

Another set of insights to be drawn from the efforts of the early analysts lead us to a critique of Relational theory itself, specifically its dyad-centricity. An implicit belief in Relational theory, and psychoanalysis more broadly, is that the analysand’s difficulties can be resolved within the boundaries of the treatment dyad without addressing their ecological surround, including not only their relationships with “real others” in the world but also the broader systems in which the dyad is embedded (Paul Wachtel, personal communication; cf. Cushman, 1994; Altman, 2009). Many early analysts recognized the need to “combine mental assistance with some material support,” thus reducing their fees for poor clients and engaging systemic issues socially, politically, and academically (Danto, 2005). This suggests a perspective that grounds the therapeutic relationship within a broader sociocultural context, as seen in contemporary reflections on the social “third” (Cushman, 1994; Altman, 2009; see Chapter III). Such a perspective would not only invite dialogue on social dynamics as they are reflected in transference-countertransference enactments, but would also suggest that—under certain circumstances—the analyst may need to engage the broader social matrix directly, through systemic intervention, advocacy, and client empowerment, as seen in many family therapy approaches (e.g. Boyd-Franklin, 2003).

As noted above, several-times-a-week, long-term psychoanalysis may not be a treatment option for many underprivileged people. This is due to economic and logistical reasons rather

than psychological ones. Many lower-income populations cannot afford therapy multiple times a week over an extended period of time. Aside from more immediate financial restraints, many individuals and families do not have the time to engage in this kind of therapy. In spite of what some stereotypes of the poor (e.g., “lazy” or “undeserving”) lead us to believe, many impoverished people may be working hard to maintain a 40-hour a week job, or work several part-time jobs in order to make ends meet or, if unemployed, are working diligently to secure a new job. In addition, other issues—e.g., access to adequate transportation to and from therapy—may complicate the use of frequent sessions. Therapy in such circumstances becomes a luxury, one that demands time, money, and other resources. Once (at most twice) a week treatment on a short-term basis (e.g., 12–40 sessions) may be a more feasible alternative, financially and logistically.

As suggested by Freud (1919/1955), psychoeducation may prove to be a useful tool for engaging clients from diverse backgrounds in treatment. Nancy McWilliams (2004) notes that psychoeducation has not received sufficient attention in the psychoanalytic literature, although most patients would benefit from preparation for the therapy process (p. 86). This might be even more important for patients from cultures that do not regularly engage in psychotherapy, or for whom therapy is stigmatized. A useful distinction might be drawn between the traditionally didactic kind of psychoeducation found in some treatment modalities, and a more process-oriented psychoeducation that draws on myth and metaphor. Didactic psychoeducation involves the therapist speaking as an authority and conveying direct information to the patient. Process-oriented psychoeducation makes psychoanalytic ideas, such as affect regulation, defenses, and transference-countertransference enactments, understandable to patients as they arise and are addressed in the moment. McWilliams sees metaphor as a rich medium through which to educate

the patient in these moments, especially when metaphors are employed in a manner that is experience-near and culturally congruent (pp. 86–87). Exploration of the patient’s cultural world may reveal a complex set of symbols that can be drawn upon in orienting them to psychoanalytic therapy.

By placing the relationship at the core of the analytic endeavor and inviting the integration of techniques seen as “non-psychoanalytic,” Ferenczi refined the gold of psychoanalysis itself (Szecsody, 2007). This leads to an interesting question for analysis today. If Relational psychoanalysis and short-term psychodynamic therapy are the products of this refined gold, is there not the risk of creating a new “copper” to serve as “other” and foil to this “gold” (cf. Curtis, 1996)? Are cognitive-behavioral, family systems, and even experiential/humanistic therapies not rendered the contemporary “copper” of psychoanalysis? If so, are we to invoke the language of pure gold and copper anew to keep these different systems apart (and only tentatively related, if at all)? Or, are we to create new alloys, further refining psychoanalysis instead?

An illustration of each of these elements will have to wait until Chapter III, where I will provide a case example that ties together the various themes of this dissertation. What I am trying to argue at this point is for a vision of psychoanalytic practice that is flexible in its responsiveness to the needs of diverse populations, but that is also infinitely diverse in its application of techniques, ideas, and interventions that not only exhaust the wide ranging resources of the psychoanalytic corpus, but go beyond them to integrate the work and knowledge of a variety of school of therapy, including cognitive-behavioral, family systems, and humanistic approaches.

Conclusion: Ferenczi's Contribution to a "Psychotherapy for the People"

Governmental bureaucracy, combined with the ravaging effects of World War I, prevented von Freund's dream of starting the first psychoanalytic free clinic in Budapest from becoming reality. Although Ferenczi was an aggressive advocate for a free clinic, one was not to be established in Hungary until the early 1930s. He blamed inadequate social services and economic destitution not only for the delay of the clinic's establishment, but also for the lives lost to hopelessness and poverty. In 1929, he published a case report, "From the Childhood of a Young Proletarian Girl," a clinical plea for social reform and increased awareness of the psychological effects of poverty.

The case report was the diary of a 19-year-old woman from an impoverished family, whose suicide Ferenczi was unable to prevent. The diary chronicled her first 10 years of life, describing the misery she experienced as a result of her social class. Rendered powerless as a clinician in the face of structural injustice, Ferenczi took the words of her diary to heart and tried to give her in death what she could not have in life: her voice, reminiscent of his work with Rosa K,

Rich children are lucky. . . . They can learn many things, and [learning] is a form of entertainment for them . . . and they are given chocolate if they know something. Their memory is not burdened with all the horrible things they cannot get rid of. The teacher treats them with artificial respect. It was like this in our school. . . . I believe that many poor children learn poorly or only moderately for similar reasons and not because they are less talented. (quoted in Danto, 2005, p. 220)

Ferenczi's patient spoke truth from the margins of psychoanalysis. Freud, Ferenczi, and others struggled creatively to alloy pure gold and copper and refine psychoanalysis into a metal that was more responsive to the needs of those who do not have the time or the money for long-term, open-ended, multiple-times-a-week analysis. These patients' limitations are not due to a lack of

ego-strength, inability to tolerate frustration, or any such ideologically motivated notions.

Ferenczi's "proletarian girl" exhibited none of these. She displayed a keen understanding of the forces that underlay her trauma, and composed a striking indictment of unjust conditions.

This chapter explores the historical importance of melding Freud's gold of psychoanalysis and the copper of less intensive psychotherapy to produce two important movements in contemporary psychoanalysis: Relational theory and short-term psychodynamic therapy. It does not argue, however, that poor and oppressed communities somehow respond better to these modalities, or that these should be the only options. In the same way that I do not see "traditional" psychoanalysis as the only way to "do" psychoanalysis, I do not wish for short-term therapy to become the "new norm." What makes the development of Relational psychoanalysis and short-term dynamic therapy "psychotherapies for the people" is the *responsiveness* that the early analysts—Freud, Rank, and Ferenczi among them—employed to adapt their therapy and themselves to various conditions and populations. What is important is not that the 1918 Budapest speech fostered the growth of these approaches, but that it stirred the flexibility necessary to alternate between long-term and short-term therapies, or between "supportive" and "expressive" interventions. What we need to realize is that this conversation is not about "psychoanalysis" versus "something-not-psychoanalysis." This is about different forms, alloys, permutations, flavors, and states that are *all* psychoanalysis (Lew Aron, personal communication; cf. Safran, 2009). The history of the early analysts reveals that far from being apathetic to the needs of the poor, they were responsive, reparative, and aware of the need for modification and adaptation. It is this ethical impulse that can bring psychoanalysis to the people. Following Ferenczi's—and Freud's—lead, we must commit ourselves to an ethic of flexibility, and practice *tsedaqah* by tilting our ears to the voice of the other.

Chapter III

A Psychoanalysis for Liberation: Reading Freire, Reading Psychoanalysis

There may be no tenet more important to overcoming this shame and blame in analytic work than the idea that recognition continually breaks down, that thirdness always collapses into twoness, that we are always losing and recovering the intersubjective view. We have to keep reminding ourselves that breakdown and repair are part of a larger process, a concomitant of the imperatives of participating in a two-way interaction. This is because, as Mitchell (1997) said, becoming part of the problem is how we become part of the solution. In this sense, the analyst's surrender means a deep acceptance of the necessity of becoming involved in enactments and impasses. This acceptance becomes the basis for a new version of thirdness that encourages us to honestly confront our feelings of shame, inadequacy, and guilt, to tolerate the symmetrical relation we may enter into with our patients, without giving up negative capability—in short, a different kind of moral third.

—Jessica Benjamin (2004, p. 29)

“What is needed is a historico-cultural psychoanalysis... Psychoanalysis for liberation, I think.”

—Paulo Freire & Antonio Faundez (1989, p. 92)

The last twenty years of psychoanalytic writing in North America has seen an increasing interest on the intersections of clinical praxis, theory, and social justice (see for example, the articles in Layton, Hollander, & Gutwill, 2006; as well as *Psychoanalytic Dialogues* Vol. 10, Issue. 5, Vol. 14 and *Psychoanalytic Psychology* Vol 19, Issue 1). Expressing concern for the experiences of oppressed and marginalized communities, this scholarship has raised questions about how to work clinically in a culturally competent manner, as well as how to reflect about social justice issues psychoanalytically (Altman, 1993; 1995; Wachtel, 2002). Some authors have been optimistic about the application of relational “two-person” psychologies to clinical work with the underprivileged, and have employed such frameworks as a source of social critique (Hollander & Gutwill, 2006; Walls, 2004). Others have been empathetic but critical about the

use of relational psychoanalytic theory, questioning the degree to which relational theory is itself structured by infantilizing and de-contextualizing ideologies (Botticelli, 1997; 2004; Cushman, 1994; 1995). In applying and refining relational theory, theorists have stressed the necessity of going beyond the “two-person” dyad, and incorporating a “three-person” or contextual model which includes therapist, patient, and the broader socio-economic, historical, and cultural context in which they exist (Altman, 1995; 2000; 2005; Cushman, 1994; 1995). Such a model connects the individual with the social by contextualizing psychological dynamics within a broader political milieu, opening up a critical conversation between therapist and patient regarding the socio-historical forces which shape and affect their suffering (Altman, 2009; Layton, 2006).

I would like to add Liberation Psychology as another voice in this conversation, one which shows promise in integrating relational theory with a social justice-oriented and contextual perspective. As mentioned in the introduction, the work of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire is central to Liberation Psychology given that his “Pedagogy of the Oppressed” is one of the core theoretical engines upon which it was built (Martin-Baro, 1994). In reading Freire’s writings, one cannot help but be struck by the influence of psychoanalytic ideas in his work, such as the importance of the teacher-student transference relation, the enactment of political dynamics in the pedagogical situation, and the unconscious internalization of societal oppression. This can be gleaned in Freire’s frequent citations of psychoanalytically-informed third world theorists such as Albert Memmi and Frantz Fanon, as well as Frankfurt School scholars such as Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, and Erich Fromm. It is interesting to note in passing that Freire and Erich Fromm developed a warm friendship over the course of their respective careers, for it was through their conversations comparing the role of intersubjectivity in pedagogy and psychotherapy that Fromm remarked to Freire that his work was a kind of “historico-cultural

political psychoanalysis” (see Freire, 1994: 55; cf. Freire & Faundez, 1989: 92; 95; see also mention of Freire’s work in Fromm & Maccoby, 1970/1996).

Hence, in this chapter I will place a greater discursive focus on Freire’s pedagogical theory, due to it being a foundation to Liberation Psychology. Fromm’s intuition, along with a contemporary psychoanalytic reading of Freire, likewise suggests that it can be read as a kind of proto-relational psychoanalysis of liberation, thus serving as an entry point for dialogue between psychoanalysis and Liberation Psychology. In this interpretation of Freire, I will draw on two of his foundational works, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1972) and *Eduation for Critical Consciousness* (Freire, 1973), as providing the material for most of his key terms. After presenting some of the core elements of his theory, I will use Jessica Benjamin’s (1988; 2004) intersubjective theory of “thirdness” and Neil Altman’s (2009) notion of the “social third” as a prism through which to re-read Freire, and draw out the implications of Liberation Psychology for psychoanalytic practice with oppressed populations. I will synthesize and illustrate the ideas developed in this dissertation through a case example in the next chapter.

Humanization and Connectedness: Freire’s Relational Vision

As an educator working with impoverished and indigenous people whose basic rights have been denied, Freire saw the dialectic between humanization—what it means to be rendered a full person—and dehumanization—the denigration of one’s personhood—as the central problem of an emancipatory education. For Freire to be human is fundamentally to be in relation with others and with the world, and to experience that world as having its own reality independent of the self. Being able to recognize the separateness of the world, of others, and yet still remain connected, is what distinguishes the human being as a being not only of *relationships*, but of *right* relationships (Harrison, 2004). Human beings are thus “not only *in the*

world but *with* the world” (Freire, 1973, p. 3). Ontologically, human beings and the world do not exist apart from each other, as isolated Cartesian beings looking outward into an objective reality, but as a system of ongoing mutual interaction and interpenetration. One’s relational orientation is in turn composed of the dialectical tension between being able to adapt to reality, and the “the critical capacity to make choices and to transform that reality” (p. 4). A person who can sustain this tension, able to adapt to the environment while at the same time transforming it, is an integrated *subject*. Conversely, the person who merely adapts to the environment is an “*object*, adaptation representing at most a weak form of self-defense. If man is incapable of changing reality, he adjusts himself instead” (ibid). To be in right relation with the world is for Freire the natural vocation of human beings.

Inspired by Hegelian dialectics, Freire (1972) argues that this vocation of right relation is constantly negated by dehumanizing violence and oppression, yet it is affirmed by that negation at the same time. The drive to be human “is thwarted by injustice, exploitation, oppression, and the violence of the oppressors; it is affirmed by the yearning of the oppressed for freedom and justice, and by their struggle to recover their lost humanity” (p. 28). Dehumanization distorts the vocation of becoming fully human by distorting both those whose personhood has been stolen, as well as those who have denied the humanity of the other. For those who oppress and hoard power, to be human is to be an oppressor, while those “other people” are rendered object-like “things” without full agency. The oppressor consciousness transforms everything around it “into an object of its domination. The earth, property, production, the creations of men, men themselves, time—everything is reduced to the status of objects at its disposal” (p .44). But, Freire cautions, sooner or later those whose humanity has been stolen will struggle against those who have rendered them destitute.

Freire (1972) argues that oppressive conditions and institutions promote the internalization of ideological demands, ways of being, and behaviors upon the oppressed. As noted in Freud's own writings (reviewed in Chapter I), the internalization of these ideologies bind the psyche of the oppressed to the perspective of the oppressor, so that even when the oppressed attempt to rise up and create change, they may enact precisely the dehumanizing tendencies which the oppressor initially subjected them to. Marginalized people may then become "sub-oppressors" toward other disempowered people who do not share their views, or engage in reactive behaviors toward the dominant group which maintains the cycle of violence and dehumanization. "The very structure of their thought" Freire explains, "has been conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete, existential situation by which they were shaped" (p. 30). The oppressed may seek to be human, but to be human is to be *like the oppressor*. This distortion of the emancipatory impulse derives from the reality that the psyche of those who have been subjugated becomes dependent, in a state of "adhesion" to the psyche of the oppressor. The ideologies—or the super-ego in Freud's terms—of the oppressor is internalized wholesale, unconsciously texturing the oppressed's experience of the world in such a way that these scripts cannot be consciously reflected upon and scrutinized. In Freire's words, "they cannot 'consider' [the oppressor] sufficiently clearly to objectivize him- to discover him 'outside' themselves" (ibid).

At this point in the psycho-political development of the oppressed, they do not yet see themselves in a dialectical relationship with the oppressors, nor are they engaging in a struggle to transcend the victim-victimizer contradiction. In this context of splitting and complementarity, one aspires not to liberation but identification with the opposite pole. Instead of criticizing the oppressor-oppressed dialectic itself, one merely reverses the poles and continues the struggle, as

if saying “I am powerless now, *until* I can topple you and take your place!” Echoing Freud’s musings on melancholia, Freire (1972) rightly intuits that “The shadow of their former oppressor is still cast over them” (p. 31). Hence the oppressed suffer from a form of splitting that has established itself in their psyche. They desire freedom and authenticity, but also fear it, being at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor who has been internalized, being whole and integrated versus maintaining splitting and the cycle of dehumanization, seeking freedom through right relation or the illusion of freedom through the assertion of power. To overcome this splitting, Freire argues that the oppressed must separate themselves from the reality of the oppressor, and in so doing locate the oppressor *outside* themselves, and begin to reflect critically on their contradictory relationship to them (p. 162-163).

For Freire (1972) then there are two interrelated tasks for an emancipatory education. The first has to do with the divided consciousness of the oppressed, the other, with the problem of the oppressor-oppressed relationship. Simply put, those committed to social change must resolve the oppressor-oppressed contradiction by ushering the appearance of new forms of subjectivity which are neither perpetrator nor victim, but human beings in the process of liberation (p. 42). Accordingly, such a relational process goes in hand with the oppressed being able to “‘discover’ their oppressor and in turn their own consciousness” (pg. 47). Critical reflection on the relationship with the external other goes hand in hand with exploring the contours of one’s awareness, and that other which stands outside of consciousness—the unconscious. It is by wrestling with these two tasks that Freire developed the practice of a critical and emancipatory education.

Banking versus Problem-Posing Systems of Education: An Intersubjective View of Pedagogy

The original context of Freire's work is his pedagogical practice with impoverished peasant communities in Brazil during the 1960s. Freire was tasked by the Brazilian government with teaching the indigenous poor of Pernambuco and Rio de Janeiro to read and write so that they may be able to vote in the country's elections (Brazil during this time still operated under literacy laws which excluded the illiterate, and often poor and indigenous communities). Having personally witnessed the crushing effects of poverty, and concerned about the plurality of abuses suffered by the poor, Freire sought to use education as a tool of liberation. Although himself a leftist who reflected on how to best empower his students, Freire noticed that a particular pattern would emerge during his lessons. He was treated by his students with a certain level of deference, as a "subject supposed to know" in the Lacanian sense, an upper-class white man who was educated, knowledgeable, and powerful. The students, by contrast, became passive in relation to him, framing him as the know-it-all, and themselves as the know-nothings. Freire saw this as fatalistic behavior, and attempted to correct his students by telling them that they should challenge his authority. The more he beseeched them, the more passive, in turn, they became, until Freire found himself not only formulating the questions for his lessons, but also answering them. This in turn led to another problem, as moments arose when Freire was actively challenged by his students, who questioned him and what he sought to teach, precipitating power struggles between teacher and student in the classroom. Freire was made to realize that he was treating his students exactly as they were being treated by their wealthy landowning bosses, and as they were depicted in the ideology of broader Brazilian society. Disempowering conditions which promoted fatalism and passivity were replicated anew in the teacher-student relationship. Freire

became the dominating authority who told the peasants what to think, conveying the unconscious communication that he held the true knowledge which was to be deposited into his passive, ignorant students. The students, in complementary fashion, either became increasingly passive, or challenged his position as the authority. Freire referred to this process as the “banking system of education,” and slowly began to disembody himself from the interaction and acknowledge that he had also fallen prey to this system.

Reflecting on the nature of this teacher-student transference, Freire realized it was not sufficient to simply point out to his impoverished students that they were projecting the role of the “subject supposed to know” upon him. He had also stepped into that role, and thus needed to step out of it. He discovered that when he relinquished his role as the one who framed the questions and gave the answers, and portrayed interest and sincere curiosity about the experiential world of the students, they in turn began producing their own questions about day to day reality. Learning to write and spell the word “house,” for example, gave way to questions regarding the inability for the poor to find affordable and clean housing, while the rich lived in comfortable luxury. An intersubjective back and forth then ensued, as the students—through dialogue with the teacher—began to ask questions about those aspects of life in society which up to that point existed only in the background of their conscious awareness. These realities were placed in the foreground and recreated as problems for Freire and his students to consider. The banking system had now given way to a problem-posing education, one in which teacher and student engage in a reciprocal dialogue which problematizes the world and opens it up to the possibility of transformation. As the students asked questions about themselves and their relationship to the world, they turned anew to their relationship with Freire, problematizing and questioning the teacher-student relationship itself. By remaining non-defensive and maintaining

responsiveness to his student's queries, Freire facilitated their empowerment in relation to other authority figures in psyche and society.

By shifting the nature of the interaction from a subject-object relationship between active teacher and passive student, to an intersubjective encounter between subjects-in-relation, Freire allowed for the expression of diverse fantasies and reactions to his position as the teacher. By responding with empathy and humility, he created a transitional space in which the students could question his authority, and through problematizing his position also turn toward the broader socio-political context in which their relationships were embedded. For Freire, knowledge about the world was a product of subjects who recognized one another's humanity, and joined together to interrogate their relationship to one another and the world which mediated their encounter. Critical consciousness about oppression cannot be "taught" to the oppressed by drawing on the very tools which maintain their oppression. It must be discovered jointly in the relation to an-Other, with whom another perspective can be discovered and discussed.

Noticing how broader societal contradictions were enacted in the teacher-student relationship allowed Freire (1972) to name one of the major culprits of a dehumanizing education, the "banking system" of education (or more broadly, of relating) which turns students into passive "'receptacles' to be 'filled' by the teacher. The more completely he fills the receptacles, the better a teacher he is. The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are" (p. 58). The pedagogical relationship then mirrors do'er-done-to dynamics by becoming an act of depositing, whereby the students are to be deposited-into and the teacher is the depositor. Communication about the world collapses into communiqués issued by the teacher. In this relationship "The teacher presents himself to his students as their necessary opposite; by considering their ignorance absolute, he justifies his own existence" (p.

58-59). An absolute ignorance is projected unto the student, while the teacher is the know-all who bestows knowledge upon the know-nothings just as Prometheus brings fire down from Olympus to the mortals below. As a result Freire argues that the banking education structures and maintains the oppressor-oppressed, subject-object dialectic, mirroring dynamics of domination in society as a whole. It “transforms students into receiving objects. It attempts to control thinking and action, leads men to adjust to the world, and inhibits their creative power” (p. 64). Our capacity to reflect creatively on our own experience, about the world in which that experience is grounded, and come up with imaginative solutions to complex problems, becomes impaired.

In contrast to the banking system, Freire (1972) proposes a “problem-posing” education that strives toward *reconciling* the teacher-student, subject-object relation. “Education,” Freire states, “must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers *and* students” (p. 59).

Critiquing the trend of well-meaning progressive education which changes the content of what is taught without changing the *process*, Freire argues that the answer is not to be found in a banking model which talks *at* the oppressed. Critical thinking and emancipatory ideals cannot be “implanted” into the poor and powerless, but must emerge out of an organic process of dialogue. The banking model must be rejected, and in its stead educators must take on a relational epistemology which sees people

as conscious beings, and consciousness as consciousness intent upon the world. They must abandon the educational goal of deposit-making and replace it with the posing of the problems of [people] in their relations with the world. ‘Problem-posing’ education, responding to the essence of consciousness—*intentionality*—rejects communiqués and embodies communication. It epitomizes the special characteristic of consciousness: being *conscious of*, not only as intent on objects but as turned in upon itself in a Jasperian ‘split’—consciousness as consciousness of consciousness. (p. 65-66)

Rather than simply exchanging an oppressive message with a seemingly affirming and liberating one, education must engage in a *process* of posing people's everyday relationships with their world, with others, and with society, as problems to be reflected upon. In doing so one not only generates new perspectives on those relationships, but also brings into awareness those aspects of the psyche which up to that point had been hidden, implicit, dissociated, or repressed. Becoming more conscious of one's relational and social transactions thus goes hand in hand with becoming conscious of that which we are usually *not*—the *not-me* of the unconscious. A critical consciousness is thus intent both upon its relational world and upon itself as a focus of inquiry.

In a problem-posing education, teacher and student enter a process of ongoing dialogue which stresses mutuality, although not in the sense of an absolute symmetry or sameness. Mutuality for Freire (1972) is not the rejection of the foundational asymmetry of the roles of teacher and student, but a radical relocation of their meaning. Mutuality in the pedagogical situation involves a back-and-forth in which teachers can tolerate vulnerability by allowing themselves to be taught, and students can take hold of their own power and the responsibility to teach. In a mutual and dialogical relationship, the teacher recognizes the incompleteness and fallibility of their point of view, constantly revising it in light of the students' reflections and verbalizations. The students, in turn, join with the teacher as critical co-investigators of truth. Meaning is constructed out of the convergence, but also the breakdown, in communication between teacher and student. The teacher presents material for the students to consider, "and re-considers his earlier considerations as the students express their own" (p. 68). In this process of dialogue and repairing breaks in communication, the teacher—in communion with the students—creates the relational conditions for new forms of experience with which to act upon reality. In contrast to the banking system which inhibits creativity, a critical education "involves

a constant unveiling of reality. The former attempts to maintain the *submersion* of consciousness; the latter strives for the *emergence* of consciousness and *critical intervention* in reality” (ibid). Through the emergence of a critical consciousness, and with it the ability to reflect on what is unconscious within and hidden without, there an increasing awareness of one’s internal world, and in turn a progressive revelation of one’s external reality. Reality then becomes an open, a dynamic process in constant flux and transformation, pregnant with the potential for change. A problem-posing education “is a revolutionary futurity,” opening the roads toward a new configuration of reality, the proverbial “promised land” seen from the heights of the mountain top, “Hence it is prophetic (and, as such, hopeful)” (p. 72).

Intersubjectivity and Dialogue: Subjects in the World

Through problem-posing, dialogical education, the dialectic of teacher-subject and student-object gives way to new, radicalized subjectivities: “teacher-student with student-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach” (Freire, 1972, p. 67). Teachers and students join together as subjects to not only unveil reality but to transform it. It requires that domination—a distorted form of relationship—be replaced by love. Freire (1973) defines dialogue as “the loving encounter of people, who, mediated by the world, ‘proclaim’ that world. They transform the world and in transforming it, humanize it for all people” (p. 115). An analogue term for dialogue in Freire’s corpus is intersubjectivity, “a relation of communication between Subjects that know, with reference to a knowable object” whether that object is the teacher-student relationship, the sociopolitical world, or the unconscious which grounds all experiencing (p. 136). Intersubjectivity presumes a horizontal relationship between full persons engaged in a joint journey of exploration, nourished by love, empathy, humility, faith, and trust.

Intersubjectivity for Freire is the foundation of all true knowing, for when two or more people are linked by these qualities “they can join in a critical search for something. Only dialogue truly communicates” (p. 45). In contrast, a non-dialogical, banking model, dominant-dominated relationship is vertical, lacks love, and is unable of fostering a reflective, critical attitude. When an intersubjective relationship collapses into a vertical subject-object duality, “empathy between the ‘poles’ is broken,” one is the knowing do’er while the other is the done-to who knows nothing. The teacher, attempting to re-establish their authority “does not communicate, but rather issues communiqués” (p. 46).

This breakdown in communication between teacher and student results from a break in empathy and humility on part of the teacher, who projects ignorance upon the student without being able to perceive their own—reducing the other to an “it” who cannot be recognized as another “I” (Freire, 1973, p. 78). Dialogue requires a radical faith which recognizes that the other who is outside of my ego holds—at the very least if not much more—a kernel of truth about the world between us as a type of third object. Through the pedagogical dialogue, teacher and student slowly begin to decode the student’s thematic universe, by moving back and forth between each pole of the different dialectics which color their world. The back and forth between self-and-other, what is consciously permitted and unconsciously disavowed, “requires that the Subject recognize himself in the object (the coded concrete existential situation) and recognize the object as a situation in which he finds himself, together with other Subjects” (p. 96). Exploring the students’ experience in the context of their world brings them face to face with the realities of that world that were previously implicit, unconscious, or split-off, and relates to the experience of others, producing new knowledge and new dialogues.

In an intersubjective space, the *I* of the oppressed emerges by breaking their adhesion to the *Thou* of the oppressor, creating some separation in order to see the latter as outside the self. The oppressed can then become conscious of a contradictory relation with the oppressor: they are oppressor because we are oppressed, and vice-versa. Whereas in a relationship of dominator-dominated the poles of I-it can be reversed indefinitely, breaking the polar cycle involves being able to sustain *two I's* which can relate to *two Thous* (Freire, 1973, p. 167). In such a relationship “I think,” and its related term, “I conquer,” gives way to “We think, relate, love.” They are able to turn not only to the immediate relationship which mediates them, but the social world which grounds the relationship as such. In the teacher-student relationship, the teacher and student are mediated by their dyadic relationship, and by the world in which the relationship itself exist.

More to the point,

The task of the educator is to present to the educatees as a problem the content which mediates them, and not to discourse on it, give it, extend it, or hand it over, as if it were a matter of something already done, constituted, completed, and finished. In the act of problematizing the educatees, the educator is problematized too. (p. 153)

When the validity of the teacher’s knowledge is questioned, when their influence is resisted by the students, the teacher must avoid reactively instating a dominating authority, and instead risk an act of love. They must recognize the way in which they have unjustly dealt with their students, and deprived them of true learning. They must display a certain humility and *vulnerability* toward their students, so that a conviction can grow within them—the conviction that the teacher is fallible, can be challenged, and show signs of change (cf. Freire, 1973, p. 51).

By responding with humility to the reaction of the students, and re-entering the dialogue through the other’s perspective—in effect restoring empathy toward the student’s experience—the teacher acquires a new point of inquiry, and hence renders themselves open to being educated by their students. In this reconciliation, new knowledge is produced, at the same time opening up

for the students “innumerable and indispensable roads leading to their affirmation as beings of praxis.” (Freire, 1973, p. 153; p. 156). In seeing the teacher responding non-defensively to their challenge, responding in a manner different from the repressive and dehumanizing conditions of their world, the students learn in a deeply emotional and experiential mode that they can effect change, create knowledge, and render the world malleable. “From that point of departure,” Freire writes that the oppressed

would begin to effect a change in his former attitudes, by discovering himself to be a maker of the world of culture, by discovering that he, as well as the literate person, has a creative and re-creative impulse. He would discover that culture is just as much a clay doll made by artists who are his peers as it is the work of a great sculptor, a great painter, a great mystic, or a great philosopher; that culture is the poetry of lettered poets and also the poetry of his own popular songs—that culture is all human creation. (p. 47)

A new experience with an-other who is responsive and humble can provide oppressed people with the psychological space to see reality as likewise capable of responding to their acts of assertion, challenge, and critical inquiry. For Freire such a back and forth between communication, mis-communication, and reconciliation brings the world that mediates teacher and student into focus, uncovering previously unacknowledged realities. It is this intersubjective process which foments a critical consciousness, making malleable not only the world that surrounds us, but also the line between what is unspoken and that which can be put into words.

Cousin Concepts: Intersubjectivity and Mutual Recognition

In interpreting Freire’s work through a contemporary psychoanalytic lens, there is perhaps no closer analogue than Jessica Benjamin’s (1988; 1995; 1998; 2004) relational-intersubjective theorizing on mutual recognition. By drawing parallels between their thinking, one can not only recognize how Freire is a type of proto-relational post-colonial psychoanalytic thinker, and further see the psychoanalytic contribution to Liberation Psychology, but also see Freire as having presaged intersubjective theory by almost twenty years. I would go further and

argue that Freire should be seen as a liminal figure in the history of psychoanalytic thought, becoming one of the seminal influences of Liberation Psychology on the one hand, and predicting the development of relational concepts on the other. The inclusion of Freire’s work—and that of other post-colonial psychoanalytic thinkers such as Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi—in psychoanalytic education (and mental health education more broadly) would go a long way to remedy this gap in our history and our theorizing on the psyche and the social.

Benjamin’s (1988) groundbreaking text *The Bonds of Love: Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and the Problem of Domination* analyzes the relationship of domination and submission in a manner convergent with Freire’s thinking. Seeing domination as a two-way process, Benjamin considers the participation of the oppressed alongside that of the oppressor. Taking Simon de Beauvoir’s feminist insights as a starting point, Benjamin argues that the problem of domination goes to the heart of the human struggle with otherness. Within a feminist analysis of domination, “woman” functions as the primary other of “man,” their always already antitype, “playing nature to his reason, immanence to his transcendence, primordial oneness to his individuated separateness, and object to his subject” (p. 7). This complementary dualism establishes the coordinates for the positions of master and slave, separation and dependency, black and white, straight and queer, rich and poor. At its core stands a conflict over what Benjamin refers to as “recognition.” Recognition refers to an overarching concept central to human experiencing and relatedness, and which underlies many of its different permutations: “to recognize is to affirm, validate, acknowledge, know, accept, understand, empathize, take in, tolerate, appreciate, see, identify with, find familiar... love” (p. 15-16).

In the earliest and fullest form of recognition, the infant-caregiver dyad, the parent recognizes the baby as a *you*, a being with ever shifting and complex internal states—a you who

in turn takes the mother as an *I*. Benjamin (1988) argues that in the early play between parent and child a paradox takes place, in which the child is seen both as “belonging to” the parent, but also as different, separate, and outside of them. “The joy I take in your existence” Benjamin adds, “must include *both* my connection to you *and* your independent existence—I recognize that you are real” (p. 15). It is in this context that Benjamin coins the term *mutual recognition* to describe these experiences of mutual influence, affective attunement, and sharing of internal space (p. 16). Like Freire, Benjamin (and other contemporary psychoanalysts) maintain that individuals grow and develop in relationship to others, and that being able to relate to others who can recognize (humanize, in Freire’s terms) one another provides the ground not only for psychological health, but also for one’s sense of reality. Yet precisely because of this need for intersubjective relations, paradox and conflict between human beings is inevitable. In fact, to echo Freud’s often tragic view of society, conflict is built *into* our need to relate. In seeking the recognition of the other, the self tries to set itself up as an absolute, independent entity, yet it needs to recognize the other in order to be recognized in turn. A conflict emerges between my need to be an autonomous being, and my dependence on you to be recognized as an independent subject (p. 32). Benjamin draws on Hegel here (not unlike Freire), noting that the struggle for recognition can often collapse into a master-slave dialectic, writing that “[t]his absoluteness, the sense of being one (‘My identity is entirely independent and consistent’) and alone (‘There is nothing outside of me that I do not control’), is the basis for domination—and the master-slave relationship” (p. 33). Instead of maintaining a constant tension in which self and other *negotiate* sameness and difference, dependence and independence, the self assumes omnipotence and becomes a master, while the other is rendered a slave who in turn projects omnipotence upon the self.

The central problem of a relationship of domination remains *recognizing the other*. Benjamin (1988) writes that in order to truly experience myself as a subject, “I must finally acknowledge the other as existing for *himself* and not just for me. The process we call differentiation proceeds through the movement of recognition, its flow from subject to subject, from self to other and back” (p. 36). It is at this juncture that Benjamin introduces Donald Winnicott’s theorizing on destruction and survival. Winnicott distinguishes between object-relating and object-using. When an object is “related to,” it is experienced as a part of the self’s mind and not seen as a separate, independent other. As the self develops, this form of relatedness gives way to a recognition of the other as a subject, as having an external reality not entirely confined to one’s projections. This is called “object-use.” When the self persists in relating to the other as an object, it engages in what Winnicott calls destruction. What is meant here is not necessarily a physical attack or death, but a process whereby the self hoists their projections upon the other in such a way that they effectively “destroy” the other’s subjectivity, separate reality, and ability to think and reflect. In Winnicott’s developmental scheme, what is crucial is for the other to *survive* the destructive attacks of the self. The other survives when they are able to tolerate the self’s projections without retaliation or submission, maintain their ability to feel and reflect upon those feelings, and offer the self the possibility that there is an *external, other* reality beyond the contours of their being. Survival then restores the possibility of maintaining a tension between self and other, rather than a collapse into the complementarity of subject and object.

Joining Winnicott’s theory of destruction and survival with Hegelian dialectics, Benjamin (1988) argues for a definition of the “reality principle” that is intersubjectively mediated and negotiated, that “external reality” is less a positivistic thing outside “you and I,” but something

that comes into being *between* us in right relation. It is a shared reality that is “is *discovered*, rather than *imposed*... Reality neither wholly creates the self (as the pressure of the external world creates Freud’s ego) nor is it wholly created by the self” (p. 40-41). Sameness and difference exist in the negotiated space of mutual recognition, positing that in order for a common reality to be articulated it is not necessary for self and other to be entirely “like-minded,” submerged into an absolute oneness. Rather, “in every experience of similarity and subjective sharing, there must be enough difference to create the feeling of reality, that a degree of imperfection ‘ratifies’ the existence of the world” (p. 47). Not sharing a single, “objective” reality, but having a dialogue that constantly shifts between agreement and disagreement, negation and affirmation, your reality and mine, produces knowledge of the world (experiential, relational, social) in which we are embedded. This is the kind of “being with” the other, with both partners alternating between passive and active, speaker and listener, that “forms the basis of compassion, what Milan Kundera calls ‘co-feeling,’ the ability to share feelings and intentions without demanding control, to experience sameness without obliterating difference” (Benjamin, 1988, p. 48).

It is mutual recognition “that finally enables us to confront the painful aspect of external reality—its uncontrollable, tenacious otherness—as a condition of freedom rather than of domination” (Benjamin, 1988, p. 48). Making an option for the other, and placing that other in dialectical tension with the self which recognizes sameness provides the tie needed to tolerate the radical otherness that emanates from powerfully toxic affect, and those objects upon which we project that which we fear. It is precisely the intensity of affect in conflict with the other that leads the psyche to give up paradox, rupturing the relationship into a polarity of opposites. “Polarity,” Benjamin writes, “the conflict of opposites, replaces the balance within the self. This

polarity sets the stage for defining the self in terms of a movement away from dependency... Opposites can no longer be integrated; one side is devalued, the other idealized (splitting)” (p. 50). In this collapse of relating, tension or balance within the self is lost in favor of omnipotence. The self’s omnipotence manifests as an act of negation, assimilating the other into the self and destroying the reality or psychic representation of an *outside*. “Yet it comes full circle,” Benjamin warns, “and leaves the self encapsulated in a closed system—the omnipotent mind—at least until the other fights back” (p. 67). In this dialectic of control, I control the other entirely and destroy their existence, and if I allow the other to completely control me, then I cease to be. And yet this is a pseudo-independence, as true autonomy depends on my recognizing the other. For me to be truly independent, I would have to sustain an internal and external tension between these contradictory impulses—to assert myself, and to recognize the other’s reality (p. 53).

Benjamin (1988) asserts that the need for another who survives destruction and introduces the self to “the outside” is the foundation to love. Love inspires us to experience a certain level of omnipotence, and at the same time places limits against which we surrender a measure of that assertiveness before another who is the object of our love. Drawing a parallel with the image of the “good teacher”—apropos for this dialogue with Freire—Benjamin writes,

The good teacher is one who provides you with structure *and* allows you the freedom to immerse yourself in your own imagination, to explore, even make mistakes, until you can finally express your own vision...when you have got it right, the teacher recognizes that rightness with you... the good teacher seems to fit with Winnicott’s description of the holding environment as a context for the child’s transitional experiences, the beginnings of play and creativity, where the flow of recognition helps the child find what is in him- or herself, rather than vicariously in the other. This finding it in the self much more closely approximates the direct recognition a child needs (‘You did it all by yourself!’) than does the alienated search for recognition through submission in ideal love. As in the transference to the therapist, the relationship with the teacher may allow for a discreet opportunity to reproduce a holding environment, to create open, transitional space where play and self-exploration are possible. (p. 120-121)

Although Benjamin had not been exposed to Paulo Freire's work at this time (Jessica Benjamin, personal communication), she made precisely the same connections I see between Freire's teacher-student dialectic and the patient-therapist relation. Rather than presenting a "banking system" in which the teacher fills the student with knowledge, or the therapist fills the patient with interpretations, teacher and therapist join student and patient in creating a transitional space in which the student-patient can discover their own selves. The "external" mutual recognition between two subjectivities translates into the subjectivity of the student-patient being able to entertain an "internal" dialogue between conscious and unconscious, ego and "it," aggression and vulnerability.

Although much of this discussion of Benjamin's (1988) theory centers upon an oppressive and omnipotent "self" which becomes subject to a subjected object, Benjamin—much like Freire—outlines the effect that relations of domination has on the oppressed. Domination for Benjamin "is a twisting of the bonds of love" (p. 219) which distorts the human need for recognition. Following the breakdown of tension between self and other "domination proceeds through the alternate paths of identifying with or submitting to powerful others who personify the fantasy of omnipotence" (ibid.). The subjugated relinquish omnipotence by projecting upon the other who assumes it. The dominant is idealized and thus becomes more than human, while the dominated are denigrated, becoming lesser than. Subjugated identify with the idealized and powerful other, creating "an absence where the other should be" (p. 219). The values, whims, and reality of the dominant is taken inside, residing in the psyche of the oppressed. In this sense, both oppressor and oppressed create a void where a fully realized human being used to be, which is then filled with fantasies and projections.

Although this dissertation has discussed a preferential option for the other as being pregnant with emancipatory potential, it should not be misunderstood as idealizing the oppressed. As Benjamin (1988) herself notes, the position of the dominated is a complicated one. Paralleling Freire, she writes,

The subjugated, whose acts and integrity are granted no recognition, may, even in the very act of emancipation, remain in love with the ideal of power that has been denied to them. Though they may reject the master's right to dominion over them, they nevertheless do not reject his personification of power. They simply reverse the terms and claim his rights as theirs. (p. 220)

This is the danger of reversal Freire and other post-colonial thinkers from Fanon to Memmi have identified and critiqued within certain leftist movements. The oppressed cannot take down the master's house with the same tools. They must make a much more radical choice. "To halt this cycle of domination," Benjamin argues (1988) "*the other must make a difference*" (p. 221). The other—whether the woman, the non-cis gendered, the non-straight, non-white, the poor—must "claim their subjectivity and so be able to survive destruction. They may thus offer [the oppressor] a new possibility of colliding with the outside and becoming alive in the presence of an equal other" (ibid.). This survival of destruction is in itself an act of resistance on behalf of the oppressed, but I also argue that it is an ethical position that the oppressor or the dominant figure—whether teacher or therapist—must take. As Freire is fond of saying, the one in power must risk an act of love.

Intersubjectivity theory leaves no one off the ethical hook, and this includes the powerful. It is not simply that the oppressor must wait for an act of survival from the oppressed. In general terms, Benjamin (1998) clarifies that

The notion of intersubjectivity postulates that the barbarism of incorporating the Other into the same, the cycle of destructiveness, can only be modified when the Other intervenes. Therefore *any subject's primary responsibility to the other subject is to be her intervening or surviving other.*" (p. 99)

The language here is compelling and provocative. *Any* subject's primary responsibility to the *other* subject is to be their surviving other. The responsibility for change cannot be placed squarely on the subaltern's shoulders. An option for the other certainly involves responding to the cry that overtly and clearly calls for justice, but it is all the more important to respond to that cry which whispers its desire for recognition. If we wait for the other who has been traumatically subjected to the will of another to challenge us, we may have to wait a long time. Rather, as therapists we must be vigilant, ever at the ready to consider what the other is experiencing, ready to ask ourselves, "What is operating outside my awareness as I relate to this other? How can I make way for their voice, with love and humility?"

Breaking the Bonds of Domination: Thirdness in the Therapeutic Space

Evolving her intersubjective perspective, Benjamin (2004) later added that when one is observing mutual interaction between two subjectivities, one does so from the perspective of the "third," a point of view that is produced by the dyad of the two, and in turn also structures that dyad. The "third" in contemporary psychoanalysis was coined in order to address not only the subjectivity of the therapist and that of the patient, but the co-created system that synergistically emerges from the two—not transference as separate from counter-transference and vice-verse, but the transference-countertransference matrix as such. Benjamin distinguishes the third as a particular epistemological position from "third-ness," the process of building such relational systems and developing the capacity for mutual co-creation. Thirdness in Benjamin's intersubjective scheme thus refers to a process "of negotiation... in which analyst and patient each build, as in a squiggle drawing, a construction of their separate experiences together" (p. 7). The third position, the not-entirely-mine-but-not-entirely-yours, could then be said to be the structure which supports thirdness. Rather than being a privileged, objective perspective, the

space of the third is not a God's-eye-view of the dyad we attain, but a broader organic process—some would argue, *separate subjectivity*—to which we surrender. Benjamin explains that

the third is that to which we surrender, and thirdness is the intersubjective mental space that facilitates or results from surrender. In my thinking, the term surrender refers to a certain letting go of the self, and thus also implies the ability to take in the other's point of view or reality. Thus, surrender refers us to recognition—being able to sustain connectedness to the other's mind while accepting his separateness and difference. Surrender implies freedom from any intent to control or coerce” (p. 8)

One surrenders not to another person, but to some principle which *mediates* self and other, bringing them into being. Benjamin notes that while surrender is something expected of the patient's side in the analytic dyad, she is here drawing attention to the need for the analyst to surrender, not to the patient in a one-sided manner, but to the third which mediates the I-You relationship.

The articulation of a third position is central to current theory and research on therapeutic impasses (Safran & Muran, 2000). The intersubjective space of thirdness will inevitably breakdown into complementary, do'er-done to twoness. Ideally these ruptures in the therapist-patient relationship will be repaired, creating a cycle of rupture and repair that is part of a larger process of relating. Breaking apart and coming together become a part of life with others. When the therapist can acknowledge their contribution to the impasse, so that it is not the patient who is the problem, nor necessarily only the therapist, the systemic nature of relationality—the third—can come into view. “In this sense,” Benjamin (2004) writes, “we surrender to the principle of reciprocal influence in interaction, which makes possible both responsible action and freely given recognition. This action is what allows *the outside, different other* to come into view” (p. 11, emphasis added). Restoring the transitional space of thirdness, negotiation between separation and connection can be re-established. Surviving the breakdown into you-versus-me, and restoring the dialogue with each partner surviving the other's destructiveness, becomes a

pivotal element of therapeutic change (ibid.). The rupture-repair cycle foments the ability (and not just in the patient!) to sustain a tension between the self's needs and those of the other. This mentalizing stance Benjamin refers to as the "moral third" (p. 13).

Alternatively, if instead of the third being something that patient and therapist co-create and co-discover together, the therapist sees the third as something they "hold on" to, with the fantasy that they have a God's eye-view of the therapeutic relationship, then the therapist becomes something akin to a "banking system" analyst (to borrow Freire's terminology), instating "asymmetrical complementarity of knower and known, giver and given to" (Benjamin, 2004, p. 20)! The analyst knows what's *really* going on in the relationship, while the patient knows nothing, or at best holds a distorted view of the interaction. In this asymmetrical and complementary view of the therapeutic dance, the analyst may one-sidedly use interpretations as a way of creating the third by depositing their perspective of the third upon the client, potentially perpetuating the impasse. Of note, Benjamin gives the example of the analyst interpreting a power struggle with the patient, which is then seen by the patient as a power move, maintaining the victim-perpetrator cycle (p. 29). Using the third as an objective position instead of something jointly discovered results in the patient feeling excluded, and hence retaliating. Instead of giving interpretations as data to be deposited into the patient, the therapist "might call for the patient's help in figuring out what is going on, in order to open up the space of thirdness, The latter can appear to be a defensive insistence on one's own thinking as the necessary version of reality" (p. 30).

Therapeutic ruptures often reveal not only the patient's vulnerabilities and traumas, but also those of the therapist. The therapist may become defensive and invalidate the patient's experience, entering into a pathological exchange in which only the therapist's reality is valid

and true, and the patient must submit to that reality by disavowing their own, experiencing as Benjamin (2004) writes, “The analyst has chosen her own sanity over mine. She would rather that I feel crazy than that she be the one who is in the wrong” (p. 31). As noted above, during an impasse the most important step we must take “is the acknowledgment of our own struggles... The analyst who can acknowledge missing or failing, who can feel and express regret, helps create a system based on acknowledgment of what has been missed, both in the past and the present” (p. 32). The process of repairing a rupture, then, involves the therapist attending not only to how they have excluded the patient from reflecting jointly on the third, but also to those aspects of their own subjectivity that have been cast out. This reflects the other side of the coin in practicing a “preferential option for the repressed”—drawing attention not only to what the patient has excluded in their conscious mind, but also what *we* have rendered abject in turn. By practicing the option for the outcast within ourselves during therapeutic impasses, we invite the patient to give us their perspective on the dyad, stepping back from the blame-game in order to take on a broader, co-discovered point of view—that of the third. We can then begin to hear the patient’s articulations not as a wrongful and unjust accusation which leaves us feeling helpless and ashamed, but as a *cry* for restitution, restoration, and justice.

In referring to this process of repair, of re-attuned responsiveness to the-other person of the patient, as the “moral third,” Benjamin (2004) grounds clinical practice in a social vision and an ethics of uncertainty, responsibility, humility, and compassion which reverberates with an egalitarian view of psychoanalysis (p. 35). Within the view articulated in this dissertation, it dovetails with a preferential option for the repressed, for the other within and without. The moral third and the preferential option can be seen as synonymous at this point, as they both call on therapists to not only be attuned and responsive to our clients but to also *bear responsibility*

toward the negative affect inside us and the marginalized external other. By this preferential option or moral third we argue for an

acceptance (hopefully within our community) of certain principles as a foundation for analytic thirdness—an attitude toward interaction in which analysts honestly confront the feelings of shame, inadequacy, and guilt that enactments and impasses arouse. In this sense, the analyst's surrender means accepting the necessity of becoming involved in a process that is often outside our control and understanding. (2004, p. 40-41)

Outside of our control, beyond our current understanding, in our “blind spots,” outside of our awareness; all these form synonyms for the unknown space which we call unconscious. They evoke feelings of shame and guilt which we must all face as a field of practitioners and consultants. In inviting the otherness that lies within us, as well as outside of us, to guide us and inform our perspective, we are enriched. The third position emerges out of what patient and therapist can face together, the unconscious communication that emerges in the intersection of the two. Perhaps no other source of ruptures is more dreaded than those that happen as a result of cultural or identity differences between patient and therapist. It is here that we will introduce the final piece of this dialogue, the *social* third.

The Analytic Third & the Social Third: A Socio-Cultural Vision for Psychoanalysis

Extending relational thinking on one versus two person psychologies, Phillip Cushman (1994; 1995) and Neil Altman (1995) propose a three-person psychology which includes the social, the cultural, and the political within the transference-countertransference matrix. Beginning in 1994, Cushman (1994) advocated for a social third in order to acknowledge the interpenetration of the social, interpersonal, and intrapsychic realms. With a three-person point of view one sees “that the individual and the cultural are inextricably intertwined, that moral understandings are a foundational aspect of a culture, and that our discipline needs to be concerned with how various theories affect political structures and activities” (p. 832). Adding a

social and not merely interpersonal dimension to individual subjectivity helps us “locate both self-conceptions and the various psychological configurations of ‘the other’ in a cultural terrain conceptualized as spreading out on all sides of the patient” (p. 833-834). This aids patient and therapist in recognizing that what is split off and disavowed is not merely “internal” but is also related to broader cultural and political forces—existing “inside” but also “outside,” between people and their social surround. Being able to explore cultural dynamics as they are always-already embedded within the psyches of patient and therapist, and as they play out in the therapeutic relationship, holds the potential for creating shifts in what Cushman calls our “cultural horizon.” “By adjusting our cultural horizon,” Cushman writes,

we can allow room for *alternative* traditions to show up, and then we can use those traditions to create a dialogue with the dominant tradition, thus informing our everyday life. We can then, armed with an enriched perspective, fight against the forces that oppress us. (p. 353)

Cushman hints that in exploring cultural dynamics as they are enacted between patient and therapist, one may create a space for previously unarticulated, alternative realities to emerge which can challenge not only our various internalized oppressions, but can be used to mobilize change in our social realities as a community. This is compelling given that for Winnicott, the transitional space between patient and therapist, self and other, is the world of play, imagination, and culture. Culture, whether dominant or subaltern, becomes something to play with, discover, re-invent, and make alive. Leaving out the communal implications of Cushman’s thinking for a future project, I want to draw out the implications of this perspective for psychotherapy.

Neil Altman (1995) in his now classic text, *The Analyst in the Inner City: Race, Class, and Culture Through a Psychoanalytic Lens*, also develops a three-person model “in which the third term refers to the social context in which the analytic work takes place” (p. xix). The third term—the social and systemic—draws reflective focus to the systemic context which structures

both psyches in the analytic relationship, and how so-called “external” realities such as prejudice are always texturing the contours of the mind, creating cuts between conscious and unconscious along racialized, gendered, and socio-economic lines. Reviewing relational two-person theorizing, Altman notes the importance of each partner being able to reflect on the relationship that forms between them, and trade one another’s perspectives in a dialectical fashion. Similarly, Altman argues that using that same self-reflective and critical capacity from within a psycho-social perspective deepens our understanding of subjectivity at all levels—intrapsychic, intersubjective, and cultural (p. 56). A three-person point of view shifts lenses back and forth between all of these modes of experiencing, calling attention to the analytic dyad alongside the patient’s and therapist’s relationship to the social context which grounds and structures their realities. The social context includes both power and cultural identifications, such as the positionality of each partner in terms of race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ability/disability, and so forth, as well as their unconscious or implicit attitudes toward each of these positions (p. 76). But even these social identifications have transference-countertransference ramifications, as “patient and analyst are creating an enactment that reflects an aspect of what is happening on the macrocosmic level” (p. 143).

In theorizing on the intersection of the transference-countertransference relation and the socio-political, Altman integrates the concept of the social third with the intersubjective analytic third. Similar to Benjamin’s call for analysts to own their own reactions to the patient, no matter how shameful or guilt inducing they may be, Altman argues that therapists should likewise become aware of their own racial and cultural prejudices and own them, instead of disowning them as “bad objects.” Reflecting on his work as a white Jewish analyst with an African-American patient, “Mr. A,” Altman slowly began to realize that there was a dimension to their

relationship which reflected anxieties around racial difference. Altman sensed that his black patient saw him as a “dirty, greedy Jew,” while he in turn experienced reciprocal feelings toward his patient which oscillated between seeing him as a “criminal, anti-social” or “deprived, oppressed” black man. I quote Altman’s reflection at length, if only due to the candor with which he speaks about his socio-culturally and racially influenced countertransference:

One can regard my racist and anti-Semitic “reveries” as my entrée into the intersubjectively created analytic third in this case, in which Mr. A had become the deprived, oppressed black man... and I had become the greedy Jew chasing after money, taking what was rightfully his. Mr. A presented himself as looking after my needs, but, finally, the joke was on me. On another level, my resistance and anxiety about becoming the greedy Jew, as well as my fear of becoming the oppressive white man, led me to delay confronting Mr. A about his bounced checks or taking up the issue of racism with him. My level of anger may also have made the specter of racist violence too powerful a fantasy. Within our intersubjectively created third space, one of us was to be victimized, and the other was to be the victimizer. (Altman, 2000, p. 598)

In this vignette, Altman shows that the social third grounds, structures, and intersects with the intersubjectively determined “third” (the therapeutic relationship). Based on his clinical experiences, he advocates that therapists become aware of culturally-toned countertransference reactions as they emerge in the intersubjective relation, especially when these reflect unconscious prejudicial attitudes. In this particular case, Altman noted that his racial prejudices, compounded by his anxiety about his prejudice, pushed him to avoid explicitly addressing the racial feelings in the room. Similar to Benjamin’s assertion that avoiding or disowning responsibility in an enactment maintains it and invalidates the patient, Altman argues that he implicitly communicated his racism to his patient, and in turn invalidated his patient’s experience of bias in the relationship. In the end, the patient dropped out of therapy.

Hence, becoming aware of prejudices, cultural misattunements, missteps, and ruptures is “an indispensable first step toward engaging the unconscious communication between [patient and therapist] and toward becoming aware of the dynamics within the third space between us, the

intersubjective/societal third” (Altman, 2000, p. 598). “If we do not confront such feelings in ourselves,” Altman warns, “we do not stand a chance of being able to process such interactions therapeutically, in words and in action” (p. 599).

Liberation Psychology and Psychoanalysis: A Family Reunion

In light of this review of relational concepts in psychoanalysis, Freire’s work takes on a new light. His theorizing on humanization and dehumanization, with their Hegelian dialectical flair, can be read in light of Jessica Benjamin’s theory of mutual recognition. The teacher-student relationship, much like the therapist-patient relationship, goes through cycles of mutuality and complementary asymmetry, attunement and misattunement, being with and being against. In both relationships, the emancipatory moment comes not in inserting some previously unknown reality in the student-patient by the teacher-therapist, but precisely in sitting with the tension between these two poles. It is when there is *breakdown*, brought upon by the teacher-therapist’s reactions to the student-patient, and the former addressing that rupture through an act of humility, vulnerability, and reconciliation toward the latter that a new reality, a more open world, can be co-discovered. For Benjamin, we are talking about a new relational experience of mutuality, co-creation, and survival. For Altman and Cushman, we articulate a re-examination of our cultural prejudices and preconceptions, and reparation whenever these intrude into the therapeutic space, and from the perspective of a socially conscious moral third, challenge those unjust realities. For Freire, it is in the space between the relational and the socio-culturo-political that his work emerges as a “historico-cultural psychoanalysis.”

The best way to illustrate this connection is through an analogy employed by Jungian psychoanalyst Andrew Samuels (2006). Drawing on the work of German dramatist Bertolt

Brecht to highlight the therapeutic value of political discussion in psychotherapy, Samuels writes,

Via certain technical theatrical devices, the audience is encouraged to step back and to distance itself from the drama going on onstage in order to apperceive more clearly what the social, political and economic dynamics of the drama are. The intention is that the audience should not only identify emotionally with the characters in the play but should also try to understand and analyze in theatre with what I would call 'exvolvement.'... Analogous to therapy, we're engaged with the issues emotionally but also cultivating a certain kind of distance where we see the broader political context of the questions at hand. (p. 19)

As I have argued elsewhere (Gaztambide, 2012b), racial enactments (or cultural enactments more broadly) reflect the irruption of the always-already present social third within the analytic space, destabilizing the intersubjective third. Patient and therapist “involve” themselves in one another’s racial, gendered, and socio-economically derived fantasies, precipitating a cultural misattunement or rupture event. There is a breakdown of mutual recognition in the therapeutic pair, collapsing into the do’er-done to, victim-perpetrator cycle of the banking system of interaction. In essence the therapeutic relationship becomes a stage upon which intrapsychic, intersubjective, and socio-cultural dynamics are “acted out” by patient and therapist. However, if the therapist is able to become aware of their turbulent emotional state, own their reactions to the patient, and perhaps even disclose them to the patient as an act of vulnerability, then as Samuels states, patient and therapist may be able to “exvolve” themselves from the drama playing out between them. The therapist surrenders to the intersubjective *and* the social third. The patient will come to feel heard, validated, and recognized, in turn allowing them to be able to see, hear, and recognize the therapist as an external other, not merely an introjected persecutor. With the repair of breakdown and the restoration of mutual recognition, a shared, open, and dynamic reality emerges. Patient and therapist distance themselves from the socio-cultural enactment, and

more clearly perceive the intrapsychic, intersubjective, and political dynamics of the drama playing on the therapeutic stage.

A Psychotherapy for the People: A Case Illustration

I will now present a case that illustrates some of the elements for “a psychotherapy for the people” as advocated for in this dissertation. The case itself is a pastiche of my pregraduate and graduate school clinical experiences providing mental health services in a variety of underserved settings (e.g., inner city outpatient clinics, in-home therapy, community externship placements). I have chosen to create a pastiche instead of drawing on a specific case in order to preserve anonymity and draw greater attention to the clinical process. To be clear, this is but one example of the possible alloys crafted from the elements of contemporary psychoanalysis. The setting of the treatment was a community based clinic that provided clinical services to an ethnically and economically diverse population. The treatment itself was psychoanalytic, though it integrated aspects of cognitive-behavioral therapy and systems consultation.

Pablo (pseudonym) was a 28-year-old, male, low-income, bilingual, Latin American undocumented immigrant who sought psychotherapy at our clinic due to anxiety symptoms that affected his day-to-day life. At intake, he stated he was a Spanish-dominant speaker, and would feel more comfortable working with someone who was bilingual. Because I am an island-born Puerto Rican who is bilingual, I offered to pick up the case. After an initial assessment, it became clear that Pablo suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder related to his immigration experience. Although Pablo wanted psychological help, he confessed that he did not have a lot of money. As the clinic charged for services on a sliding scale, we were able to negotiate an affordable fee. Given Pablo’s hectic work schedule, arrangements were made for once a week treatment. Also, because I am a graduate student who takes vacation time at the end of each

semester, we agreed to review progress and the need for further treatment at the end of the current semester.

During the first couple of sessions, I asked Pablo how he felt talking to me about his problems. Pablo disclosed that he felt comfortable with me, which was a relief to him because he worried we would not have “una buena onda,” (a good vibe). Considering the importance of interpersonal warmth (*personalismo*) and trust (*confianza*) for many Latinos, I used this moment as an opportunity for psychoeducation. I told him that it was good for us to have a “good vibe,” because we could use the chemistry between us as a way of exploring his needs and concerns. This became Pablo’s introduction to transference and the relational nature of psychotherapy. Throughout our work together, I used similar moments and metaphors to explain the analytic process, and make psychotherapy a less alien and stigmatizing experience.

Given Pablo’s post-traumatic stress symptoms, I employed relaxation and distress reduction skills training from cognitive-behavioral therapy, with the understanding that improving emotional regulation would facilitate the exploration and expression of the underlying emotions associated with his traumatic experience. By increasing Pablo’s repertoire of coping skills and gradually beginning to discuss his immigration experience, he became more tolerant of previously unbearable anxiety, giving him the emotional freedom to disclose more details of his trauma. After some sessions of this kind of work, we agreed we could begin exploring Pablo’s trauma in full. As I listened to Pablo’s story, there were moments in which his range of affect suddenly narrowed, and his narrative became more constrained and less detailed. He would then cease talking about his narrative altogether and demand to know if I was sharing his story with *la migra* (e.g., the immigration authorities, ICE). I assured him this was not the case and asked him

to continue. He would then resume his narrative, only to once again become preoccupied with my intentions.

Pablo withdrew emotionally from me, and increasingly feared I would sell him out to the authorities. I, in turn, had difficulty staying attuned to him, becoming increasingly uncomfortable during our sessions. I increasingly saw him as unnecessarily suspicious and disengaged, and I worried that the stereotypes of ethnic minorities as “unanalyzable,” unable to engage in psychoanalytic therapy, were true (perhaps an ironic neurosis considering that *I* am a Puerto Rican clinician who is *also* in his own personal psychoanalytic therapy!). Through supervision and reflection on the enactment, I realized that I was operating from an assumption that belied my privilege as a Puerto Rican, given that Puerto Ricans from the island and the United States mainland are born with citizenship. Since the mainland was always a plane ride away from Puerto Rico, I had no idea what it was like to lose friends and family, and almost lose one’s life, in the course of immigration. Hearing Pablo’s story highlighted the experiential gulf between us, bringing my own unarticulated privileges into awareness and increasing my discomfort. Pablo must have sensed this discomfort and responded to it as a threat to his safety, a sign that I could not provide a holding environment for his affect. When he rightly questioned whether I was compromising his safety (“are you reporting me to *la migra*?”), my attempts at reassurance—the denial of my discomfort with our cultural difference—labeled him as paranoid, invalidating his experience of me in the here-and-now. The intersubjective third space collapsed into the complementary dance of persecutor and persecuted.

At our next session I noted the growing distance between us, and wondered aloud whether my “reassurance” had in fact invalidated him and implicitly communicated that he was being paranoid. Pablo confirmed this, sharing that he felt I was calling him a “Latino loco” (a

crazy Latino). He had felt confused and disoriented, but knew that at some level I was not fully present with him, which made him worry about my intentions in listening to his trauma. I validated his observations of my avoidance, and disclosed that I was reacting to the cultural differences in our relationship: with him as an undocumented Latino and myself as—at this point Pablo finished my sentence for me—“Latino con ciudadanía” (a Latino with citizenship”). Bringing attention to the cultural/social third opened up space for us to address how our different experiences—his as a Latin American immigrant, mine as an island-born Puerto Rican with U.S. citizenship—affected our interaction and my ability to stay connected. The enactment resonated with Pablo’s experience outside of therapy, in which others could not understand the profundity of his immigration experience, or his fears of being caught and “sent back” to his country by immigration officials. Negotiating the meaning of this intersubjective/social third reanimated the ghosts of the homelands we left behind, and allowed the unspoken truth of skin tone privilege. My white skin and his brown skin became a microcosm of the colorism which haunts the Latino community, with its narratives of master and slave, the uplifted and the fallen, becoming a charged site of analytic inquiry.

Repairing the cultural rupture allowed for the restoration of mutual trust by validating Pablo’s experience of me in the here-and-now. Validating Pablo’s reality facilitated the emergence of underlying feelings of injury and loss into awareness, allowing him to mourn those he had lost after he immigrated to the United States. Expressing this untapped affect to me provided Pablo with an experience in which his reality as a trauma victim was validated and born witness to. Mutual reflection on our transference and countertransference, in turn, made new emotional and historical material available to consciousness and furthered the work of analysis. Connections were drawn between his intrapsychic reality, the intersubjective third we co-

constructed, and the social-political world which grounds our existence. This promoted a greater political awareness for Pablo and myself, which empowered us to envision a new reality in which this country's laws created a haven for the immigrant and the stranger.

As a result of our exchange, I connected Pablo with an immigration lawyer who did pro bono work and could inform him of his rights and help him navigate the U.S. immigration system. Empowerment through access to legal and community resources, coupled with increased coping and meaningful connection within the therapeutic relationship, led to symptom improvement, the creation of new meaning from the trauma, and improvement in emotion regulation capacities. As set out at the beginning of our time together, we reviewed our progress and assessed the need for further treatment at the end of the school year. At this point, Pablo felt he had achieved his goals and requested that we end treatment so that he could attend to some family responsibilities that had come up. After a collaborative dialogue we decided to terminate therapy after a course of 25 sessions. The therapy process was marked by a dynamic interplay between empathic exploration of affect, use of cognitive-behavioral skills training, here-and-now relational processing, systems level intervention and exploration of culturally urgent themes. Technical flexibility allowed us to deploy different types of clinical tools within a psychoanalytic framework.

Conclusion:

As Freire learned from his pedagogical experiments, once we are able to join one another as subjects—and not objects—we can begin the search for something together. We can draw attention to the world which mediates you and I, and structures both that which we are conscious of and that which we are not. When Freire (1973) writes that “Dialogue is the loving encounter of people, who, mediated by the world, *proclaim* that world,” (p. 115) he is foreshadowing the

importance of mutual recognition in any of the relationships which constitute Freud's "impossible professions"—whether education or psychotherapy. Mutual recognition, and its repair when it falters, provides the fertile ground upon which a critical consciousness—of self, other, and world—can grow. In joint critical reflection upon the world patient and therapist transform the world, "and in transforming it, humanize it for all people" (ibid.). In this synthesis, Liberation Psychology and psychoanalysis flow one into the other.

This analysis has important implications for culturally competent practice. Embedded in Freire's relational philosophy—and that of contemporary psychoanalysis—is the understanding that breakdowns in communication, ruptures in attunement to the other, and lapses in right relation *are inevitable*. This includes attunement to our patient's experiential, cultural, and social realities. *No* amount of cultural sensitivity, cultural competence, or diversity training will make us perfectly attuned clinicians to diverse cultural populations. You cannot train yourself out of having an unconscious. We will always have our automatic, pre-reflective biases, and these may often arise in relation or reaction to our patients. To think otherwise would be to somehow abstract the therapeutic relationship out of the society in which we exist, with its ongoing problems with otherness—whether gendered, sexual, racial, or otherwise. It would also ignore the way that society is "inside" us at all times, molding our affect, structuring our thoughts, nudging our behavior to approach or retreat from different types of people.

To say this is not, of course, to excuse or normalize prejudicial behavior as natural or entirely inevitable. We may become more aware of our biases, and strive to make them less automatic by being attentive to them. But they will not disappear by our not addressing them, especially with our patients. As noted through Freire, Benjamin, Cushman, and Altman, ignoring such enactments can be very destructive to our patients. Alternatively, processing them with a

reparative and reconciliatory spirit has the potential of not only restoring our connection to the patient, providing a new relational experience, but also framing the socio-political dimension of the enactment, raising the critical consciousness of both patient and therapist. This depends on a dialogue in which patient and therapist can survive one another's destructiveness, and take the risk of being vulnerable with the "other side" of the face-to-face relation—the face of the unconscious. It is out of this vulnerability, and the love that sustains our survival, that a new world can be proclaimed.

Conclusion

Not a Destination, but a Departure: An Outline for Future Scholarship

“Psychoanalysis is in essence a cure through love.” –Sigmund Freud in a letter to Carl Jung
(cited in Betterlheim [1984])

This conclusion will review the preceding chapters and argue for an integration of two of the members of the three-way dance discussed in the introduction: psychoanalysis, Liberation Psychology, and Multicultural Psychology. Specifically, I will argue for a synthesis of psychoanalysis and Liberation Psychology that recognizes the emancipatory origins of psychoanalysis and the psychoanalytic origins of Liberation Psychology, while also creating space for future convergences which are yet to be written. This integration will serve as a springboard for a much broader discussion which joins psychoanalysis and Liberation Psychology in order to reconfigure how we think about cultural competency *theory, practice,* and *education*. This conclusion will create an outline for future theoretical and integrative work, and serve as a foundation for a more complete project which will unpack the relevance of psychoanalytic thinking for Multicultural Psychology.

Review of Central Arguments

To review, this dissertation has—in line with current scholarship on the sociology of psychoanalysis—contextualized the origins of psychoanalysis as a theory and clinical practice in the racialized discourses of fin-de-siecle Europe, and the traumatic experiences of the oppressed Jewish people within that world; Sigmund Freud and the first generation of analysts among them. Having framed the socio-historical context of psychoanalysis, this oft-forgotten history was in turn read through the eyes of Liberation Theology. As Jews, Freud and the early analysts

were racial others, outsiders standing at the margins of society, and in a position from which to witness the conflicted, split, and dissociated aspects of society and human subjectivity. In being what Aron & Starr (2012) refer to as “optimally marginal,” Freud was subject to the biases and prejudices of his time, and the same time capable of critiquing them and point out what they *left out*. By being in the position of the other, Freud and the early analysts practiced a preferential option for the repressed, a concern for what is turned away from, dissociated, and excluded in psyche and society. From this perspective, psychoanalysis emerges as a proto-post colonial emancipatory practice which calls on us to heed the call of the inner and outer other, to turn towards them as an ethical act, acknowledging both our complicity to their exclusion and responsibility to their inclusion.

A psychoanalytic perspective, filtered through the lens of Liberation Theology, enjoins us to practice a preferential option for the repressed both clinically and socio-politically, always asking who or what is being left out, who or what is not being acknowledged, who or what is rendered other. Our attention then turns toward recognizing the dialectical tension between self and other, and how the self’s creation is constituted by the other’s marginalization, in order to strive toward a reconciliation that dances between the poles of breakdown and reconciliation. This third space lays the groundwork for developing a critical consciousness. It reflects a process that is both internal and external, playing out between different self-states, affects, intentions, and conflicts in the mind just as much as between individual people, groups, or societies. As was shown in this dissertation, the early psychoanalytic movement practiced this preferential option both in the interpersonal space of the clinical situation as well as in social advocacy, debate, and public reform. It is the constant turn toward the margins, in order to reconcile them with the “center,” that inspired Freud’s call for a “psychotherapy for the people.”

Born from the dialogues between Freud and Ferenczi, interpretation and suggestion, gold and copper, psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, rich and poor, white and non-white (Aron & Starr, 2012), a “psychotherapy for the people” emerged from the embers of the first world war. This psychotherapy for the people arose in order to draw attention to the poverty brought about by rampant warfare, and to the impoverished many that up to that time did not benefit from psychoanalytic treatment. Ushering an era of clinical experimentation marked by increased emphasis on the curative dimension of transference-countertransference relation, the role of “active” intervention, and systemic advocacy for client needs, Freud and Ferenczi strove to redefine psychoanalysis as a tool that was flexible, responsive, and socially engaged with the needs of the displaced and oppressed. This impetus manifested itself clinically through the establishment of public clinics which catered to the poor and downtrodden, and through increased activity in political and cultural debates at the intersection of sexuality, gender, race, and religion. Recovering this historical memory (Martin-Baro, 1994) leads to a conception of psychoanalysis that is relational, technically flexible and integrative, politically minded, and responsive to the needs of oppressed populations *in its origins*.

Although the purpose of this dissertation is to recover the historical memory of psychoanalysis, the fact is that this history has been dissociated and mostly forgotten both within and outside psychoanalysis. The rise of the Nazi Party, the traumatic irruption of the *Shoah*, and the displacement of Jewish survivors all had a role to play in the eroding of this psychoanalytic tradition in Europe. But what of the émigrés who fled Europe? Did they not bring this tradition of social progressivism with them to North and Latin America, to Africa and Asia? In thinking of this history, I am reminded of a passage from the Christian Gospels which seems apropos. In the

“Parable of the Scattering Seed,” Jesus preached of a farmer who went out to the field to spread their seeds,

As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn’t have roots, they died. Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted! Anyone with ears to hear, let them hear! (Matthew 13: 4-9)

In the analogy I am drawing here, the seeds are the progressive tradition in psychoanalysis. Some of the seeds landed on the path and were eaten by birds. Others fell upon the rock but were burnt by the heat. And still others fell amidst the thorns which prevented their sprouting. To state this analogy more concretely, one could compare psychoanalysis in North America with Latin America. Briefly, the Jewish analysts who immigrated to the United States were not only traumatized by World War II, but then had to face the othering taking place in United States along race, class, and political ideology. In the 50s and 60s Jews were also a racialized other in North America, and leftist movements such as the socialism and communism of the era were seen as a danger to the nation due to McCarthyism. In truth, *any* left-leaning ideology was persecuted, no matter how distant or non-existent their relationship to socialism. This led many progressive Jewish psychoanalysts to disavow both their Jewishness *and* their progressive values in order to survive. Psychoanalysis and the monstrous otherness it represented was tamed, leading to a one-sided emphasis on the ego and its adaptability to social convention (Aron & Star, 2012; Jacoby, 1988). Whenever the seeds attempted to sprout anew, whether on the lips of Clara Thompson, Karen Horney, Erich Fromm, Harry Stack Sullivan, or Franz Alexander, there was excommunication, sanction, and marginalization. The seeds fell on the path, and the birds devoured them.

The situation was somewhat different in Latin America. Although psychoanalysis underwent a similar process of being tamed in order to meet the needs of the status quo, there were those émigrés *who remembered*, analysts who trained in Freud's free clinics like Marie Langer (Hollander, 1997; cf. Danto, 2005). Analysts like Marie Langer *remembered that history*, and sought to revive it in Latin America. Progressive psychoanalysts in Argentina, Peru, Uruguay, Mexico, and elsewhere committed their time to providing low cost services to the poor, harbored, treated, and protected revolutionaries and progressives during the "Dirty Wars" of the Southern Cone Countries, and lent a critical psychoanalytic voice against injustice. North American psychoanalyst Nancy Caro Hollander (1997), who interviewed Langer and studied the work of her colleagues, saw fit to coin the term "Liberation Psychology" in a manner contemporaneous with Martin-Baro. And like Martin-Baro, left-leaning Latin American psychoanalysts faced persecution, torture, violence, displacement, and in some cases death. The seeds fell upon rocks and thorns, sprouted and began to grow, yet they too were strangled and burnt.

But there was a space in between North and Latin America, between the "third" world and the "first," in which the seeds seemed to grow and yield fruits for both. Psychoanalysis in many ways became well established and spread out in Latin America, informing and being informed by a variety of progressive thinkers, not least of which was the psychoanalytic group theorist Enrique Pichon-Riviere. Psychoanalysis also became a tool of social critique in Africa and the Caribbean through figures such as Albert Memmi and Franz Fanon. All of these thinkers flowed into Paulo Freire who, along with Liberation Theology, was a central inspiration for Martin-Baro's Liberation Psychology. And it was in Mexico—Latin America bordering with North America—that Freire began his friendship with Erich Fromm (Funk, 2000).

Psychoanalytic progressivism from the “first world” had made contact with its estranged sibling from the “third,” leading to a moment of meeting and recognition: “This educational practice,” Fromm remarks to Freire, “is like a kind of historico-cultural, political psychoanalysis!” (Freire, 1992).

What exactly led to this recognition? What did Fromm see in Freire’s work? By reading Freire through the eyes of relational psychoanalysts such as Benjamin, Altman, and Cushman, we discovered that Freire’s work is psychoanalytic not only in pedigree (Fanon, Memmi, Pichon-Riviere, Fromm, Althusser, Adorno), *but in structure*. His thinking stresses the importance of the transference-countertransference relationship, the necessity of processing enactments and addressing ruptures in intersubjectivity, and the role of making all the dimensions of the unconscious—personal, interpersonal, socio-political—*conscious*. This is *concientizacao* or *critical consciousness*. It is reflection upon self-in-the-world, which in turn, transforms self-in-the-world. In tracing the psychoanalytic origins of Liberation Psychology, and finding Liberation Psychology in psychoanalysis, I come to the following conclusion: *The practice of Liberation Psychology—in the classroom, in the clinic, in the trenches—is psychoanalytic practice*.

Hollander (1997), in the epilogue of her book *Love in a Time of Hate: Liberation Psychology in Latin America*, asks whether “a chorus will emerge to call for a ‘preferential option for the poor’” (p. 237) in North American psychology and psychoanalysis. I think that such a call cannot emerge from North American psychology—or North American Multicultural Psychology—in isolation. Rather, it is in the three-way dance of psychoanalysis, Liberation Psychology, and Multicultural Psychology that such a call will emerge. It is by bridging North America and Latin America, Multicultural and Liberation Psychology, first and third world psychoanalysis and, in Benjamin’s terms, by finding an intersubjectively negotiated moral third,

that this preferential option for the other can be articulated as a corrective to our accustomed ways of thinking about culture, politics, and cultural competence.

An Outline for Future Scholarship

Given that this dissertation serves as the first part of a much more expansive and ambitious project, I will provide an outline for my future scholarship, in which I will apply the insights of this writing to Multicultural Psychology discourses. The goal of such a project will be to articulate a relational, psychoanalytically informed, approach to cultural competence that reconfigures three of its major domains: *practice*, *theory*, and *training*.

A relational approach to culturally competent *practice* is informed by the concept of intersubjective negotiation in psychoanalysis (Benjamin, 2004). Cultural competency as practice then, embodies an ongoing process of cultural exploration and negotiation, where clinicians empathically inquire about the cultural dimensions of the patient's experience, and relate this experience to constantly shifting social and intrapsychic dynamics. A recent meta-analysis of culturally adapted psychotherapies helps illustrate this process (Benish, Quintana, & Wampold, 2011). "Culturally adapted psychotherapy" refers to therapies which have been adapted to be more responsive and congruent to a specific (usually marginalized) ethnic minority group. According to this meta-analysis, one of the strongest predictors of the superiority of culturally adapted therapy versus un-adapted therapy was less the technical modification of an existing therapy, and more the degree to which the therapist expressed curiosity, inquired about, conveyed respect, and validated the client's "illness myth"—the culturally-contingent worldview from which the client makes meaning of their presenting problem. From a position of mutual respect and understanding, client and clinician could then join together to negotiate the meaning of that myth. Throughout this process of negotiation there will inevitably erupt moments of

cultural misattunement, misunderstanding, or microaggression which will precipitate an impasse, derailing cultural exchange (Gaztambide, 2012b). It becomes imperative at this juncture for clinicians to become aware of where and how the rupture occurred, and take steps to repair communication either by discovering the source of miscommunication within themselves and reattuning, or by owning their misstep to the client.

Cultural negotiation, as gleaned through Benjamin and Freire, will oscillate between intersubjectivity and complementarity, cultural sameness and difference, rupture and repair. But it is precisely those moments of breakdown in cultural communication that shows promise for culturally competent practice. When we can see our failures in cultural attunement—and their repair—as part of culturally competent work *itself*, when we can own our fallibility, the lacunae in our cultural knowledge about a particular client’s culture, we create a space for the Other. The encounter with the culturally different Other, with their cry for justice and restitution, provides us therapists with an opportunity to respond in a reparative spirit. With that reparative spirit, we stand to create something with our clients that is transformative, a new cultural narrative that can hold our disparate racial, ethnic, sexual, class, gender, ability, and generational realities in tension; a third reality which binds together *I* and *Thou*, and yet to which *I* and *Thou* surrender. The patient’s illness myth, as well as our own, is transformed therapeutically and culturally through *restored* intersubjective negotiation. From this position, we can complement Multicultural Psychology’s emphasis on attaining categorical knowledge of ethnic minority groups with the “three-legged stool” of a relational approach: a) exploration and validation of cultural realities, b) cultural ruptures and their repair, and c) transformation of cultural meaning. The “seat” which joins these three “legs,” of course, is dialogue and negotiation.

A relational approach to cultural competency practice is potentially useful not just in psychoanalytic therapy, but also other of schools of psychotherapy. The process of dialogue, empathic exploration, negotiation, transformation of meaning, and resolution of impasses is certainly familiar to humanistic and psychoanalytic therapists, but it is no less useful to Cognitive-Behavioral (Holtforth & Castonguay, 2005) or Family Systems Therapists (Aponte, 2004). In fact, part of what catalyzes change in any therapeutic system is the bond with the therapist. For example, the usefulness of a manualized Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is predicated on the accurate assessment and identification of the patient's goals in the context of a collaborative relationship with the therapist. Using Bordin's (1979) conceptualization of the therapeutic alliance, a good Cognitive-Behavior Therapist empathically explores the client's needs and goals for therapy, ascertains a set of tasks which will be effective and which the client agrees to undertake, and develops a trusting bond which will facilitate the client's readiness to engage in those tasks. One cannot imagine developing a consensus on tasks and goals and a trusting bond *without* the therapist exploring, negotiating, potentially adapting not only their treatment protocol, but also the client's cultural worldview and expectations. A relational approach to cultural competence in CBT could enhance adherence to treatment, reduce recidivism, and enhance therapeutic work with ethnic minority populations. A relationally oriented, idiosyncratic *and* culturally-informed approach to CBT with diverse populations would provide a much needed corrective to the usual arguments for CBT's superiority with minority populations as predicated upon their "fatalism," "action orientation," or "lack of psychological mindedness." These arguments may have the unintended effect of reinforcing a series of dangerous stereotypes. Not only are these arguments problematic, *they are also not necessary to conduct effective, culturally competent CBT or any other therapy.*

An approach which decenters (but does not excludes) cultural competency's focus on categorical knowledge, and which privileges cultural identity *as it is experience by the client, as it emerges in dialogue with the therapist, and as it is reflected upon in a socio-political context*, necessitates a revision of culturally competence *theory*. Hence, a relational approach to cultural competency theory—immersed in Liberation Psychology—emphasizes the material, economic, and political context in which cultural formations take place. Rather than taking a cultural “trait” as if it were naturally inherent in the character of the person or their culture (e.g. fatalism in Latino clients), one should always keep in mind the historical and material conditions to which that trait is dialectically related. Any one ethnic minority community is never one static, ahistorical, unchanging culture, but an ever-changing, ongoing improvisation across time and place that is creative, emergent, and *alive*. Culture—whether *this* or *that* culture—is not to be found fossilized in the linear, narrative descriptions found in a workshop, an article, a chapter, or an entire book on “population X.” Culture lives “off the page” and in the lived, organic transactions between people, their community, and the world of which they are a part. Following Freire, but also Winnicott, culture and cultural identity always presumes an intersubjective negotiation between people. Attending to culture as performance, as negotiation, and as dialogue invites us to consider not culture or collectivism against subjectivity or individuality, *but culture texturing subjectivity, and the collective as always already within the individual*. Rather than engaging in dynamic sizing (Sue & Sue, 2008) by starting with a ready-made description of a culture and then seeing if a client from that community fits with that description, we should be starting with culture as it emerges in our client's subjectivity, and allow our exchange with the client to guide our search for relevant cultural knowledge. Rather than knowledge-driven attunement, which can come off to clients as too “cookie-cutter” instead of being based on

authentic understanding (Chang & Yoon, 2011), we are talking here of attunement-driven knowledge. This is dynamic sizing from the bottom-up.

Attending to the ways that culture textures our clients' subjectivity reveals the rich diversity of expression in cultural identity. In effect, that cultural identity can be quite idiosyncratic and personalized, due in no small part to the intersectionality between a wide range of identities which overlap with ethnic/racial identity. We often forget the degree to which there is greater diversity *within* cultural groups as opposed to *between* them. In effect there is no such thing as the prototypical (dare I say stereotypical) "Black client," or "Latino client," or "Asian client," and so forth. Rather than collapsing the wide ranging modes of expression of entire communities into the fantasy of "the same," we should attend to the diversity *in* diversity. Perhaps this point is obvious, but there is far too much scholarship which reduces this crucial reality to the status of a footnote: "The information about 'X' group contained in this article/chapter/book/workshop involves generalizations which should not be applied one-sidedly without attention to individual differences." A relational approach to cultural competency calls on us to take this reality from the margins of "the footnote," and place it front row and center in our considerations of diversity.

Lastly, the relational approach advocated for in this dissertation has important implications for culturally competent *training*. Speaking personally as an adjunct professor at the graduate and undergraduate levels, and as a student myself, it is interesting to note that the standard fair in much cultural competence training and education in clinical/counseling psychology and social work programs entails some form of what Laura Brown (2008; 2009) has called "the almanac of alien others" approach to diversity. Usually comprising a single course on "diversity," "multiculturalism," or "cultural competence," with the *Handbook of Psychotherapy*

with Alien Beings assigned as the central text (Brown's [2009] own label for books of this kind), this type of course then proceeds with a breakdown of the traits, practices, and values of individual ethnic groups on a week by week basis—a week on African-Americans, a week on Latinos, a week on South-East Asians, and so forth (some of my peers have referred to it as “flavor of the week” cultural competency). As mentioned earlier in this writing, this approach to cultural competence and diversity education emphasizes a knowledge based, categorical approach to working with ethnic minority populations. Although knowledge of the cultural practices and beliefs of different ethno-racial groups is certainly an important element of cultural competence, it is insufficient insofar as the knowledge 1) does not translate into teachable skills for establishing and maintaining cultural attunement, or 2) lead students to explore, articulate, and become aware of their own cultural identity and the degree to which they are privileged and/or underprivileged (Sue, 2006).

A relational approach to cultural competence training complements the emphasis on *content* (values, beliefs, practices of different groups) by attending to the *process* of being culturally competent. Tolerating anxiety about otherness, establishing cultural attunement, negotiating the goals and tasks of therapy based on cultural values, becoming aware of cultural counter-transference, and repairing breaks in attunement are all teachable skills with a wide range of applicability to diverse cultural populations. It may be difficult, if not untenable, to attain cultural knowledge of every conceivable ethnic minority group—let alone those that exist in one's immediate environment (Chu, 2007). In contrast, being able to tolerate what is culturally unknown or different, to sharpen one's awareness of moment-to-moment emotional reactions to clients, and maintain a mindful and dialectical mindset from which to respond to client need for modification in therapeutic tasks and goals can provide an important foundation from which to

pursue a deeper understanding of the ethno-racially different other. If one of the most important elements of culturally adapted psychotherapy is the ability to explore and negotiate the tension between the clients' cultural worldview and the values embedded in the therapy (and the therapist!), then teaching students how to engage in that process should be just as important, if not more so, than teaching them the intricacies of different cultures.

The shift from content to process in relationally-oriented diversity education likewise translates to the pedagogical situation itself. There are at least two topics that are covered in traditional education on cultural competence. One is the aforementioned lecturing on the cultural beliefs and practices of diverse populations. The other is some form of awareness training related to power and privilege. In both cases we encounter a banking system approach to education (to go back to Freire). The teacher has knowledge about all the different ethnic/racial groups, as well as knowledge of how privileged or underprivileged the students are. This knowledge is then deposited upon the students, who are to internalize the information. This description is, of course, an exaggeration. Certainly most educators in the mental health field attempt to make knowledge of diverse populations experience near, and engage in creative ways of conveying this information to students. Likewise, educators who want to raise their students' awareness of their unexamined biases and privileges often draw on experiential exercises and group dynamics. Unfortunately, this is more often the ideal rather than the reality. Again, speaking anecdotally as a student who has attended different types of diversity trainings, workshops on working with specific cultural groups, and anti-racism workshops, as well as an educator and lecturer, my experience has been that cultural competence training often draws on a banking system approach. As this approach is not based on dialogue, whenever a student raises a question, whether for clarification or as a direct challenge, the instructor has often experienced this as

undermining their authority. The teacher then attempts to reinstate their authority by “talking at” the student about their internalized racism (or simply racism when referring to white students), lack of understanding, or naïveté. Any opportunity for dialogue or a teachable moment is shut down, and an adversarial dynamic begins to emerge between teacher and students.

A problem-posing approach, an approach rooted in dialogue, sees the *process* of *how* we have discussions about diversity, race, or culture, as an important pedagogical vehicle, and can provide a powerful corrective to our content based approaches. By placing the dialogue between teacher and student front row and center in cultural competence education, we can develop a curriculum that is experiential, which effectively communicates the skills outlined above, and which renders cultural competence something written “in the heart,” as opposed to a law to which one must submit to or fear reprisal. One excellent example of a relational approach to cultural competence education is Inter-Group Dialogue (IGD), an evidence-based approach to diversity education in college settings influenced by Freire’s work (Nagda et al., 2009; Sorensen et al., 2009). IGD was tested in a major randomized controlled trial across nine separate universities in the United States, which compared IGD to a traditionally didactic course on diversity. IGD is based on the idea that providing students from dominant groups with interaction with members from non-dominant groups is insufficient to change underlying biases. Rather, the nature and tenor of that interaction needs to be changed. In order to effect that change, students who enrolled in IGDs at these universities were given training in basic communication and conflict resolution skills, active listening, empathy, and perspective taking as a precursor to talking about race or culture. Once students begin engaging in topics related to diversity, the group leaders draw attention to breakdowns in dialogue, gently guiding students from different backgrounds to reconnect with one another and restore communication. In doing

so the students can become aware of racial or cultural dynamics as they play out in the relationship with one another, with power, privilege, and difference taking on flesh before their eyes. At the end of the study, it was found that students who took part in IGDs were more likely to become aware of their social identities, biases, and prejudices, question the causes of inequality, build deeper relationships across difference, were more committed to change unjust conditions, developed a greater appreciation of cultural differences, and acquired better communication skills with which to dialogue with others (Nagda et al., 2009).

In a manner convergent with Benjamin's (1988; 2004) theorizing on mutual recognition and thirdness, leaders in IGD help students—whether from dominant or non-dominant backgrounds—hold self and other, sameness and difference, communication and breakdown, in a constant dynamic tension. As a result of ongoing enactments and their resolution, students are able to dialogue across difference and grow to understand one another's realities. Students with any sort of privilege, whether conferred along racial, sexual, gender, or class lines, become aware of their privilege and unexamined assumptions and are able to understand the experience of their underprivileged peers. Students from underprivileged backgrounds not only have their experiences validated, but begin to experience compassion for their perceived oppressors by noting the broader context of oppression which frames the oppressor-oppressed dialectic. This compassion empowers them to survive the invalidation or attacks of more privileged students, in order to offer them a transformative encounter with the other. By emphasizing relational dynamics and communication skills, IGD is able to accomplish what more didactic courses try to do, though in a more experiential, affectively-loaded, and ultimately more effective way. The *process* evokes, frames, and conveys *content* in a manner that elicits but is also able to *contain* affect.

I will give an example from my own pedagogical practice which illustrates a relational, psychoanalytically informed, Freirian model of cultural competence education. Some colleagues and I were leading a workshop on cultural competence and ethics which included some lecturing on microaggressions in psychotherapy. As we talked about the experience of discrimination and microaggression many people of color face in daily life, I noticed some of the white audience members become increasingly uncomfortable and upset. At one point one of the white people, a female social work student, spoke up and criticized our presentation as one-sided. She stated that people of color were also racist toward white people. She shared a story in which she was standing in a line at the bank, and noticed that the teller—a black woman—skipped her and allowed two black men to cut in line ahead of her. As I heard the story, it was not clear to me that the bank teller had exercised some prejudicial preference to attend black men before a white woman, although this was clearly how this person experienced it. One of my colleagues, a white male, challenged the woman's story. He argued that there was no evidence that what she said was true, and that even if it were, there was no way she could equate that incident with the systemic racism black people face in our society. I saw the breakdown occur before my eyes, almost in slow motion. Feeling challenged (which I did as well), my colleague began talking at this audience member about their unacknowledged privilege. I noticed her shrinking more and more into her seat in response. I could sense that, reality aside, she felt her experience of this racialized incident was being invalidated. I could feel her withdraw into herself, silently telling off my colleague and the rest of us leading this workshop. I reached into myself, into my own experience of having these conversations. As a Puerto Rican man, I have often had my experience of prejudice or discrimination invalidated and told that it was all in my head,

whenever I brought them up in a group context. I would also feel really hurt, shut down, and withdraw from the conversation.

Even though I ultimately disagreed with the content of what this audience member was saying, I tried to short-circuit the process playing out between us by establishing empathic contact with how she must have been feeling. She felt criticized and told to shut up and be quiet. She was also being told that she was wrong and that we, the workshop leaders, were right. I felt in that moment that if we continued down this road, we were going to lose her and potentially a lot of the audience. Our message would be undermined by our need to be not only right, but *self-righteous*. In an attempt to repair this breach in the relationship with the audience, I meta-communicated to the young woman that I could sense her withdrawing, and that she was probably feeling invalidated. I disclosed that as a Puerto Rican, I have also felt invalidated when I have shared my experiences of discrimination or mistreatment to others. I would feel alone, criticized, angry, and thus pull away. I empathized with her, stating that *I did not want the same thing to happen to her*. As I communicated this attunement to her experience, we could all feel the adversarial energy in the room begin to shift. There was a collective sigh of relief. We moved on with the rest of the training, but at the end came back around to the social work student. She disclosed that she indeed was beginning to shut down, but that my disclosure and empathizing with her experience had created space for her to stay in the conversation, and in the end gain new insights about herself, her privilege as a white woman, and about the day to day experience of people of color. I did not need to agree with her experience to empathize with it, and to use that empathic contact to shift us to a place where we could continue the dialogue, and help her see things from a different perspective.

In sharing this experience and others like it with colleagues who are also educators in the cultural competence field, *I have been told that I am insane*. I am siding with the oppressors. I am throwing people of color under the bus. I am betraying our field. In the end, however, my goal with any diversity oriented training or course is to get students to reflect on their biases, internalize an option for the “other,” and adopt a social justice orientation *by any means necessary*. If momentarily letting go of my position as the authority, as the “subject supposed to know” as Lacanian psychoanalysts might say, as needing to be *right and self-righteous*, provides a student with the space to reflect on themselves critically and compassionately, and come closer, even incrementally, to seeing the value in diversity, to developing a passion for justice, to accept the unknown, then I am staying true to the central values of Liberation Psychology. It is difficult for those of us who come from ethnic minority backgrounds, from histories of slavery, genocide, and colonization, who come from the underside of modernity, who face injustice as a lived reality, to fathom the need to practice humility and vulnerability with students who come from dominant backgrounds, or with other ethnic minority students who simply do not agree with us. Being vulnerable before the other evokes anxieties that remind us of our day to day vulnerabilities before a world that finds us toxic and unwanted. In that sense I can see how this ethic of vulnerability can be considered crazy. But it would be more accurate perhaps to call it *monstrous*.

The Monstrous Kernel of the Liberationist Ethic

Here we reach Hegel’s key insight: Reconciliation cannot be direct, it has first to generate (appear in) a *monster*—twice on the same page Hegel uses this unexpectedly strong word, “monstrosity,” to designate the first figure of Reconciliation, the appearance of God in the finite flesh of a human individual: “This is the monstrous [*das Ungeheure*] whose necessity we have seen.” The finite fragile human individual is “inappropriate” to stand for God, it is “*die Unangemessenheit ueberhaupt* [the inappropriateness in general, as such]”—are we aware of the properly dialectical paradox of what Hegel claims here?

The very attempt at reconciliation, in its first move, produces a monster, a grotesque “inappropriateness as such.” (Zizek & Milbank, 2009, P. 74)

Why turn from a consideration of future scholarship on psychoanalysis, Multicultural Psychology, and Liberation Psychology to such a seemingly philosophically distant topic as *monstrosity*? Why start this section with a quote from psychoanalytic philosopher Slavoj Zizek of all people? In this final section I want to tease apart an underlying anxiety to our debates around culture, race, and otherness, and argue for the need to take the preferential option for the repressed, for the other, seriously. I spoke earlier of the reactions I have received from other professionals in the cultural competency field when they hear about my pedagogical method, and of the reticence to appearing vulnerable to students—especially students from dominant backgrounds—when talking about diversity. I believe this resistance arises in part from an inability to consistently apply the ethic for the other that is inherent in our social justice discourses. To do so would reveal its inherently monstrous nature.

We are used to conceiving of this preferential option as applying only to those of us who are oppressed, marginalized, and cast out. Sometimes we fail to realize that in having conversations about diversity, the dominant are *other to us*. They are the other side of this dialectical relationship. Their power depends on our powerlessness, yet at the same time instead of reconfiguring this relationship we symbolically reverse it. Even if ultimately, in the world we are non-dominant, *in here*, in this moment, in this classroom, *we will be powerful*. Filled with self-righteousness and the belief that we hold a noble and just cause, we exercise the power of the banking system. We forget Freire’s (and also Benjamin’s) exhortation that liberation cannot occur unless we resolve the oppressor-oppressed dialectic itself. We lose sight of the option for the other, opting instead for the back and forth clash of doer and done-to. We speak the same language of the oppressor—power—and attempt to use their tools to dismantle their house.

But if we risk an act of love, of humility, of dialogue, we stand poised to initiate a shift in the cycle, a turn toward a new form of relating, a sense of mutuality between the powerful and the powerless. *It would mean treating even our enemies as an other to be loved, to recognize their humanity inasmuch as our monstrosity.* Let me be clear, if a bit scandalizing, about what I mean here. When we demonize another human being, we say that “they are not human, but a monster.” The liberal attempt to undo this demonizing is to say “they are not a monster, but a human.” Let me turn again to the quote from Žižek. He is analyzing Hegel’s interpretation of the incarnation, the Christian mythology of God taking flesh as a human being. Hegel sees this act, God becoming human, as a monstrous act. The fragile human vessel is an inappropriate container for the Divine. In essence, there is something about *being human* that is inherently monstrous. When we cannot bear this reality, we split the human from the monstrous. We take sides. In contrast, the liberationist ethic asks us to recognize the monstrosity embedded in human beings, to say “they are a monster, they are human,” and “they are human, they are a monster” together.

Let me illustrate the problem. Recently a leader in our field—a man of color—gave a talk on addressing the powerful feelings that are evoked when we conduct trainings, workshops, and courses on race, class, gender, and sexuality. He discussed how at one point, one of the white female students became very emotional about the topic of white privilege and the history of racial oppression in the United States. When he invited her to explore those feelings, the student broke down and started crying. The presenter argued that this woman’s tears were an act of manipulation, meant to derail the conversation, gain sympathy from others, and undermine his lecture. Further, he argued that this belied her white privilege, as she had the power to cry and use these tears to her advantage. Nobody in the audience questioned this scholar’s interpretation of the events. Nobody pointed out the sexist implications of a man declaring that a woman’s

feelings were simply attempts to manipulate and exert control of the conversation, evoking gender stereotypes of women as overly emotional and controlling. The lecturer could not conceive that this woman's feelings were a source of information. It was nothing other than a power play based in white privilege. Her tears were perceived as monstrous, and monsters were to be slain. But the liberationist ethic calls on us to approach monsters, to prepare a seat at the table, to welcome them into our homes.

The relational, monstrous perspective of this dissertation would have invited this man of color to go into the experience of this other—a white woman—and risk an act of love. What would it have meant for him to sit with her feelings, and whatever feelings were evoked in him in turn? Could there have been a moment of meeting, of connection with this other? As theorized by Freire and Benjamin, when we break the cycle of victim-perpetrator by surviving destructiveness and recognizing the other, the other recognizes us in turn. At this point the obvious question is raised, “Well, what if I recognize the other, but the other does not recognize *me* in turn?” Indeed, there is an anecdotal lore that Emmanuel Levinas was asked this same question, to which he responded, “I am fully responsible for and to the other, but as to the other's responsibility? That is not my concern” (Patrick Cheatham, personal communication). This is the risk that the preferential option asks us to take. To not turn away from the monstrosity of the other, to not sanitize it nor delink it from their humanity, to approach the other without knowing if they will “accept or reject us, shake our hand or injure us, kiss or kill us. To approach in justice is always a risk because it is to shorten the distance toward a distinct freedom” (Dussel, 1985, p. 17).

And what of this “distinct freedom” that Enrique Dussel alludes to in his philosophy of liberation, this barbarian philosophy? We turn again to Žižek’s psychoanalytic theologizing—he writes that

It is only in this monstrosity of Christ that human freedom is grounded; and, at its most fundamental, it is neither as payment for our sins nor as legalistic ransom, *but by enacting this openness that Christ’s sacrifice sets us free*. When we are afraid of something (and fear of death is the ultimate fear that makes us slaves), a true friend will say something like: ‘Don’t be afraid, look, I’ll do it, what you’re so afraid of, and I’ll do it for free—not because I have to, but out of my love for you; I’m not afraid!’ He does it and in this way sets us free, demonstrating *in actu* that it can be done, that we can do it too, that we are not slaves. (Žižek & Milbank, 2009, p. 82, emphasis added)

Fear of the other’s toxic monstrosity leads us to erect bulwarks against attack, against vulnerability, against connectedness. It is why many of us hesitate when faced with a poor person on the street, begging for alms: “If I give them money, will they use it for drugs? What if they are not really poor? What if they are stiffing me?” What Žižek (an avowed atheist) finds freeing in the image of the Christ is that God takes a risk by becoming human, and faces the monstrosity of human beings, to the point of being put to death. Resurrection then signals Christ’s survival of human beings’ destructiveness, validating for the community of believers that death will have no hold over them (Hoffman, 2010). It can be considered a *vicarious* corrective emotional experience. The most monstrous, ethical act is to give of oneself to the other without fear of the consequences. Perhaps even without care for the consequences at all.

“...a cure through love”: A coda

Many classic stories have a monster and a hero. The monster reigns with tyranny, until a hero rises up to defeat them. The monster is vanquished, and peace spreads over the land. Hordes of barbarians roam the countryside, until they are cast out into the sea by the civilized. And so on and so forth. Some of our social justice discourses have its monsters and heroes as well. Racists are rooted out and “vanquished” in public. The white, straight, heterosexual, middle-upper class

student in the diversity course who “doesn’t get it” is put in their place by the socially conscious instructor. Conservative activists are fought back by liberal thinkers with facts. There are always “good guys” and “bad guys.”

I am asked to take a position relative to these different enactments. Am I the social justice “hero” who will put the culturally incompetent “villains” in their place? Or am I the “white-identified” Puerto Rican who will challenge our elders in the field of cultural competency, and become a villain myself? Psychoanalytically speaking, each of these narratives is a mirror of the other. The preferential option for the repressed, the alien, the other and monstrous I see in psychoanalysis compels me to always search for dialectical tension, to unrelentingly ask “Who or what is being othered, cast out, marginalized, and treaded on in this conversation, this moment, this relationship?” I’ve spent the majority of this dissertation arguing for the relevance of this line of thinking for working with oppressed populations. But it is precisely in the interest of the oppressed that I raise these questions. Change cannot happen by pushing away those we deem oppressors. Change happens by bringing oppressor and oppressed into tension with one another, holding the polarity until a third can emerge, a third which reconfigures the poles into a new relationship where there is neither oppressor nor oppressed, but human beings in the process of liberation (Freire, 1972). If I am right in reading Freud’s remark to Jung, that the cure of psychoanalysis is a “cure through love,” as referring to an act of love toward what is alien within and without, then it is only when we take this risk even with our oppressors that we can be free. By facing the monstrosity in ourselves, our fear of vulnerability, we stand poised to restore the humanity of the other. This is a cure through love—a cry for liberation in both psyche and society.

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