CHAPTER TWELVE

JUMP-STARTING TIMELINESS: TRAUMA, TEMPORALITY AND THE REDRESSIVE COMMUNITY[1]

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Summary

This paper argues counter-intuitively that psychological trauma describes not an event in the past but a condition of the present. Trauma is a memory illness characterized by the collapse of timeliness, when remembering prior experiences or events intrude on a present-day being-ness. The social basis of traumatic remembering is defined: an *a posteriori* and critical remembering of those who, either because of their presence (as perpetrators) or their absence (as protectors) generate suffering. Trauma endures through time when, in the absence of a reparative community, no capacity is available to allow for closure of past events. If timelessness—the inability to demarcate past from present—is symptomatic of trauma, then trauma's cure requires the jump-starting of timeliness, and timeliness depends on the existence of a community that colludes in the illusion of an individual's current day well being. How to restore to an individual the experience of the world's timeliness? The paper considers the conditions necessary for social redress, the restoration of community, and trauma's cure. Apology and forgiveness are described both as constitutive features of trauma's redress and as dependent upon the creation of a new liminal community (of apologizers and forgivers) whose members are temporally demarcated from the past.

Trauma Defined

Psychological trauma is a condition of the present. It is a memory illness. It manifests itself in individuals, as in collectivities, as a collapse of timeliness, when remembering prior experiences or events intrude on a present-day being-ness. Some events or experiences in our lives differ from ordinary moments because of their capacity to forever conflate when these experiences occurred with the after-the-fact remembering of them. The present is distorted to incorporate the memory of an un-metabolized, or unprocessed,

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past; a *then* folds in upon the *now* largely without awareness or distinction. Certain powerfully affect-laden experiences or events from before (that can include mental disturbances) yield the for-ever collapsing of time and the experiencing of the past *as if* it were the present, even when, in other respects, the demarcation of a then and a now remains clear. Traumatic remembering can preclude the possibility of a being's unencumbered movement into the future, as it can impede the potentiality of a group creatively responding to a changing world.

Trauma, because of its timelessness, cannot be specified exclusively in terms of properties of the past. While a prior overwhelming experience or horrific event—a moment described as inflicting upon the sufferer a *wound* (Van der Kolk, et al.)—is a defining condition for trauma, even that depends on its *post-hoc* remembering. Nonetheless, contemporary trauma research and theory tend not to emphasize trauma's negotiated relation between subsequent re-visits and prior experience, but give primacy to the events or experiences of the past, seeing them as driving all subsequent effects. In this spirit, trauma is described as an experience so overpowering as to defy representation and symbolization. The result, it is argued, is an inability to achieve a healthy distancing from the shock (Caruth, 152–3). The failure of language to soothe and contain, portrayed often as a typical feature of the precipitating occurrence, here is misconstrued as constitutive of psychological trauma itself. Similarly, trauma is defined by the symptoms it yields: photographic-like, veridical reproductions in memory, what have been characterized as intrusive *flashbacks*, in which what happened becomes belatedly recalled (Van der Kolk et al.; Caruth, 5). Among these scientists, little interest has been shown in discovering the ways in which a present-day "return to the past"—remembering—and the past itself may significantly differ. They accept at face value the subjective experience of those who describe this uncanny return to the past *as if* no time has elapsed.[2]

These characterizations of trauma, what Ruth Leys critically describes as "the science of the literal," (Leys, 229–297) insist upon the determinativeness of the past on the present and assert that trauma's meaning lies intrinsically in the character and nature of the material event that sets traumatic recall (and suffering) in motion. The victim becomes condemned to repeat, through performance, the meaning and significance of the trauma since the experience defies the capacity for representation or articulation (Leys, 266–7). By the same logic, the power of the past, that which cannot be represented, has no hope of mitigation. It is an experience without the possibility of closure. It

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[2] For an excellent discussion of the relation of trauma to timelessness, see Leys (229–65).

represents an understanding of a past that is invulnerable to redress: history is destiny.

Contrary to those accounts that eviscerate the *post-hoc* and here-and-now in explaining the persistence of the past on the present, trauma can only occur *after* the event, as a memory of an experience that becomes inscribed on the individual.[3] Memory, of course, can assume a narrative form, a conscious story about prior events or experiences. Yet "representational memory" (Loewald, 164–5; Prager) is itself inevitably subject to distortion. When, for example, an earlier experience is recalled, even one remembered as traumatic, a visual image of the experience is typically constructed which includes the rememberer but now as a third-party. By seeing oneself as an actor on stage, significant alterations have already occurred, surely colored by the emotion attached to the experience. Memory inevitably refashions the experience itself, now shot through with affect. This is as true for the memories of "a people," i.e. a collectivity, as it is for a person. A narrative recounting of a traumatic past, in every instance, is deeply imbued with multiple layers of post-hoc affectively-charged constructions of those events, reflecting an effort, to be sure, to reconstruct a veridical memory of the past but inflected by after-the-fact affects, interests and impulses.[4]

But, in addition, memory may also be expressed unconsciously, as embodied knowledge (Prager, 178),[5] or as Hans Loewald describes it as

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[3] See Thoma and Cheshire, for an extensive discussion of Freud's interest in challenging traditional understandings of psychological causality when he suggests that retrospective memory makes the "pure" retrieval of experience impossible. To that end, Freud, from an early point in his writings, defines trauma in temporal terms, always mixing experience with the re-working of it through memory. These authors argue that Strachey, Freud's English translator often sought, perhaps unwittingly, to reinstate a more conventional understanding of the primacy of the material event to psychological thought. Thoma and Cheshire cite Freud's original German in a passage from *The Scientific Project* (p. 410), along with a pre-Standard Edition Strachey translation of it to read: "as a memory…which becomes a trauma only after the event." Strachey alters his own translation for later publication in *The Standard Edition* to reflect both a consistent terminology for Freud—in this case, the term *nachtraglichkeit* that he defines as "deferred action," but that results in reinstating the primacy of past experience on psychological understanding. In contrast to a view of deferred action as implying a kind of latent festering that, some time later, manifests itself, Freud suggests rather that prior (external) experience effects a person's inner world when it later becomes re-worked in terms of feelings of helplessness separate from the experience itself. See, too, Mather and Marsden.
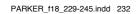
[4] To the comparability between individual and collective memory, Freud (1954a, 206) writes in his "Notes upon a Case of Obsessional Neurosis," i.e., the Rat Man case: "If we do not wish to go astray in our judgment of their historical reality, we must above all bear in mind that people's 'childhood memories' are only consolidated at a later period; and that this involves a complicated process of remodeling, analogous in every way to the process by which a nation constructs legends about its early history."

[5] While the idea of unconscious memory derives from Freudian thought, it is also worth

"enactive memory," seemingly automatic, without benefit of conscious reflection and revision, in which memory and perception itself are inextricably interconnected. Loewald (164, emphasis in original) writes, "From the point of view of representational memory, which is our ordinary yardstick, we would say that the patient, instead of *having* a past, *is* his past; he does not distinguish himself as rememberer from the content of his memory." Just as perception is inescapably filtered through motive and desire, so too is memory. Because of the unreliability of memory along the lines just described, trauma resides in the special processing of moments that produce psychological rupture, or breaks in a sense of the on-goingness of life and the collapse of life's timeliness, rather than in some external event— outside of time—whose meaning and significance for the individual is taken *post-hoc* as self-evident. Moreover, if trauma is to be in any way undone, it is by jointly working on the experience of it, i.e., understanding the ways in which the experience has become memorialized by those who suffer from it, not simply by acknowledging an event's reality, specifying in detail its horror, remembering it graphically, etc.[6]

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noting that non-Freudians, speaking from within different disciplines and intellectual tradition, also posit knowledge as contained within individuals, acted upon, without a self-consciousness of it, that while embodied within the person express his or her embeddedness in a broader social universe. See, for examples, Pierre Bourdieu on "Bodily Knowledge," Charles Taylor, "To Follow a Rule," Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain*, and Daniel Schacter, "Emotional Memories."

    [6] Contrast this view, with that of Judith Herman, a clinician and theorist who emphasize the ways in which traumatic moments determine the present. Herman, responding to those who focused on a pathological predisposition to traumatic responses rather than to trauma's perpetrators, seeks to assert the centrality of the "crime" to trauma, not a "victims" propensity to become traumatized. Laudable in itself, Herman nonetheless "overcorrects" by isolating the event itself as the psychological source of trauma. For her, the "cure" is to recapture the moment in as much detail as possible. She (175) writes, "In the second stage of recovery, the survivor tells the story of the trauma. She tells it completely, in depth and in detail. This work of reconstruction actually transforms the traumatic memory, so that it can be integrated into the survivor's life story." Here, therapeutic cure requires a return to the traumatic event, "telling the story," to enable its psychological integration. While my emphasis on the environment that sustains traumatic memory does not preclude an exploration of the past and trauma's perpetrators, it does insist that the multiple ways in which a trauma of disillusionment has been sustained in memory need to be the objects of enquiry, not the detailing of the horror of any single event or experience. "Telling the story" of trauma risks elision of the multiple sources of suffering, including the social context in which suffering occurred.

The Past Defined Traumatically and the Price it Exacts

Traumatic harm is understood, as Freud sought to make clear from his early writings onward, not by a description of the external injury alone but by the ways it becomes internally processed and remembered. He writes, "Man seems not to have been endowed, or to have been endowed to only a very small degree, with an instinctive recognition of the dangers that threaten him from without… The external (real) danger must also have managed to become internalized if it is to be significant for the ego. It must have been recognized as related to some situation of helplessness that has been experienced" (1954c, 168) For Freud "the idea of trauma is not to be conceived so much as a discrete causal *event* [but] as part of a *process-in-system*;" a system comprised of drives, events, precipitating events, "all playing out in the context of a continuing struggle between an instinctive apparatus versus a defensive apparatus" (Smelser, 35). The context of helplessness registers experience as traumatic and on-going reminders of it keep trauma alive.

Trauma endures through time, it will be argued, when no capacity is currently available to allow for closure, to enable the understanding of the past as past, to permit the distinguishing between present-day acts of remembering from the memory itself. Said differently, the context of contemporary experience, in its deficiency, keeps alive in memory an earlier moment of psychic rupture. Trauma is a function of the present failure of the environment to provide safety and security and wholeness—what Freud (1954c) adumbrates as "helplessness"—to buffer the person against the intrusive reminder of a world neither safe, secure nor whole.[7] Trauma is the intrusion of memory, an occurrence that affectively, i.e., with emotion, describes the failure of members of the community to contain against disappointment the memorial experience of the person. In this sense, psychological trauma is both a disease of the contemporary moment as well as a social one, when an individual's capacity to engage the world presently and orient herself autonomously to the future is insufficiently enabled by the environment. When these conditions prevail, memory intrudes and a traumatic past dominates.

Thus, psychological trauma describes not a moment occurring in the past, i.e., the experience of an instant of terror or horror suffered alone by the

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[7] On the experience of helplessness in infancy, see, especially, D. W. Winnicott, who I discuss below; also, Martha C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought, The Intelligence of Emotions* esp. "Emotions and Infancy," pgs. 181–190.

rememberer. It is not even only the memory of such an instant. Danger may generate instinctive reactions, whereby involuntarily instinctual responses to danger link human beings to all animals. But autonomic response, at least for humans, becomes meaningful belatedly, i.e., traumatically, because it is re-experienced in memory and it is social-ized. When it manifests, trauma is never an asocial encounter with the past; in fact, it is replete with an *a posteriori* and critical remembering of those who, either because of their presence (as perpetrators) or their absence (as protectors), generate suffering. It is always, therefore, an egocentric experience of the profound failure of particular members of one's own community to provide and protect. It is never impersonal and abstract (though it may become defensively understood impersonally and abstractly, as experience-distant).[8]

Psychological trauma is characterized, on the one hand, by the memory of a person or people who profoundly exploit the victim's vulnerability and, on the other, by the memory of those who disappoint by failing to offer necessary protections, who fail to defend against suffering. Firstly, it conjoins the sufferer with the memory of the perpetrator; i.e., the guilty party responsible for the breaching of innocence, for the shattering of expectations, and for the harsh intrusion of ugly reality against whole-some fantasy. Secondly, trauma indicts in memory the victim's intimate community—principally mother, father or other caregivers—who, at the time of such overwhelming experience, is felt to have failed to protect the victim. The wish, however irrational, to imagine the world as complete and good, with oneself as safe and secure within it, has been thwarted.

Disillusionment and harm are inextricably intertwined. When the perpetrators and the community members who fail to shield the individual are one and the same, disillusionment, of course, is likely to be more devastating and the trauma more persistent.[9] Physical or sexual abuse by a parent is one

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[8] For this argument, I am following the lead of others who distinguish between traumatic memories whose origins are "person-made", and not a result of natural disasters, like hurricane, earthquake. It is likely that the experience of betrayal by others is a universal one to trauma; nonetheless, the psychodynamics of abuse, abandonment, loss undoubtedly differ in appreciable ways from "acts of God." Especially because of my focus in this paper on the intersubjective sources both of trauma and its repair, I limit my discussion of trauma to those that result from intra-human interaction.

[9] Think, perhaps, of those children of the perpetrators who have to endure both the love of their parents and the guilt felt by their transgressions. Here is another difficult traumatic "processing challenge," now being explored extensively in terms of the German experience during World War II. See, for example, Gunter Grass, *Crabwalk* and W. G. Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction*.

instance of such a confluence; so, too, is the premature death of a mother or father. By the same token, overwhelming experiences become processed differently depending on one's place in the life cycle. Generally speaking, the younger one is the more devastating the confrontation with disillusionment. But each age generates its own particular response, expressing some calculus between the nature and intensity of threat, the meaning given to the experience of helplessness, and the trajectory of omnipotent dependency in one's psychic life.

The memory illness' onset can immediately follow the determining, or disruptive, experience and it can, arguably, persist over long periods of time—even across generations—transmitted from parents to children (Prager 2003). Its onset can also be delayed, manifest only after defensive strategies have proven futile, like a false self or pseudo-independence; when various ego-driven efforts to ward off disillusionment and vulnerability have failed. But latent or manifest, immediate or delayed, it can come to shape reality in its own image, as trauma encourages action in the world that conforms to individuals' time-distorted experience of it. Paradoxically, in its collapse of present with past, when the past is lived *as if* it were current, trauma prevents the creation of the sense of a person moving through time. Time instead is experienced as frozen and unyielding, even as threatening the attachment of the person, or the collectivity, to a defining sense-of-oneself. Only memory is left, effectively closing off all the gateways to the senses.

Never Again, a reference to the determinative memory of the past and the wish never to re-experience it, becomes the recipe for life. Examples, of course, are all too plentiful but one might think of the parent of a child in the *antebellum* South whose family, in an instant, was shattered due to the slave market, or the descendant of a Holocaust survivor, overwhelmed by the knowledge of his parents' death-defying experience, or the woman whose child or husband suddenly disappears at the hands of a dictatorial regime. Memory then occupies the place of duty, an obligation to preserve in the present the past. And ironically, *Never Again* (either as representational or enactive memory) can effectively insure that the world conforms to precisely the moment meant never to be repeated. The replication of the imagined parents' traumatic reality, for example, can come to occupy the fantasy life of the child; psychological trauma can result in the child's identification more powerfully with his parents' harrowing past than with his own separate and distinctive present. Identity, here understood as a connection to one's past, to one's people, to one's history, as a resource for the present and as an orientation to the future suppresses, is overcome by, or gives way to,

identification.[10] Identification constitutes an inability to extricate oneself from the burden of the past; when one, in effect, is determined to re-create and repeat the traumatic conflicts that now define oneself. Life becomes only meaningful in reference to that past, and the present becomes experienced and acted upon as if it were then. Not surprisingly, when such convictions prevail, the world indeed can be transformed to conform to the timeless past, a living testimony to past disappointments.

As Winnicott (1965, 37) describes, trauma shatters a fantasy of omnipotence: the destruction of the victim's sense that because of the perfection of the world, all is possible and anything can be achieved. Omnipotence depends on an environment that encourages the person to believe in his dependence on a benign world-in-place to provide for his or her needs. It is a seamless world that, as Winnicott (1971, 12) puts it, never asks 'did you conceive of this or was it presented to you from without?' In place of posing the question, the environment sustains the illusion that the individual omnipotently creates the world that provides for him.

Independence is a life-long process in which omnipotence is "tamed," though never fully eliminated. Through the life-course, the world ever remains an expression of one's own centrality and pre-eminence, though maturation typically mutes the fantasy on the pathway toward the world's disenchantment. Aging, and perhaps the experience of those close to us

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[10] Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok, in essays included in their *The Shell and the Kernel, Vol. 1*, Nicholas Rand (ed.), (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1994) develop a similar distinction as the one being drawn here between identity and identification. In "The Illness of Mourning" (p. 114), Torok distinguishes between *introjection* (identity) and *incorporation* (identification). "Like a commemorative monument," she writes, "the incorporated object betokens the place, the date, and the circumstances in which desires were banished from introjection: they stand like tombs in the life of the ego." Introjection is a gradual process of taking-in objects, including their drives and desires, a process that both broadens and enriches the ego, while incorporation is a secret, all-at-once moment, marking the (traumatic) instant in which the process of introjection has ceased. "The prohibited object is settled in the ego in order to compensate for the lost pleasure and the failed introjection." Torok's formulation of incorporation describes, in her words, the origins of traumatic memory, a description that corresponds to my own. My concept of identification also has an affinity to Arendt's description of fraternity, though hers without the backward-in-time dimension that I emphasize. Fraternity, for Arendt, is a formulation intended to capture the experience of Jews in the face of persecution. As Schaap (*Political Reconciliation* p. 3) describes Arendt's position, "fraternity becomes a bulwark against a hostile environment as people huddle together for mutual support against the pressure of persecution. While fraternity often produces genuine warmth of human relationships, however, it dissolves the 'interspace' between persons. In this situation, what is shared in common is no longer a world perceived from diverse perspectives but an identity predicated on a common situation." See, too, Hannah Arendt, *Men in Dark Times*, 1968.

dying amongst us, often yields a more sober understanding that the world, indeed, can (and will) exist without us. But traumatic ruptures promote the *premature* destruction of omnipotent dependency. They yield, in memory, an experience of the community's failure to indulge the illusion that the world is there to gratify me. The living of life in the shadow of this failure means that trauma cannot be placed in the past tense: the fear of its present-day return, as Winnicott (1974) describes, shapes the person's relationship to the future.[11]

In place of omnipotence, trauma can generate a precocious compliance to the external world, a premature abandonment of the illusion of omnipotence. With the loss of a sense of the world's provision of safety and security, the individual may attempt to present herself (to herself, and/or to others) as without dependent needs, as an adult (of whatever age) without a link to her child-like feelings, as no longer needing a world outside herself to provide a sense of safety and containment. These are defensive maneuvers that seek either to preserve a sense of cohesion and capacity in oneself that the memory is attacking, a "fear of breakdown" (Winnicott 1974) and/ or to protect those loved ones from the anger felt by having been, at that moment, forsaken. By prematurely destroying the fantasy of omnipotence that accompanies dependence, trauma interferes with the process, occurring through the life-course, of the slow weaning from dependence and the movement toward independence. This life-long enterprise is accomplished through social relationships in collaboration, a community that only slowly gives up the collusion with the person that the world is present because of her making-it-so.

A *scar*, a permanent reminder that memory has broken through, marks psychological trauma: a breach in the social "skin" has occurred, a registration that wholesomeness has been violated (Margalit, 125). The scar constitutes the record of a past remembered that, while never fully healing, nonetheless,

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[11] In this instance, Winnicott is describing a traumatic rupture that occurred so early in a child's life that "this thing of the past has not happened yet because the patient was not there for it to happen to. Only in the transference, Winnicott (105) argues, is it possible for the patient to regain omnipotent control over the fear because "the only way to 'remember' in this case is for the patient to experience this past thing for the first time in the present, that is to say, in the transference." But as I argue below, re-remembering trauma in the context of a redressive community similarly holds the promise that the victim can regain omnipotent control over memory so that the past can be put in the past tense. A community whose members—the victims and the guilty—jointly acknowledge the existence of the rupture—to-that-point only remembered by the victim—serves to restart a process of living in the present for an unencumbered future.

over time can ever better blend into the surrounding tissue. Its capacity to be re-opened, memory revived, as a result of traumatic triggers, however, remains ever-present; these triggers can instantaneously return the person to his past, and disrupt, once more, the timeliness of the present en route to the future (Stolorow)[12] Repair, or healing, then, is not about the return to "the scene of the crime," a revisiting of the literal or veridical event or events signified by the scar. It is rather the jump-starting of timeliness, the overcoming of a pervasive and entrenched psychic commitment to the stoppage of time.

Unlike those who suggest that traumatic relief depends on a person's return in memory to his or her unassimilated past in the form of representing and speaking it in an affect-laden language,[13] it is, rather, the restoration of a community that has disappeared and a re-engagement with an experience of a providing-world that enables moving-on. Relief derives not monologically by reclaiming one's past through its representation, but dialogically by presently describing to a listener or to a community of listeners who are willing and capable of understanding both the breach that is now occurring and its likely origin in prior disillusionment. The signifier, i.e. the memory, while a reference to the past, cannot be undone by redoing the signified; rather, its efficacy as an organizing principle for living diminishes when the social world, by listening, presently reconstitutes itself on behalf of the sufferer. The experience of "falling on deaf ears" results in the perhaps increasingly strident insistence that someone pay for the crime or crimes of the past. When there are no listeners, one begins to shout. Only when the conviction develops that significant others "know the trouble I've seen" (or, obversely, that significant others are no longer willfully denying either a traumatic past or its enduring efficacy) does it become possible to appropriate past experiences on behalf of the future. The burden of holding on to the past, sequestered in private experience, for the first time, has been lifted. Now, past events are capable of becoming integrated and mobilized to realize potentiality. But for this to

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[12] On triggers, see Robert Pynoos.

[13] The renewed interest in dissociation, and its relation to trauma, expresses this particular formulation of the historical origin of trauma. An unassimilated, unrepresented event, inaccessible to consciousness, remains part of the mind's latent structure. It manifests itself, however, in dissociated fugue-like states, co-existing with conscious awareness but inaccessible to it. In this rendering, trauma's cure is the integration of dual mental states into one, making experience that is now dissociated part of one's conscious awareness. In identifying the problem of dissociation, it was claimed, post-traumatic stress disorder and its relation to other mental diseases like Multiple Personality Disorder could be better understood and more effectively treated. For critical considerations of this prevailing model of treatment, and the history of its origins, see Allan Young, Ian Hacking, and also, Jeffrey Prager (1998).

happen, a community disposed toward redress must be restored or, maybe for the first time, created. At the same time, the forces inhibiting its creation cannot be underestimated: resentment and cynicism on the part of the victims and of acknowledging a desire toward illusion, on the one side, and, on the other, the transgressors' defensive fear and unwillingness of losing power and authority, of having to face themselves as culpable individuals.

Trauma's Redress

Its timelessness imposes its own demands, and challenges, for the possibility of trauma's redress, or repair. How to restore timeliness to a condition defined by a psychic investment in preserving the past? How to have the past acknowledged for its continuing efficacy, so as to reclaim from it an unburdened present?

Trauma requires community for its repair. The scar's healing-over cannot be accomplished alone. Since the preservation of memory involves the re-visiting of the experience of the world's disillusionment for its failure to offer protection, the social world presently, is responsible for redress. The reconstitution of social relationships to enable repair is never a foregone conclusion; the fabric of trust, security and protection is so exquisitely delicate, especially when confronting one's enemies, or substitutes for them, that its restoration requires an equally fine re-stitching. In the same way that psychological trauma is a function of a social community that failed, trauma's repair requires the social recuperation of omnipotence after its premature destruction, in the face of those who originally contributed to the failure, or of those whom all of mistrust and violation has become "entrusted."

Put differently, the present-day community, invested in the work of repairing a tear in the social fabric, is the receptacle of possibility where an adversarial relationship characterized by enmity might become transformed into one of civic friendship (Schaap, 5). "The commonness of the world," Andrew Schaap (2) writes, "is not merely revealed..... but constituted through politics since each perspective brought to bear on the world comes to form part of the inter-subjective reality we inhabit. Friendship thrives on the 'intensified awareness of reality' that arises from such political inter-action"[14] Precisely because the aim of civic friendship, in part, depends upon the jump-starting of timelessness, this outcome cannot be foreordained: neither the

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[14] Schaap here is quoting Hannah Arendt on friendship, *Men in Dark Times*, p. 15.

according of forgiveness, on the one side, nor apology, on the other, can be effected independent of an "agonistic process" in which the words and deeds both of forgiveness and apology can meaningfully, at the end, be uttered and enacted. The reparation of community cannot be achieved if the process begins as pre-ordained by a presumption that it will succeed; to fore-ordain the outcome precludes the possibility of achieving a new horizon of shared understanding (Schaap, 4). Paradoxically, redress is achievable only when the shadow of absolute failure constitutes real possibility, when the potential for an even more permanent alienation between members is not foreclosed.

The community, in order for it to achieve its aim, must be comprised both of the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) who meaningfully confront one another's different perspectives. If the guilty offenders are unavailable (or unwilling) to present themselves in an effort to reconstitute community (and to restart omnipotent dependency), others, with authority to do so, must stand in for them. The redressive community in-formation is comprised, on the one side, of those disposed to replace a stance of resentment or disbelief with a disposition toward forgiveness and, on the other side, of those willing to risk a position of defensive power and authority, non-accountability, now oriented toward apology.[15] Forgiveness, understood as part of this political engagement, is not an achievement, a *fait accompli*, but a negotiated process in which, over time, those who have been harmed develop a voluntary psychological orientation in which forgiveness becomes possible. The willingness to forgive the offenders develops not before they are confronted, encountered, and talked to. Forgiveness is performed in real-time, not simply granted.[16] The stakes, of course, could not be greater but, as Schaap (105) describes it, "the possibility of setting aside resentment, of comprehending the other as more than one's transgressor, must be allowed if there is to be a place for hope and trust in the politics of a divided society."

But forgiveness within community, if it is to occur, can only happen

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[15] Hieronymi (546) writes, "Resentment is best understood as a protest. More specifically, resentment protests a past action that persists as a present threat … a past wrong against you, standing in your history without apology, atonement, retribution, punishment, restitution, condemnation, or anything else that might recognize it as a wrong, makes a claim. It says, in effect, that you can be treated in this way, and that such treatment is acceptable."

[16] One is reminded once again of Winnicott's formulation of the psychoanalytic encounter in "Hate in the Countertransference." Winnicott describes the confrontation between analyst and analysand that, in the beginning, may mobilize in the analyst hateful countertransferential feelings toward the analysand. These, in time, are sentiments that may become redeployed in more loving ways. Yet this redeployment constitutes the achievement of a productive analytic relationship. There is nothing foreordained in this outcome.

with a concomitant movement, by those accused, toward apology. The restoration of thick relations between victims and perpetrators cannot be achieved unilaterally.[17] All too often, apologies have been issued, as an achievement, seemingly to foreclose the process of meaningful engagement with one's accusers. Yet a genuine impulse toward apology develops only with the strengthening of the community, not with its greater fracturing. The impulse, both toward genuine forgiveness and apology, expresses the capacity to experience one another, in-the-present, in a timely fashion, less conflated with past experience. Apology, like forgiveness, reveals a psychological openness toward meaningfully demarcating past from present and past actions (or actors) from present frames-of-mind. To the extent that its aim is not a cynical one, its purpose is not to deny the occurrences of the past; now, rather than being denied or defensively defended, they are acknowledged for the harm they inflicted.

The pre-condition for redress, then, is the creation of a space for speaking and listening, a community constituted neither by victim and perpetrator *per se* but rather by those willing, for the time being, to shorn themselves of their particular pre-existing positions, now with a preparedness toward forgiveness and apology in the hope of reconstituting themselves and the social world into a common future-in-the-making, to a life in common. It is, as Winnicott (1971, 13) might describe it, a "transitional space," neither comprised of selves or others, where "the strain of relating inner reality and outer reality" is mitigated by this "intermediate area of experience." *Post-hoc* communities of redress, standing-in for past inter-subjective failures, become the sites where private harm, sequestered and alienating, might find expression not in their denial but in acknowledgement, pointing toward a more wholesome relation between individuals and the collectivity and to a different, socially-constructive, forward-looking future.

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[17] Margalit uses the term "thick relations," as I am here, to describe relations with people with whom we have a sustained, in-depth, historical relationship. Thick relations evoke moral questions about the community while thin relations—concerns, say, about the abstract individual—impose merely ethical considerations. We might think of African-American/white relationships in the United States, and European/Jewish relations in Europe as examples of thick relations. Here, the importance, as well as the difficulties, of achieving redress is more pressing because of the interweaving—both past and presently--of communal histories. Margalit argues that thick relations impose a standard of moral behavior, more difficult to realize than an ethical standard concerning, say, the treatment by humans of animals where thick relations do not obtain. In a similar spirit that stresses the especially complex and urgent task of repair in a democratic society, see Paul Barry Clarke (118) who writes about "deep citizenship," suggesting the inextricable connection between care of the self, care of others, and care of the world.

Because of their transformative potential, however delicate, communities of redress need to be *ad-hoc* in nature. Conventional juridical bodies and existing law, standing state agencies and governmental procedures dealing with harm, or other forms of institutionalized authority are all unlikely to produce, from both those who might forgive and those who might apologize, a setting in which private experience gives-way to this intermediate sphere, neither self nor other, in which a cooperatively forged dimension of illusion succeeds in diminishing personal disillusionment. At the least, existing authorities, first, are necessarily sites of suspicion in which skepticism toward their motives in articulating a language of redress must be overcome, if indeed these agencies are not simply aspiring to dampen the redressive impulse. Nor are words alone likely to define the extent of redressive action: while vocabularies of meaning may be comprised by the words of forgiveness and apology, specific concrete measures of recompense for past wrongs, mutually settled upon—whether symbolic and/or material—become the grammar for the reconstitution of community.

In each instance of a potentially redressive community, the restoration of timeliness requires this struggle and confrontation between perspectives and "a willingness to engage in an incessant discourse in which difference and lack of consensus is understood not as an obstacle to communication but a precondition for it" (Schaap, 2). Redress becomes possible only when communication succeeds in the transmutation of different perspectives into a new one: only then can omnipotent dependency, i.e., illusion, possibly become restored. Winnicott describes what needs to occur by those who have been victimized, when in a redressive setting they are provided a second chance. Speaking of the analytic encounter, he (1965, 37) writes, "There is no trauma that is outside the individual's omnipotence. Everything eventually comes under ego-control … The patient is not helped if the analyst says: 'Your mother was not good enough' … 'your father really seduced you' … 'your aunt dropped you.' Changes come in an analysis when the traumatic factors enter the psycho-analytic material in the patient's own way, and within the patient's omnipotence.' The resuscitation of dependent omnipotence, in short, is an experience that cannot be simply supplied by the outside; nonetheless, for it to occur, it must be enabled by an affectively-resonant other (a real perpetrator or a stand-in) also invested in its occurrence. And while the "burden" of this transformation appears to rest on those who have been victimized—the sufferers—it is clear that the restoration of omnipotent dependency requires the earnest effort by those in the "facilitating environment"—here described as the redressive community—to insure that the process not fail.

Psychological trauma, as I have argued, jeopardizes an unencumbered

present and the capacity to freely anticipate a future. A newly-constituted redressive community, by replacing memory as a primary source of experience with a contemporary engagement with other perspectives seeks to counter-act disillusionment and to restore, if possible, omnipotent dependency and to enable continuing-on. Present-day members of a community-in-formation collude, on behalf of a common future, to move beyond memory and to enable, once more, an illusionary world of possibility for everyone. When it occurs, as Winnicott (1971) suggests, individuals are able once again, each in their own way, to engage the world freely and on their own behalf.

One should not be too sanguine about redressive possibilities. What is being negotiated, after all, from the perspective of traumatic memory, as Derrida (32) describes it, is forgiveness for the unforgivable. Trauma's repair, in the end, may remain forever out-of-reach. At the very least, its elusiveness becomes the ground upon which the search for reconciliation must tread. Nonetheless, the possibilities of resuming life in-the-present make the effort at redress, however daunting, worthwhile. Through the work of a redressive community, history is freed of its obligation to provide the basis for living presently: a melancholic history of past wrongs no longer becomes the source for timeless identifications in the present.[18] The past, now acknowledged, enables those in the present no longer to sacrifice themselves to the memory of prior trauma. Memory is restored to a more modest place in social experience, now providing a resource to inspire every person to utilize fully the full panoply of sense-experience now available for living.

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[18] In a recent collection of essays *Loss, The Politics of Mourning*, D. Eng and D. Kazanjian (eds.), there is an effort to valorize "melancholic history," suggesting that its alternative, i.e. "mourning the past, " risks the past being forgotten. To insure that prior tragedies not simply be lost to memory, a melancholic attachment to that history ought to be preserved. Not only does this constitute a misreading of Freud's (1954b) "Mourning and Melancholia" and his definition of mourning, it also romanticizes the illness that was the focus of Freud's concern. Melancholia, it must be recalled, incapacitated its victims, denying them the possibility of engaging the world presently, and resulted in their suffering unrelentingly. Used rather as a free-floating signifier without attachment to the illness being described, the contributors to the current volume idealize melancholy's attributes. See Prager (forthcoming).

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