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EXPLORATIONS IN CRITICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

EDITED BY AKHIL GUPTA AND JAMES FERGUSON

DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS DURHAM AND LONDON 1997

National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees

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"To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul," wrote Simone Weil (1987:41) in wartime England in 1942. In our day, new conjunctures of theoretical inquiry in anthropology and other fields are making it possible and necessary to rethink the question of roots in relation—if not to the soul—to identity and to the forms of its territorialization. The metaphorical concept of having roots involves intimate linkages between people and place—linkages that are increasingly recognized in anthropology as areas to be denatured and explored afresh.

As many have suggested (Appadurai 1988b, 1990, 1992; Said 1979; Clifford 1988:10–11, 275, and 1994; Rosaldo 1989a:196; Hannerz 1987; Hebdige 1987; Löfgren 1989; Malkki 1994, 1995a, 1995b; Balibar 1991a; Gilroy 1993; Hall 1990; Gupta and Ferguson 1992; Massey 1992; Rouse 1991), notions of nativeness and native places become very complex as more and more people identify themselves or are categorized in reference to deterritorialized "homelands," "cultures," and "origins." There has emerged a new awareness of the global social fact that, now more than perhaps ever before, people are chronically mobile and routinely displaced, inventing homes and homelands in the absence of territorial, national bases—not in situ but through memories of and claims on places that they can or will no longer corporeally inhabit.

Exile and other forms of territorial displacement are not, of course, exclusively "postmodern" phenomena. People have always moved—whether through desire or through violence. Scholars have also writ-

ten about these movements for a long time and from diverse perspectives (Arendt 1973; Heller and Feher 1988:90; Fustel de Coulanges 1980:190–93; Mauss 1969:573–639; Sally Falk Moore 1989; Zolberg 1983; Marrus 1985). What is interesting is that now particular theoretical shifts have arranged themselves into new conjunctures that give these phenomena greater analytic visibility than perhaps ever before. Thus, we (anthropologists) have old questions, but also something very new.

The recognition that people are increasingly "moving targets" (Breckenridge and Appadurai 1989:i) of anthropological inquiry is associated with the placing of boundaries and borderlands at the center of our analytic frameworks, as opposed to relegating them to invisible peripheries or anomalous danger zones (compare Gupta and Ferguson, "Beyond Culture," this volume; Comaroff and Comaroff 1987; van Binsbergen 1981; Balibar 1991a:10). Often, the concern with boundaries and their transgression reflects not so much corporeal movements of specific groups of people but rather a broad concern with the "cultural displacement" of people, things, and cultural products (for example, Clifford 1988; Hannerz 1987; Torgovnick 1990; Goytisolo 1987). Thus, what Edward Said, for instance, calls a "generalized condition of homelessness" is seen to characterize contemporary life everywhere.[1]

In this new theoretical crossroads, examining the place of refugees in the national order of things becomes a clarifying exercise. On the one hand, trying to understand the circumstances of particular groups of refugees illuminates the complexity of the ways in which people construct, remember, and lay claim to particular places as "homelands" or "nations." On the other, examining how refugees become an object of knowledge and management suggests that the displacement of refugees is constituted differently from other kinds of deterritorialization by those states, organizations, and scholars who are concerned with refugees. Here, the contemporary category of refugees is a particularly informative one in the study of the sociopolitical construction of space and place.

The major part of this essay is a schematic exploration of taken-for-granted ways of thinking about identity and territory that are reflected in ordinary language, in nationalist discourses, and in scholarly studies of nations, nationalism, and refugees. The purpose here is to draw attention to the analytic consequences of such deeply territorializing concepts of identity for those categories of people classified as "dis-

placed" and "uprooted." These scholarly views will then be juxtaposed very briefly with two other cases. The first of these derives from ethnographic research among Hutu refugees who have lived in a refugee camp in rural Western Tanzania since fleeing the massacres of 1972 in Burundi. It will trace how the camp refugees' narrative construction of homeland, "refugeeness," and exile challenges scholarly constructions and common sense. In the second case, the ethnography moves among these Hutu refugees in Tanzania who have lived (also since 1972) outside a refugee camp, in and around the township of Kigoma on Lake Tanganyika. These "town refugees" present a third, different conceptual constellation of links between people, place, and displacement—one that stands in antagonistic opposition to views from the camp and challenges, from yet another direction, scholarly maps of the national order of things. I will also mention the way that conceiving of "peoples" as properly "rooted" in national soils may have played a role in the waves of genocidal killings that have swept across Rwanda and Burundi in more recent years.

MAPS AND SOILS

To begin to understand the meanings commonly attached to displacement and "uprootedness" in the contemporary national order of things, it is necessary to lay down some groundwork. This means exploring widely shared, commonsense ideas about countries and roots, nations and national identities. It means asking, in other words, what it means to be rooted in a place (compare Appadurai 1988b:37). Such commonsense ideas of soils, roots, and territory are built into everyday language and often also into scholarly work, but their very obviousness makes them elusive as objects of study. Common sense, as Clifford Geertz has said (1983:92), "lies so artlessly before our eyes it is almost impossible to see."

That the world should be composed of sovereign, spatially discontinuous units is a sometimes implicit, sometimes stated premise in much of the literature on nations and nationalism (for example, Giddens 1987:116, 119; Hobsbawm 1990:9–10; Gellner 1983).[2] To take one example, Ernest Gellner sees nations as recent phenomena, functional for industrial capitalism,[3] but he also conceptualizes them as discrete ethnological units unambiguously segmented on the ground, thereby naturalizing them along a spatial axis. He invites us to examine two kinds of world maps:

> Consider the history of the national principle; or consider two ethnographic maps, one drawn up before the age of nationalism, and the other after the principle of nationalism has done much of its work. The first map resembles a painting by Kokoschka. The riot of diverse points of colour is such that no clear pattern can be discerned in any detail. . . . Look now instead at the ethnographic and political map of an area of the modern world. It resembles not Kokoschka, but, say, Modigliani. There is very little shading; neat flat surfaces are clearly separated from each other, it is generally plain where one begins and another ends, and there is little if any ambiguity or overlap. (1983:139–40)

The Modigliani described by Gellner (*pace* Modigliani) is much like any school atlas with yellow, green, pink, orange, and blue countries composing a truly global map with no vague or "fuzzy spaces" and no bleeding boundaries (Tambiah 1985:4; Trinh 1989:94). The national order of things, as presented by Gellner, usually also passes as the normal or natural order of things. For it is self-evident that "real" nations are fixed in space and "recognizable" on a map (Anthony Smith 1986:1).[4] One country cannot at the same time be another country. The world of nations is thus conceived as a discrete spatial partitioning of territory; it is territorialized in the segmentary fashion of the multicolored school atlas.

The territorialization expressed in the conceptual, visual device of the map is also (and perhaps especially) evident on the level of ordinary language. The term, "the nation," is commonly referred to in English (and many other languages) by such metaphoric synonyms as "the country," "the land," and "the soil." For example, the phrase "the whole country" could denote all the citizens of the country or its entire territorial expanse. And "land" is a frequent suffix, not only in "homeland" but also in the names of countries (Thailand, Switzerland, England) and in the old colonial designations of "peoples and cultures" (Nuerland, Basutoland, Nyasaland). One dictionary definition for "land" is "the people of a country," as in "the land rose in rebellion."[5] Similarly, soil is often "national soil."[6] Here, the territory itself is made more human (compare Handler 1988:34).

This naturalized identity between people and place is also reflected and created in the course of other, nondiscursive practices. It is not uncommon for a person going into exile to take along a handful of the soil (or a sapling or seeds) from his or her country, just as it is not unheard of for a returning national hero or other politician to kiss the ground upon setting foot once again on the "national soil."

Demonstrations of emotional ties to the soil act as evidence of loyalty to the nation. Likewise, the ashes or bodies of persons who have died on foreign soil are routinely transported back to their "homelands," to the land where the genealogical tree of their ancestors grows. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust: in death, too, native/national soils are important.

The powerful metaphoric practices that so commonly link people to place are also deployed to understand and act upon the categorically aberrant condition of people whose claims on and ties to national soils are regarded as tenuous, spurious, or nonexistent. It is in this context, perhaps, that the recent events in Carpentras, Southern France, should be placed (Dahlburg 1990:H1; Plenel 1990:16; compare Balibar 1990:286). On the night of 9 May 1990, thirty-seven graves in an old Jewish cemetery were desecrated, and the body of a man newly buried was disinterred and impaled with an umbrella (Dahlburg 1990:H1). One is compelled to see in this abhorrent act of violence a connection to "love of country" in the ugliest sense of the term. The old man's membership in the French nation was denied because he was of the category "Jew." He was a person in the "wrong" soil and was therefore taken out of the soil (compare Balibar 1990:285). Reports of a similar logic have surfaced in Europe since Carpentras, most recently in the case of Serbs moving the bodies of their dead out of territory that is to become "Bosnia"—apparently so that their enemies will not exhume or desecrate them.

ROOTS AND ARBORESCENT CULTURE

The foregoing examples already suggest that the widely held commonsense assumptions linking people to place, nation to territory, are not simply territorializing but deeply metaphysical. To begin to understand the meaning of displacement in this order of things, however, it is necessary to explore further aspects of the metaphysic. The intent in this section is to show that the naturalizing of the links between people and place is routinely conceived in specifically botanical metaphors.[7] That is, people are often thought of, and think of themselves, as being rooted in place and as deriving their identity from that rootedness. The roots in question here are not just any kind of roots; very often they are specifically arborescent in form.

Even a brief excursion into nationalist discourses and imagery shows them to be a particularly rich field for the exploration of such

arborescent root metaphors. Examples are easy to find: Keith Thomas has traced the history of the British oak as "an emblem of the British people" (1983:220, 223; compare Daniels 1988:47; Graves 1966). Edmund Burke combined "the great oaks that shade a country" with metaphors of "roots" and "stock" (cited in Thomas 1983:218). A Quebecois nationalist likened the consequences of tampering with the national heritage to the withering of a tree (Handler 1988:44–45). An old Basque nationalist document links nation, race, blood, and tree (Heiberg 1989:51).

Put more broadly, metaphors of kinship (motherland, fatherland, *Vaterland, patria, isänmaa*) and of home (homeland, *Heimat, kotimaa*) are also territorializing in this same sense, for these metaphors are thought to "denote something to which one is naturally tied" (Anderson 1983:131). Motherland and fatherland, aside from their other historical connotations, suggest that each nation is a grand genealogical tree, rooted in the soil that nourishes it. By implication, it is not possible to be a part of more than one tree. Such a tree evokes both temporal continuity of essence and territorial rootedness.

Thinking in terms of arborescent roots is, of course, in no way the exclusive province of nationalists. Scholars, too, often conceptualize identity and nationness in precisely such terms. Anthony Smith's *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (1986) provides one example of the centrality of root metaphors in this intellectual domain. In an effort to find constructive middle ground between "primordialist" and "modernist" versions of the emergence of nations,[8] Smith sets out "to trace the ethnic foundations and roots of modern nations" (1986:15), stating, "No enduring world order can be created which ignores the ubiquitous yearnings of nations in search of roots in an ethnic past, and no study of nations and nationalism that completely ignores the past can bear fruit" (5).[9]

Thinking about nations and national identities may take the form of roots, trees, origins, ancestries, racial lines, autochthonism, evolutions, developments, or any number of other familiar, essentializing images; what they share is a genealogical form of thought that, as Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987:18) have pointed out, is peculiarly arborescent: "It is odd how the tree has dominated Western reality and all of Western thought, from botany to biology and anatomy, but also gnosiology, theology, ontology, all of philosophy . . . : the root-foundation, *Grund, racine, fondement.* The West has a special relation to the forest, and deforestation."

THE NEED FOR ROOTS AND THE SPATIAL INCARCERATION OF THE NATIVE

Two kinds of connection between the concept of the nation and the anthropological concept of culture are relevant here. First, the conceptual order of the "national geographic" map (elucidated above by Gellner) is comparable with the manner in which anthropologists have often conceptualized the spatial arrangement of "peoples and cultures." This similarity has to do with the ways in which we tend to conceptualize space in general. As Akhil Gupta (1988:1–2) points out: "Our concepts of space have always fundamentally rested on . . . images of break, rupture, and disjunction. The recognition of cultures, societies, nations, all in the *plural,* is unproblematic exactly because there appears an unquestionable division, an intrinsic discontinuity, *between* cultures, *between* societies, etc." This spatial segmentation is also built into "the lens of cultural relativity that, as Johannes Fabian points out, made the world appear as culture gardens separated by boundary-maintaining values—as posited essences" (Prakash 1990:394). The conceptual practice of spatial segmentation is reflected not only in the narratives of "cultural diversity" but also in the internationalist celebration of diversity in the "family of nations" (Malkki 1994).

A second, related set of connections between nation and culture is more overtly metaphysical. It has to do with the fact that, like the nation, culture has for long been conceived as something existing in "soil." Terms like "native," "indigenous," and "autochthonous" have all served to root cultures in soils; and it is, of course, a well-worn observation that the concept of "culture" derives from the Latin for "cultivation" (see, for example, Wagner 1981:21). "The idea of culture carries with it an expectation of roots, of a stable, territorialized existence," notes James Clifford (1988:338). Here, culture and nation are kindred concepts: they are not only spatializing but also territorializing; they both depend on a cultural essentialism that readily takes on arborescent forms.[10]

A powerful means of understanding how "cultures" are territorialized can be found in Arjun Appadurai's (1988b:37) account of the ways in which anthropologists have tended to tie people to places through ascriptions of native status: "Natives are not only persons who are from certain places, and belong to those places, but they are also those who are somehow *incarcerated,* or confined, in those places." The

spatial incarceration of the native operates, he argues, through the attribution not only of physical immobility but also of a distinctly ecological immobility (37). Natives are thought to be ideally adapted to their environments—admirable scientists of the concrete mutely and deftly unfolding the hidden innards of their particular ecosystems, PBS-style (38). As Appadurai observes, these ways of confining people to places have deeply metaphysical and moral dimensions (37).

The ecological immobility of the native, so convincingly argued by Appadurai, can be considered in the context of a broader conflation of culture and people, nation and nature—a conflation that is incarcerating but also heroizing and extremely romantic. Two ethnographic examples will perhaps suffice here.[11]

On a certain North American university campus, anthropology faculty were requested by the Rainforest Action Movement (R.A.M.) Committee on Indigenous Peoples to announce in their classes that "October 21st through the 28th is World Rainforest Week. The Rainforest Action Movement will be kicking the week off with a candlelight vigil for Indigenous Peoples." (The flyer also lists other activities: a march through downtown, a lecture "on Indigenous Peoples," and a film.) One is, of course, sympathetic with the project of defending the rain forests and the people who live in them, in the face of tremendous threats. The intent is not to belittle or deny the necessity of supranational political organizing around these issues. But these activities on behalf of "the Indigenous," in the *specific* cultural forms that they take, raise a number of questions: Why should the rights of "Indigenous People" be seen as an "environmental" issue? Are people "rooted" in their native soil somehow more natural, their rights somehow more sacred, than those of other exploited and oppressed people? And, one wonders, if an "Indigenous Person" wanted to move away to a city, would her or his candle be extinguished?

But something more is going on with the "Indigenous Peoples Day." That people would gather in a small town in North America to hold a vigil by candlelight for other people known only by the name of "Indigenous" suggests that being indigenous, native, autochthonous, or otherwise rooted in place is, indeed, powerfully heroized.[12] At the same time, it is hard not to see that this very heroization—fusing the faraway people with their forest—may have the effect of subtly animalizing while it spiritualizes. Like "the wildlife," the indigenous are an object of inquiry and imagination not only for the anthropologist but also for the naturalist, the environmentalist, and the tourist.[13]

The romantic vision of the rooting of peoples has recently been amplified in new strands of "green politics" that literally sacralize the fusion of people, culture, and soil on "Mother Earth." An article in the *Nation,* "How Paradise Was Lost: What Columbus Discovered" (1990), by Kirkpatrick Sale, is a case in point. Starting from the worthwhile observation that the history of the discovery of the Americas needs to be rewritten, Sale proceeds to lay out a political program that might be described as magical naturalism. The discovery, he writes, "began the process by which the culture of Europe, aptly represented by this captain [Columbus], implanted its diseased and dangerous seeds in the soils of the continents" (445). The captain, we are told, is best thought of as "a man *without place* . . . always rootless and restless" (445). By contrast, "the cultures" discovered and destroyed are best thought of as originally "*rooted in place*" (445). For they had "an exquisite sense of . . . the bioregions." Sale is not content with mere nostalgia; he distills moral lessons and a new form of devotional politics from this history: "The only political vision that offers any hope of salvation is one based on an understanding of, a rootedness in, a deep commitment to, and a resacralization of, *place.* . . . It is the only way we can build a politics that can spread the message that Western civilization itself, *shot through with the denial of place* and a utilitarian concept of nature, must be transformed" (446; emphasis added).

> Such a politics, based, as the original peoples of the Americas had it, upon love of place, also implies the place of love. For ultimately love is the true cradle of politics, the love of the earth and its systems, the love of the particular bioregion we inhabit, the love of those who share it with us in our communities, and the love of that unnameable essence that binds us together with the earth, and provides the water for the roots we sink. (446)

The "natives" are indeed incarcerated in primordial bioregions and thereby retrospectively recolonized in Sale's argument. But a moral lesson is drawn from this: the restless, rootless "civilization" of the colonizing "West," too, urgently needs to root itself. In sum, the spatial incarceration of the native is conceived as a highly valued rooting of "peoples" and "cultures" — a rooting that is simultaneously moral and literally botanical, or ecological.

It is when the native is a national native that the metaphysical and moral valuation of roots in the soil becomes especially apparent. In the

national order of things, the rooting of peoples is not only normal but also perceived as a moral and spiritual need. As Weil wrote in *The Need for Roots,* "Just as there are certain culture-beds for certain microscopic animals, certain types of soil for certain plants, so there is a certain part of the soul in every one and certain ways of thought and action communicated from one person to another which can only exist in a national setting, and disappear when a country is destroyed" (1987: 151–52).

A SEDENTARIST METAPHYSICS

The territorializing, often arborescent conceptions of nation and culture explored here are associated with a powerful sedentarism in our thinking. Were we to imagine an otherworldly ethnographer studying us, we might well hear that scholar observe, in Yi-Fu Tuan's (1977:156) words, "Rootedness in the soil and the growth of pious feeling toward it seem natural to sedentary agricultural peoples." This is a sedentarism that is peculiarly enabling of the elaboration and consolidation of a national geography that reaffirms the segmentation of the world into prismatic, mutually exclusive units of "world order" (Anthony Smith 1986:5). This is also a sedentarism that is taken for granted to such an extent that it is nearly invisible. And, finally, this is a sedentarism that is deeply metaphysical and deeply moral, sinking "peoples" and "cultures" into "national soils" and the "family of nations" into Mother Earth. It is this transnational cultural context that makes intelligible the linkages between contemporary celebratory internationalisms and environmentalisms.

The effects of this sedentarism are the focus of the following section on refugees. Refugees are not nomads, but Deleuze and Guattari's (1987:23) comments on allegorical nomads are relevant to them: "History is always written from a sedentary point of view and in the name of a unitary State apparatus, at least a possible one, even when the topic is nomads. What is lacking is a Nomadology, the opposite of a history."

UPROOTEDNESS: SOME IMPLICATIONS OF SEDENTARISM FOR CONCEPTUALIZING DISPLACEMENT

Conceiving the relationships that people have to places in the naturalizing and botanical terms described above leads, then, to a peculiar sedentarism that is reflected in language and in social practice.

This sedentarism is not inert. It actively territorializes our identities, whether cultural or national. And as I will attempt to show, it also directly enables a vision of territorial displacement as pathological. The broader intent here is to suggest that in confronting displacement, the sedentarist metaphysic embedded in the national order of things is at its most visible.

That displacement is subject to botanical thought is evident from the contrast between two everyday terms for it: transplantation and uprootedness. The notion of transplantation is less specific a term than the latter, but it may be agreed that it generally evokes live, viable roots. It strongly suggests, for example, the colonial and postcolonial, usually privileged category of "expatriates" who pick up their roots in an orderly manner from the "mother country," the originative culture-bed, and set about their "acclimatization"[14] in the "foreign environment" or on "foreign soil"—again, in an orderly manner. Uprootedness is another matter. Even a brief overview of the literature on refugees as uprooted people shows that in uprooting, the orderliness of the transplantation disappears. Instead, broken and dangling roots predominate—roots that threaten to wither, along with the ordinary loyalties of citizenship in a homeland (Malkki 1985:24–25; Heller and Feher 1988:89).

The pathologization of uprootedness in the national order of things can take several different (but often conflated) forms, among them political, medical, and moral. After the Second World War and also in the interwar period, the loss of a national homeland embodied by refugees was often defined by policymakers and scholars of the time as a politico-moral problem. For example, a prominent 1939 historical survey of refugees states, "Politically uprooted, he [the refugee] may sink into the underworld of terrorism and political crime; and in any case he is suspected of political irresponsibility that endangers national security" (Simpson 1939:9).[15]

It is, however, the moral axis that has proven to command the greatest longevity in the problematization of refugees. A particularly clear, if extreme, statement of the perceived moral consequences of loss of homeland is to be found in the following passage from a postwar study of the mental and moral characteristics of the "typical refugee":

> Homelessness is a serious threat to moral behavior. . . . At the moment the refugee crosses the frontiers of his own world, his whole moral outlook, his attitude toward

the divine order of life changes. . . . [The refugees'] conduct makes it obvious that we are dealing with individuals who are basically amoral, without any sense of personal or social responsibility. . . . They no longer feel themselves bound by ethical precepts which every honest citizen . . . respects. They become a menace, dangerous characters who will stop at nothing. (Cirtautas 1957:70, 73)

The particular historical circumstances under which the pathologization of the World War II refugees occurred has been discussed elsewhere (Malkki 1985). The point to be underscored here is that these refugees' loss of bodily connection to their national homelands came to be treated as a loss of moral bearings. Rootless, they were no longer trustworthy as "honest citizens."

The theme of moral breakdown has not disappeared from the study of exile and displacement (Tabori 1972; Kristeva 1991). Francesco Pellizzi (1988:170), for instance, speaks of the "inner destruction" visited upon the exile "by the full awareness of his condition." Suggesting that most of us are today "in varying degrees of exile, removed from our roots," he warns: "1984 is near" (168). Another observer likens the therapeutic treatment of refugees to military surgery; in both cases, time is of the essence: "Unless treated quickly, the refugee almost inevitably develops either apathy or a reckless attitude that 'the world owes me a living', which later proves almost ineradicable. There is a slow, prostrating and agonising death — of the hopes, the idealism and the feeling of solidarity with which the refugees began" (Aall 1967:26).[16]

The more contemporary field of "refugee studies" is quite different in spirit from the postwar literature. But it shares with earlier texts the premise that refugees are necessarily "a problem." They are not ordinary people but represent, rather, an anomaly requiring specialized correctives and therapeutic interventions. It is striking how often the abundant literature claiming refugees as its object of study locates "the problem" not in the political conditions or processes that produce massive territorial displacements of people but within the bodies and minds (and even souls) of people categorized as refugees.

The internalization of the problem within "the refugee" in the more contemporary study of refugees now occurs most often along a medicalizing, psychological axis. Barbara Harrell-Bond, for instance, cites evidence of the breakdown of families and the erosion of "normative social behaviour" (1986:150), of mental illness (152, 283),

"psychological stress" (286), and "clinical levels of depression and anxiety" (287).[17] The point here is obviously not to deny that displacement can be a shattering experience. It is rather this: our sedentarist assumptions about attachment to place lead us to define displacement not as a fact about sociopolitical context but as an inner, pathological condition of the displaced.

THE "FAMILY OF NATIONS" AND THE EXTERNALITY OF "THE REFUGEE"

These different texts on the mental and moral characteristics of refugees create first of all the effect of a generalized, even generic, figure: "the refugee."[18] But the generalization and problematization of "the refugee" may be linked to a third process, that of the discursive externalization of the refugee from the national (read "natural") order of things. Three examples may clarify this process.

In a study of the post–World War II refugees, John Stoessinger (1956:189) notes the importance of studying "the peculiar psychological effects arising from prolonged refugee status," and he stresses that "such psychological probings constitute an excursion into what is still largely *terra incognita.*" The title of a more recent article reflects a comparable perception of the strangeness and unfamiliarity of the world peopled by refugees: "A tourist in the refugee world" (Shawcross 1989:28–30). The latter is a commentary in a photographic essay on refugees around the world, *Forced Out: The Agony of the Refugee in Our Time* (Kismaric 1989). Excursions into terra incognita, guided tours in "the refugee world," and the last image of being "forced out": all three point to the externality of "the refugee" in the national order of things.

Hannah Arendt outlined these relations of strangeness and externality very clearly when writing about the post–World War II refugees and other displaced peoples in Europe. The world map she saw was very different from the school atlas considered earlier: "Mankind, for so long a time considered under the image of a family of nations, had reached the stage where whoever was thrown out of one of these tightly organized closed communities found himself thrown out of the family of nations altogether. . . . [T]he abstract nakedness of being nothing but human was their greatest danger."[19]

Refugees, liminal in the categorical order of nation-states, thus fit Victor Turner's famous characterization of liminal personae as "naked unaccommodated man" or "undifferentiated raw material"

(1967:98–99). The objectification to which Arendt's and Turner's observations refer is very evident in the scholarly and policy discourse on refugees. The term "refugees" denotes an objectified, undifferentiated mass that is meaningful primarily as an aberration of categories and an object of "therapeutic interventions" (compare Foucault 1979). One of the social and analytic consequences of the school atlas, then, is the political sensitivity and symbolic danger of people who do not fit, who represent "matter out of place" (Douglas 1966).

These relations of order and aberration also raise questions for anthropological practice: if "the refugee" is "naked unaccommodated man," naked and not clothed in culture, why should the anthropologist study him? The heroizing concept of the "family of nations" can be likened to another naturalistic term, the "family of man" (see Haraway 1986:9, 11). Thus does the nakedness of the ideal-typical refugee suggest another link: that between nationlessness and culturelessness. That is, territorially "uprooted" people are easily seen as "torn loose from their culture" because culture is itself a territorialized (and even a botanical and quasi-ecological) concept in so many contexts.[20] As Clifford (1988:338) observes, "Common notions of culture" are biased "toward rooting rather than travel." Violated, broken roots signal an ailing cultural identity and a damaged nationality. The ideal-typical refugee is like a native gone amok (compare Arendt 1973:302). It is not illogical in this cultural context that one of the first therapies routinely directed at refugees is a spatial one. The refugee camp is a technology of "care and control" (Proudfoot 1957; Malkki 1985:51) — a technology of power entailing the management of space and movement — for "peoples out of place."

In the foregoing, I have tried to unfold into clear view these four points: First, the world of nations tends to be conceived as discrete spatial partitionings of territory. Second, the relations of people to place tend to be naturalized in discursive and other practices. This naturalization is often specifically conceived in plant metaphors. Third, the concept of culture has many points of connection with that of the nation and is likewise thought to be rooted in concrete localities. These botanical conceptions reflect a metaphysical sedentarism in scholarly and other contexts. And, finally, the naturalization of the links between people and place lead to a vision of displacement as pathological, and this, too, is conceived in botanical terms, as uprootedness. Uprootedness comes to signal a loss of moral and, later, emotional bearings. Since both cultural and national identities are

conceived in territorialized terms, uprootedness also threatens to denature and spoil these.

NATIONALS AND COSMOPOLITANS IN EXILE

The following two ethnographic examples of conceptions of links between people and place are drawn from detailed accounts presented elsewhere (Malkki 1990, 1995a). Based on one year of anthropological field research in rural, western Tanzania, among Hutu refugees who fled the genocidal massacres of 1972 in Burundi, this work explores how the lived experiences of exile shape the construction of national identity and historicity among two groups of Hutu refugees inhabiting two very different settings in Tanzania. One group was settled in a rigorously organized, isolated refugee camp, whereas the other lived in the more fluid setting of Kigoma Township on Lake Tanganyika. Living outside any camp context, these "town refugees" were dispersed in nonrefugee neighborhoods. Comparison of the camp and town settings revealed radical differences in the meanings ascribed by the refugees to national identity and homeland and to exile and displacement.

The most striking social fact about the camp was that its inhabitants were continually engaged in an impassioned construction and reconstruction of their history as "a people." Ranging from the "autochthonous" origins of Burundi as a "nation" to the coming of the pastoral Tutsi "foreigners from the North," to the Tutsi capture of power from the autochthons by ruse, and, finally, to the culminating massacres of Hutu by Tutsi in 1972, which have been termed a "selective genocide" (Lemarchand and Martin 1974), the Hutu refugees' narratives formed an overarching historical trajectory that was fundamentally also a national trajectory of the "rightful natives" of Burundi. The camp refugees saw themselves as a nation in exile, defining exile in turn as a moral trajectory of trials and tribulations that would ultimately empower them to reclaim (or create anew) the "homeland" in Burundi.

Refugeeness had a central place in these narrative processes. Far from being a "spoiled identity," refugee status was valued and protected as a sign of the ultimate temporariness of exile and of the refusal to become naturalized, to put down roots in a place to which one did not belong. Insisting on one's liminality and displacement as a refugee was also to have a legitimate claim to the attention of "interna-

tional opinion" and to international assistance. Displacement is usually defined by those who study refugees as a subversion of (national) categories, as an international problem (Malkki 1985, 1994). Here, in contrast, displacement had become a form of categorical purity. Being a refugee, a person was no longer a citizen of Burundi and not yet an immigrant in Tanzania. One's purity as a refugee had become a way of becoming purer and more powerful as a Hutu.

The "true nation" was imagined as a "moral community" being formed centrally by the "natives" in exile (Malkki 1990:34; compare Anderson 1983:15). The territorial expanse named Burundi was a mere state. The camp refugees' narratives agree with Ernest Renan: "A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle" (1990:19). Here, then, would seem to be a deterritorialized nation without roots sunk directly into the national soil. Indeed, the territory is not yet a national soil because the nation has not yet been reclaimed by its "true members" and is instead governed by "impostors" (Malkki 1995a). If "[a]nything can serve as a reterritorialization, in other words, 'stand for' the lost territory," then the Hutu nation has reterritorialized itself precisely in displacement, in a refugee camp (Deleuze and Guattari 1987:508). The homeland here is not so much a territorial or topographic entity as a moral destination. And the collective, idealized return to the homeland is not a mere matter of traveling. The real return can come only at the culmination of the trials and tribulations in exile.

These visions of nation, identity, and displacement challenge the common sense and scholarly views discussed in the first section of this paper not by refuting the national order of things but by constructing an alternative, competing nationalist metaphysic. It is being claimed that state and territory are not sufficient to make a nation and that citizenship does not amount to a true nativeness. Thus, present-day Burundi is an "impostor" in the "family of nations."

In contrast, the town refugees had not constructed such a categorically distinct, collective identity. Rather than defining themselves collectively as "the Hutu refugees," they tended to seek ways of assimilating and of manipulating multiple identities—identities derived or "borrowed" from the social context of the township. The town refugees were not *essentially* "Hutu" or "refugees" or "Tanzanians" or "Burundians" but rather just "broad persons" (Hebdige 1987:159). Theirs were creolized, rhizomatic identities—changing and situational rather than essential and moral (Hannerz 1987; Deleuze and

Guattari 1987:6, 21). In the process of managing these "rootless" identities in township life, they were creating not a heroized national identity but a lively cosmopolitanism—a worldliness that caused the camp refugees to see them as an "impure," problematic element in the "total community" of the Hutu refugees as "a people" in exile.

For many in town, returning to the homeland meant literally traveling to Burundi, to a spatially demarcated place. Exile was not a moral trajectory, and homeland was not a moral destination but simply a place. Indeed, it often seemed inappropriate to think of the town refugees as being in exile at all. Many among them were unsure about whether they would ever return to Burundi even if political changes were to permit it in future. But, more important, they had created lives that were located in the present circumstances of Kigoma, not in the past in Burundi.

The town refugees' constructions of their lived circumstances and their pasts were different from *both* the national metaphysic of the camp refugees and that of scholarly common sense. Indeed, they dismantled the national metaphysics by refusing a mapping and spurning queries over origin altogether. They mounted instead a robust challenge to cultural and national essentialisms; they denaturalized those scholarly, touristic, and other quests for "authenticity" that imply a mass traffic in "fake" and "adulterated" identities; and finally, they trivialized the necessity of living by radical nationalisms. They might well agree with Deleuze and Guattari (1987:15): "To be rhizomorphous is to produce stems and filaments that seem to be roots, or better yet connect with them by penetrating the trunk, but put them to strange new uses. We're tired of trees. We should stop believing in trees, roots, and radicles. They've made us suffer too much."

Just how much it is possible to suffer from root-thinking is illustrated in a particularly terrifying way by developments in Burundi and Rwanda since I completed fieldwork there. I have reviewed this recent history of violence elsewhere (Malkki 1995b:495–523), and many careful, detailed studies have since been published by scholars of the region (for example, Reyntjens 1994; Lemarchand 1994; Guichaoua 1995; Prunier 1995; Newbury and Newbury 1995; Mbonimpa 1993; Jefremovas n.d.; and Destexhe 1994). To give the barest chronological account: 1987 in Burundi saw a coup that brought Major Pierre Buyoya to power. Buyoya's regime first opened a broad discussion of national unity and reconciliation, initiating programs of liberalization. These changes in policy heightened political tensions in the

country. In 1990, in Rwanda, a civil war began as the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) (a mainly Tutsi fighting force trained in exile) moved from Uganda into Rwanda to challenge the Hutu-dominated regime of President Juvenal Habyalimana. In 1993, the first democratic elections in the history of independent Burundi resulted in the elections of the first Hutu president, Melchior Ndadaye. After only one hundred days in office, Ndadaye was assassinated in a coup attempt apparently planned by high officers of the Burundi army. The assassination touched off massive political unrest and culminated in the killings of untold numbers of Tutsi before the army stepped in and in turn killed massive numbers of Hutu. It is thought that some one hundred thousand people were killed then and another million forced into exile in neighboring countries. The democratically elected government was reinstalled, but it was clear that the army held the real power. Since that time, continual political repression and fighting have been reported from Burundi. In April 1994, the presidents of both Rwanda and Burundi were killed in a plane crash as they were returning together from a meeting of heads of state in Tanzania. These deaths precipitated a terrible genocide in Rwanda, with systematic mass killing that primarily targeted people of the Tutsi category, as well as politically moderate Hutu. It is estimated that the 1994 Rwanda genocide had a death toll of perhaps 500,000–800,000 (although some estimates are higher) and caused the mass displacement of over two million people after the RPF gained power. In the meantime, the United Nations and other organizations are warning that the ongoing political violence in Burundi is likely to culminate in further genocidal violence. Even a cursory study of the forms of violence and repression in Rwanda and Burundi suggests that it is useful to try to trace or identify larger regional histories, patterns, and commonalities of forms of thought, which may not respect the boundaries of the nation-state (compare Reyntjens 1994; Lemarchand 1994; Guichaoua 1995).

One must be careful, of course, not to assume that the structures of thought about the Tutsi "enemy" that lay behind the Rwandan genocide are isomorphic with those that I observed in Mishamo refugee camp. There is evidence that some Hutu refugees from Burundi have been involved in political violence in both Rwanda and Burundi in recent years, and that some men from Mishamo have returned to Burundi to fight in the ongoing civil war there. But Mishamo is not Rwanda, and it would be irresponsible to make too close a connection between the nationalist metaphysic of purity that grew in Mishamo

and the genocidal thinking that motivated the Rwandan massacres. It is also important to remember that tracing commonalities in forms of thought is not to imply common authorship of a crime.

That said, it must also be observed that the extremist Hutu nationalist rhetoric that led up to the Rwandan genocide invoked ideas of indigenous, rooted Hutu and Tutsi "invaders" out of place in the Rwandan national soil, ideas that are disturbingly reminiscent both of the material from Mishamo and of extreme national-categorical thinking more generally. An African Rights study entitled *Rwanda: Death, Despair, and Defiance* (a hotly debated, controversial document that is nevertheless valuable as a compilation of eyewitness testimony on the genocide) states that propaganda appeals were reportedly made, in the months preceding the genocide, to Hutu as "Sons of the Cultivators" in order to incite people to violence (African Rights 1994:69). The same report states: "Other phrases with important cultural and historical resonances have been given currency by extremist poets and ideologues. Some of these play on the theme of communal work: the word 'interahamwe' itself was previously used for communal work parties; 'clearing the bush' originally referred to clearing land for cultivation and has subsequently been used for killing Tutsi (African Rights 1994:70)." One radio broadcast told the Tutsi: "I'd like to tell you that your home is in Ethiopia and we will dump you in the Nyabarongo [river] for you to arrive quickly" (African Rights 1994:73). Like the Jews in the French cemetery at Carpentras, the alien elements were to be removed from the national soil. In May of 1994, some forty thousand such alien elements were retrieved from Lake Victoria in Uganda, carried there by a river reportedly choked with corpses (Prunier 1995:255).

Anderson (1983:19) proposes that "nationalism has to be understood by aligning it, not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which—as well as against which—it came into being" (compare Orwell 1968:362; Bhabha 1990:1; Kapferer 1988; Balibar and Wallerstein 1991; Gilroy 1990; Yanagisako and Delaney 1995; and Guillaumin 1995). It is in this spirit that the phrase "the national order of things" has been used here (in preference to "nationalism"). Its intent has been to describe a class of phenomena that is deeply cultural and yet global in its significance. That is, the nation—having powerful associations with particular localities and territories—is simultaneously a supralocal,

transnational cultural form (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1988b:5–9). (Compare Löfgren 1989; Reé 1992; Gupta 1992; Malkki 1994, 1995a.)

In this order of things, conceptualizations of the relations between people and place readily take on aspects of the metaphysical sedentarism described here. It is these naturalized relations that this paper has tried to illuminate and decompose through the three-way comparison of sedentarist common sense, of the Hutu in the refugee camp, and of the cosmopolitan refugees in Kigoma. These ethnographic examples underscore what a troubled conceptual vehicle "identity" still is, even when the more obvious essentialisms have been leached out of it. Time and again, it reappears as a "root essence," as that "pure product" (Clifford 1988:1) of the cultural, and the national, soil from which it is thought to draw its nature and its sustenance. That many people (scholars included) see identity through this lens of essentialism is a cultural and political fact to be recognized, perhaps especially in the wake of recent events in Rwanda and Burundi. But this does not mean that our analytic tools must take this form. The two main oppositions in this paper — that between sedentarism and displacement in general and that between "the nationals" and "the cosmopolitans" in exile in Tanzania — suggest alternative conceptualizations.

They suggest that identity is always mobile and processual, partly self-construction, partly categorization by others, partly a condition, a status, a label, a weapon, a shield, a fund of memories, and so on. It is a creolized aggregate composed through bricolage. The camp refugees celebrated a categorical "purity," and the town refugees, a cosmopolitan "impurity." But both kinds of identity were rhizomatic, as is any identity, and it would not be ethnographically accurate to study these as mere approximations or distortions of some ideal "true roots."[21]

What Deleuze and Guattari (1987:3) somewhat abstractly describe as rhizomatic is very succinctly stated by Dick Hebdige in his study of Caribbean music and cultural identity. Defining the terms of his project, he says: "Rather than tracing back the roots . . . to their source, I've tried to show how the roots themselves are in a state of constant flux and change. *The roots don't stay in one place.* They change shape. They change colour. And they grow. There is *no such thing as a pure point of origin* . . . but *that doesn't mean there isn't history*" (1987:10; emphasis added).

Observing that more and more of the world lives in a "generalized condition of homelessness" — or that there is truly an intellectual

need for a new "sociology of displacement," a new "nomadology" — is not to deny the importance of place in the construction of identities.[22] On the contrary, as I have attempted to show and as Hebdige suggests above, deterritorialization and identity are intimately linked: "Diasporas always leave a trail of collective memory about another place and time and create new maps of desire and of attachment" (Breckenridge and Appadurai 1989:i).[23] To plot only "places of birth" and degrees of nativeness is to blind oneself to the multiplicity of attachments that people form to places through living in, remembering, and imagining them.

NOTES

I would like to thank the following friends and colleagues for their valued comments on this paper: Jim Ferguson, Laurie Kain Hart, Ann Stoler, Karen Leonard, Jane Guyer, Fernando Coronil, David Scobey, Mihalis Fotiadis, and the faculty and students at the Departments of Anthropology at Stanford, Princeton, and Columbia and at the Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, San Diego. My colleagues at the Michigan Society of Fellows, the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, provided an exciting intellectual environment during the writing of this paper. The Society of Fellows and a Grant for Advanced Area Research from the Social Science Research Council provided funding that made this work possible. This essay originally appeared in 1992 under the same title in *Cultural Anthropology* 7 (1): 24–44. The present version has been updated to take account of recent events in Burundi and Rwanda.

1 Said 1979:18, cited by Gupta and Ferguson, "Beyond 'Culture,' " this volume. Julia Kristeva (1991) arrives at similar observations along quite different theoretical trajectories.

2 A more detailed discussion of the literature on nations and nationalism can be located in Malkki 1989:11 and of nations as "citizens of humanity" in Malkki 1994.

3 A critique of Gellner's position has been done by Sally Falk Moore (1989).

4 The "real" nation is implied in such terms as Anthony Giddens's "classical form" (1987:269) and Anthony Smith's "standard or 'classic' European 'nation' " (1986:8). See also Smith 1986:17 on "dubious" forms.

5 *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* 1980:640.

6 "Heimat is first of all the mother earth who has given birth to our folk and race, who is the holy soil, and who gulps down God's clouds, sun, and storms. . . . But more than all this, our Heimat is the land which has become fruitful through the sweat of our ancestors. For this Heimat our ancestors have fought and suffered, for this Heimat our fathers have died." Extracted and translated from a 1950s South Tyrolean almanac by Doob (1952:196) and cited in Tuan 1977:156.

7 Clearly, the other great metaphor for community is blood, or stock. But the tree more closely reveals the territorialization of identity and is thus given primacy here. Frequently these dominating metaphors are also combined, of course, as in the family tree. My understanding of the politico-symbolic significance of blood has been enriched by conversations with Ann Stoler.

8 One variety of primordialism is to be found in Mazzini's view that God "divided Humanity into distinct groups upon the face of our globe, and thus planted the seeds of nations" (cited in Emerson 1960:91).

9 Compare Kapferer 1988:1 on culture as the "root essence" of nations and national identities in discourses of nationalism.

10 How Durkheimian views of the nation seem to rest on metaphors of the organism and the body (the female body, in particular) has been examined elsewhere (Malkki 1989:16).

11 The first example raises the issue of rain forests and the people who live in them. Here it is necessary to emphasize that it is not being suggested that the political efforts converging on these forests are futile or trivial. Similarly, in the case of the second example of environmentalism and green politics, the intent is not to advocate a cynically agnostic stance toward environmental politics or to echo the unfortunate relativism of a book like Douglas and Wildavsky's *Risk and Culture* (1982). The purpose is to sharpen the focus of these phenomena so as to better study their place and effects in the contemporary transnational context.

12 Thierry Verhelst's study *No Life without Roots* (1990) is an example of such heroization. Looking to Third World "grass-roots communities" (4) for a "spiritual message" (87) for the West, he states, "Indigenous cultures contain within them the seeds necessary to give birth to societies which differ from the standardized and devitalized model that has spread over the world" (24).

13 This postcolonial relationship was powerfully portrayed in the fine ethnographic film *Cannibal Tours.*

14 Notably not "acculturation."

15 A more detailed study of European refugees at the end of the Second World War has been done by Malkki (1985, 1995b).

16 Compare Jacques Vernant (1953:17) on "the refugee complex" and also Robert Neumann on "émigré life" as a "highly contagious," "corrosive disease" (cited in Tabori 1972:398–99).

17 See also Harrell-Bond 1989:63. Compare further Godkin 1980:73–85, a study of "rootedness" and "uprootedness" among alcoholics, which finds that belonging to a place fosters psychological well-being.

18 Many of the themes discussed in this section are also treated in Malkki 1994:41–68.

19 Arendt 1973:294, 300, discussed in Malkki 1989:57–58.

20 Marrus 1985:8. William Shawcross (1989) echoes this sense of the loss of culture: "The poignant voices of refugees recall their lost homes, their precious rituals forcibly abandoned" (29).

21 Deleuze and Guattari (1987) state: "Unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome

connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states. . . . It is composed not of units but of dimensions, or rather directions in motion. It has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (*milieu*) from which it grows and which it overspills" (21). And, "The tree is filiation but the rhizome is alliance . . . the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, 'and . . . and . . . and' " (25).

22 On the question of a new sociology of displacement, see Breckenridge and Appadurai 1989:iv. On the concept of a new nomadology, see Deleuze and Guattari 1987:23.

23 It is also worth considering why "to some people the very 'state of movement' is being 'at home' " (Marianne Forro, cited in Tabori 1972:399).