

ANAMNESIS AND UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP - Michael Bennett
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Anamnesis (remembrance) is a key Christian concept which I believe can be successfully translated from a religious to a secular context such that the sacred nature of the former (justified by revelation and tradition) becomes a secular, reflexive sacred in the latter (justified by validity claims and procedures of communicative rationality). The immanent sacrality of the latter comes, not from any substantive decisions of the participants in discourse, but from the universality of the preconditions of discourse and argumentation. In conferring the status of secular holiness on them we endow them with the highest status because they provide a universal foundation for the human form of life.

Anamnesis is important because the need to remember all past actions of all humans along with the parallel need to anticipate the remembrance of all future human actions, is directly linked to the fundamental belief that *all humans reside in a universal fellowship*. Christianity and communicative rationality share this pivotal value. Let us look at it, in the first place, from the Christian perspective. People are not seen as isolated units in the eyes of God, but, as part of Christ's Kingdom, they share in God's grace as would a family with God as the father. But this connection is not just an individualistic vertical link of each man or woman to God, they also all connect to each other. This connection is not just based on practical social bonds, but by mutual understanding and a common agreement on the sacred importance of that which binds them (God's love and grace).

The relationship of the Trinity is a small-scale representation of this. McGrath (2003: 325) indicates that the Greek term perichoresis refers to how the three characters in the Trinity relate to one another. The integrity of the individuality of each is maintained, but there is an interpenetration between them as each shares in the life of the other. There is a 'community of being,' in which each person, while maintaining their distinctive identity, penetrates the others and is penetrated by them. The Kingdom of God therefore creates a universal fellowship between the believers. Similarly, New Testament parables of heaven are more communal than individualistic. Eternal life is therefore a not so much a promise or hope for the individual as something shared with the community as a whole.

The practices and observances of necrology, purgatory, All Saint's Day and All Soul's Day all reflect the Church's concern with a universal fellowship that spans both space and time. Necrologies, or obituaries, are the registers made by religious communities in which they entered the names of the dead with a view to offering prayers for their souls. If insufficiently pure, many souls would reside in purgatory awaiting further purification to enter heaven. Necrologies provided communicants with a valid list of ex-members and previous benefactors for whom prayers would be offered as an intercession to assist them on their way out of purgatory. The eleventh century Winchester book called the 'Hyde Register' sums it up thus:

let the names be laid upon the holy altar during the very mysteries of the sacred Mass and be commended most humbly to God Almighty so that as remembrance is made of them upon earth ... so in the life to come, by His indulgence who alone knows how they stand or are hereafter to stand in His sight, the glory of those who are of greater merit may be augmented in Heaven and the account of those who are less worthy may be lightened in His secret judgments.

All Saint's Day celebrates and remembers the fellowship of all the Christian saints, martyrs and apostles; All Soul's Day provides the same service for all the deceased Christians who did not achieve quite such a vaulted status during their lives. If we put to one side the notion that prayers and remembrance can have a causal influence on the souls of the dead, we are nevertheless left with a very powerful sense of the solidarity and universal fellowship of believers. Through anamnesis we maintain a strong common ground with all those that have gone before us, that is, our ancestors. Moreover, if we understand that we share a common horizon with our predecessors, by the same token, we share a similar horizon with our successors. Anamnesis, therefore, not only reminds us of our connection with the past, it also stimulates us to remember that we are connected to the future we create for, and with, our successors. Ironically, it also concerns itself with the future consequences of those that have already died. The notion of purgatory enabled believers to intercede in the future of the deceased. And the belief, during life, that one might receive help from others after death (prayers whilst in purgatory) had an impact on one's actions in life. Hence during life people would seek to be entered into a necrology and the rich would make donations to a monastery in order to purchase prayers of intercession and remembrance.

It would be wrong to just abstractly acknowledge the genesis of the theology and practice of anamnesis without also seeking to understand how, for Christians, by placing themselves in a common bond of past, present and future fellowship, they provide themselves with a permanent source of enlightenment and authenticity. Anastasios (1999) indicates that Christians as individuals and communities have become 'severely wounded because we have lost the vivid remembrance of Christian consciousness or ... retain the power of anamnesis only in a very feeble way.' For him anamnesis is neither just an academic concept or empty ritual, it is a personal existential event. 'It embraces all the pain of humanity, the exploitation of individuals or groups, the multifaceted oppression of women and children, the local clashes, the global financial unrest and injustice, and deepening ecological threats.' By staying connected, in this way, to all previous and future suffering we can offer a loving and authentic response to all who share in the human fellowship. Such a notion, albeit still in religious clothing, is simply too rich in possibility to ignore.

Communicative rationality enables us to transform this fellowship that is based on a transcendent God into a *fellowship that is immanently based on the universals of communication*. Christianity enabled an anamnestic solidarity of fellowship as a horizontal bond between women and men, but it was only possible because it was anchored in a vertical relationship with an external, transcendent God. Habermas has rescued the ethics and truth of the universal fellowship from religious traditions and transformed them into a non-coercive communications community that no longer requires an external, vertical guarantor. Let us look in a little more detail into this extension of communicative rationality into the realm of anamnesis and universal fellowship.

The link of communicative rationality to anamnesis and universal fellowship comes from the universal features of such rationality that we have already outlined. The immanent universals of the validity claims and the general features of communication are preconditions for successful communications for all human beings for as long as they are defined by the human form of life. Although the sheer existence of these universals cannot provide an absolute 'ought' for moral action, there is a *weak moral obligation that flows from the force of reason* to compel us to act in accordance with the better argument. This weak universal obligation, combined with the trans-subjective features of the core validity claims and the preconditions of communication, provide universal features of human experience that span space and time,

and are the structure upon which we can reasonably claim that *all people share a common fellowship*.

Communicative rationality requires that anyone who presents an argument and anyone who enters into an argumentative conversation must be accepted as a partner. 'The supposition of the ideal speech situation thus implies an unlimited communication community. Hence, in principle, in any communicative act the entire human species is implied as the final horizon of the communication community.' (Peukart 1984: 187) The process of argumentation necessarily requires an unlimited communication participation. In order to convince anyone with our argument, we have to accept that, in principle, all relevant voices have been heard and all who are affected have been given the opportunity to participate. It is the radical extension of this to include the horizon of all social space and all historical time that makes the connection to anamnesis and human fellowship.

For a solidarity that spans historical time the primary obstacle is amnesia. We know only too well how easy it is for each of us, as individuals and collective agents, to forget the past under the joint pressures of current contingencies and historical guilt. Amnesia is tempting and comfortable. Yet, our drive towards an identity that is both reflexive and autonomous precludes amnesia as a viable option. Self-awareness and forgetfulness are antinomies. As Benjamin (1992) argued, the past has a claim on us. Therefore the communicative fellowship includes not only the living but also those who have lived, suffered and died. More poignantly, it includes those whose suffering was a direct result of their attempts to improve life for us as their successors. This includes the untold numbers who have died in wars; those who have suffered the degradation of slavery; the oppressed and the victimised. Through anamnesis we have a fellowship of remembered solidarity with all these people. This remembrance cannot just be for our own benefit in terms of what it means for us and how we might benefit from a greater self-understanding. Remembrance and commemoration must also be enacted for the sake of our ancestors (particularly the victims) for their own sake. Their experience and suffering must be fully recognised.

There is a problem. Peukart, Siebert (1985) and others draw our attention to a fundamental contradiction. How can we maintain our universal fellowship through anamnesis when this solidarity is intentionally and unintentionally broken each and every day on countless occasions that range from the petty to the catastrophic? The very nature of this fellowship

exposes it to failure. Communicative rationality generates and requires an ethic and practice of intersubjectivity. As we have already discussed, the psychological competencies required by participants in communication demand high levels of reflexivity and self-transparency. Between participants this creates an intense dependency on the trust and authenticity that enables them to be influenced in interaction only by the force of the better argument when making decisions. Where these conditions obtain it maximises co-operation and solidarity as well as individual autonomy. However, by the same token, this state of affairs is vulnerable to various levels of abuse from actors who are either unable or unwilling to operate at this level. Thus communicative actions become exposed to manipulation from strategically minded actors. The notion of universal fellowship has this paradox within it – we only reach fulfilment through the recognition provided by the other, but the other is not obliged to reciprocate. The secular sacred can be transgressed.

Suffering ensues. When the bond of fellowship is broken we have countless instances of pain, suffering, abuse and death. It is important to differentiate between the unavoidable suffering that is fundamental to the human condition (ageing, death, disease) and suffering that is caused by the willed or unknowing derogation of the bond that binds us all. It is the latter that concerns us. This issue generates three further questions. How can we come to terms with the suffering of innocent victims? How can we consider redemption for the guilty? And how can later generations have solidarity with the innocent victims of earlier generations?

That the bond of human fellowship is constantly broken is no surprise. But how do we, as people who recognise the moral status of this connection, relate to those who died in inconsolable suffering caused by other humans who supposedly shared the same universal commitment? If the past is immutable and is closed to future intervention we are left with the terrible and inconsolable facticity of the suffering of those whose death and pain was caused by others. The annihilation of the innocent is challenging enough but Peukart and others raise the issue of what consolation is available to those innocents whose lives were not only ruined but who, at the same time, devoted their lives to helping others and to promoting the bond of fellowship? The fact that many people devoted their lives to the love of others only deepens the sense of loss, grief and meaninglessness when this commitment is the cause of their suffering and death. To be destroyed because of one's commitment to human fellowship is an event of unbearable poignancy.

It may seem natural for this question of innocent suffering to receive most attention from interested theologians. I am, nevertheless still perturbed by the issue of our relationship to those of our ancestors who perpetrated pain, suffering and death on the innocent victims. Whether they knew it or not, from our point of view they still share the same bond of fellowship. The need to hold such aggressors to account for their actions doesn't deny the possibility that those who destroy others have themselves been subject to suffering and alienation. If the past is closed what redemption is available to the perpetrators?

What about the living? The existence of the innocently annihilated is a fact. Anamnesis requires us to hold in constant remembrance our ancestors, all of whom share a universal fellowship with us. How can the living be happy or content and also come to terms with the fact that their present level of freedom is built on the inconsolable suffering of others?

'Peukart explains that this problem of the relationship of present and future generations with past generations introduces the paradox of anamnestic solidarity. How can a future liberated generation enjoy its liberation while living with the extremely unhappy memory that its liberation has been achieved at the expense of the annihilation of past generations? In this case the price of this liberation is an unhappiness that cannot be real liberation. On the other hand, how can it be considered liberated if its liberation can be achieved only by severing its solidarity with the innocently annihilated through amnesia? In this case the price of liberation is the loss of that universal solidarity that is constitutive for a liberated identity.' (Simpson 1989: 31)

For Siebert (1985: xii) this paradox is also found in Habermas's theory of communicative rationality . 'Habermas is, of course, fully aware of the fact that all human intersubjectivity is continually in danger of the one or the other dying and being destroyed. ... But ... solidarity with the innocent other who has been annihilated is not possible, if history is closed ... This aporia makes the theory of communicative action disconsolate.' From this perspective the claim to the universality of fellowship to be found in communicative rationality is diminished by its inability to offer any consolation to the innocent victims of' history.

As we shall shortly see, I do not believe that a thoroughly secular vision of universal fellowship based on communicative rationality is as deeply mired in contradiction as Siebert suggests. Moreover, in recent years Habermas has been seriously engaged in trying to develop a theory (which I am attempting to extend) that makes secular reasoning more open

to a range of religious values and concepts that may provide more existential consolation. However, the complete washing away of the pain and suffering of the unjustly victimised and annihilated in the direct sense that history can be reopened and consolation delivered is clearly not possible from a secular perspective. The inherent reflexivity and fallibility of the preconditions of communication prevent the deliverance of any 'total' answers that provide perfect consolation. In order to achieve this theologians like Peukart and Siebert have to take a step that is not permissible from within the perspective of communicative rationality.

The way out of this problem for both Peukart and Siebert is the assertion of the reality of God and the resurrection of Jesus. For Peukart 'God is affirmed for the one praying as the reality who saves those who are threatened with death because of their attempts to live a just life, the reality that saves those who cry for help from these threats.' (1984: 219) For Siebert 'Jesus has provoked and opened up the possibility of asserting God to be the saving actor even in the case of his own death. God has rescued the just ... in his [Jesus MB] destruction on the cross in the form of resurrection.' (1985: 341) Through God and the resurrection not only are the innocently annihilated rescued, but the guilt of future generations is redeemed because their happiness is no longer dependent upon the suffering of their ancestors. This is a very neat theological solution to the problem, but is premised on a return to metaphysical speculation, revelatory intuition and a failure to ground statements on evidence. Having originated their theoretical speculations from within the discourse of communicative rationality they make a final step that takes them completely outside of it. They break away from the concept of an immanent transcendental that operates within communicative action towards an external transcendent that is no longer confined by the parameters of communicative rationality. As Habermas describes it, the move made by these theologians takes us from an *internal transcendence that binds us, back to an external, higher-level subjective transcendence that delivers us back in to bondage.*

Simpson (1992) also provides a telling critique of Peukart's problem from the perspective of Peukart's own commitment to communicative rationality. The problem of the innocently annihilated is not just a matter of the lack of consolation for their suffering but, more significantly, as with all those who are dead, the main issue is how can we conceive of them as being partners in the universal fellowship of communication if history is closed? So, whilst a resurrection might relieve them of an injustice to what are they resurrected? If the point of Peukart's and Siebert's theological escape from the paradox they identify within the theory of

universal fellowship is to re-establish that fellowship, then the implicit retreat to a notion of heaven or paradise will not succeed in this task. This is because, as Simpson identifies, they pay insufficient attention to the way communicative rationality and discourse works. For anyone to belong to the universal fellowship of communication without oppressing others in the process, they are obliged to comply with the conditions of discourse, that is, bringing forth arguments, listening to responses and altering behaviour as a result of the uncoerced force of the better argument. 'Peukart evades a theological analysis of this extreme tension between the ever-renewed testing of the ideal speech situation and the everlasting impurity in the pragmatics of speech, and he does so via a kind of hypo-acceleration to "another dimension". (Simpson: 183) In other words the theological escape route is insufficiently connected to the communicative rationality premise upon which it is supposedly grounded. The 'final' court room that resurrection provides for the unjustly annihilated would (if it is to be compliant with the universal features of communication) still be characterised by the need for critique, justification, intersubjective procedures and personal reflexivity. Anamnestic solidarity cannot be severed from these communicative preconditions. Those resurrected would still have an all too human subjectivity. If this was not the case their autonomy would be in bondage to the God that saved them. This returns us to the idea of communicative rationality as 'God' transformed into a secular sacred. 'Since communicative argumentation is the basic constituting component of community, subjectivity, and history, then it must be shown how God's very self is intimately involved in the structures and dynamics of communicative rationality as communicative argumentation.' (Simpson: 32)

Not all theologians followed the path of Peukart. Glebe-Möller (1987) took the secular route whereby the theistic concerns with a transcendental God are translated into 'designations for norms – the notably last and highest norms' that are 'acceptable to everyone who enters into a dominance-free discussion'. (111) Such norms are guaranteed by their universality and not by theism. But this universality needs support and protection from at least two directions. Firstly, the essential features of communication (characterised by the need to recognise and defend the 'other' in communication from humiliation and destruction) need to receive the highest public recognition possible such that their secular sacred status commands respect. Secondly, these tenets of the secular sacred need reinforcement from reflexive myths that make them attractive and meaningful.

I now want to address some of the questions raised by Peukart and Siebert in an attempt to show that a secular interpretation of the religious concept of anamnesis can provide consolation, hope and a source of meaning without the need to resort to theological solutions. This will involve considering:

- the positive transformation, by successors, of negative causation inherited from predecessors
- a muted ‘triumph of the innocent’
- the validation of the anticipatory hope of predecessors
- the creation of hope for the living
- a source of meaning and authenticity in life
- how to relate to perpetrators of evil acts.

Although the past is closed in the material sense and although death is final, it is not a trivial observation to note that the past still moves in present time. Just as all things material are inherited from cosmic stardust, so is it true that the living carry within them the shadow of their phylogenetic history. The actions of forebears carry a causal effect on successors. This is true not just on the grand scale of collective actions, but also operates at the level of families and individuals. As individuals, we not only inherit a genetic destiny from our parents, we are also the receivers of a specific set of psychological and emotional traits. We receive, collectively and individually, a complex and sometimes overdetermined set of causal influences that can have a serious impact on us for the duration of our lives. Whilst much of this is positive, inevitably we are more concerned with our negative inheritance. Like bad karma, the actions of our ancestors continue to dwell within us and exert a negative causality on our actions and destiny. With our conception of anamnestic solidarity there is a counterbalance to the ingrained forward-looking obsession of Western culture. Anamnesis enables us to improve our chances for truth, justice and authenticity by undoing, transforming and dissipating the negative causality we inherit. By ‘negative’ I do not, in this context, just mean reducing current suffering for our own benefit, rather there is a sense of fulfilling our universal fellowship by acknowledging and receiving the suffering of our ancestors and turning this negative causality into a positive. Being aware of our own suffering and acting to relieve it is not only an aid to our successors but is also, in some sense, *redeems the suffering of our predecessors*.

When the communion of saints is interpreted not moralistically - as often enough has happened - but as remembering solidarity, there emerges also a subversive meaning. It means that those who now live do not resign themselves to suffering but acknowledge the claims of those who have suffered and who died in suffering. They are allowed to be heard in the universal communicative fellowship, and they obligate us now and for all time to work to overthrow the cause of suffering: humans oppressing other humans.' (Glebe-Möller 1987: 73)

It is important to keep in mind that, not only for our own benefit, but also to fulfil that potential within the lives of our ancestors which was repressed or annihilated, the toxicity of history can be ameliorated and, in time, neutralised. Psychotherapy, at the level of the individual, acts as an example of this kind of process. Through our personal psychological development we can diminish and come to terms with the negative causation or karma we inherit. Even at the level of everyday interaction acts of kindness and grace, however small, painlessly 'eat up' or absorb anger, fear and anxiety. Change is possible. This gives us some kind of answer to Peukart's worry that no generation of successors in the future could ever be happy because they would never be able to overcome the guilt they would feel as a result of their awareness of the fact that their current happiness was historically based on the suffering of predecessors. Not only is the total supersession of guilt an impossible idealisation, it also fails to recognise that the experience of some guilt is a universal moral necessity derived from its role as an inhibitor of immoral actions. In the same vein, Glebe-Möller makes the important point that rather than being preoccupied with some theological end-point of history, the presence of this inherited guilt is not something that needs to weigh us down, rather the consciousness of this guilt can be something positive - 'something that spurs us to fight against the conditions that have produced the guilt. That can happen when we hold fast to our solidarity with all who have suffered and died, now and before.' (1987: 112)

In what way can we tease-out of the concept of anamnesis a way of having some understanding that there can be, in some form, a 'triumph of the innocent' after their death? If we are to remain within a secular framework, this cannot take the form of a corporeal resurrection, neither can it take residence in the notion of a paradise after death.

Along with Benjamin (1992), is there a way that we can think of the 'reopening' of history as a form of remembering the suffering of predecessors (particularly those who fought for

universal fellowship)? I think so because through this remembrance we ‘bring to life’, by means of drawing to our concentrated attention, the thoughts and feelings of despair and suffering felt by those who had died with this kind of experience. This cannot directly improve the pain suffered by the dead (although, as we shall see, this can be the case if those who suffer anticipate future remembrance) because the past is materially closed, but symbolically, through anamnesis, there is a way in which the remembrance of those who suffered fulfils the purpose the deceased intended in their struggle to survive. *Through suffering and memory of suffering, ancestors and successors express their common bond of universal fellowship.*

Clearly this form of remembering cannot be limited to national celebrations of remembrance for those killed in military actions, nor can it be the idle recollections of everyday life. To reach into the experience of our ancestors we require the considered application of ever improving hermeneutic acts of interpretation and understanding. In one sense this is what the scholars of history do all the time, but the framework of anamnesis gives this process a more secular-theological shape by directly linking our imagination and feelings into a fellowship with our ancestors. This involves hearing the suffering; receiving and accepting it; feeling it and trying to understand it. Once this has taken place we are then able to add a layer of meaning that connects us with our ancestors. That our predecessors experienced pain as a result of trying to establish a universal fellowship is partially redeemed by our reception and recognition of this act which, by this fact, expresses our loyalty to them and to ourselves in our mutual bond of fellowship. Suffering received with unflinching love may in some way be quenched. This process also reaches out towards the future. We have a similar loyalty and bond with those who inherit our legacy. Today, perhaps the clearest breach of the bond to our children is our failure to adequately respond to the environmental decline of our planet.

Anamnesis acts at the level of the individual as well as the collective. Acts of hermeneutic empathy are not reserved for our innocently annihilated ancestors operating at the level of large-scale historical change, but are equally relevant between friends and within families. Nor is anamnesis limited to people who have been oppressed or annihilated. I see the possibility of gaining a considerable benefit from developing a secular version of ancestral rituals whereby family members and friends consciously develop and bring to everyday awareness a more considered and vibrant anamnestic relationship with deceased partners and loved ones. Through an empathic and continuous relationship with such intimate ancestors

we not only keep 'alive' our bonds of affection and love, we can also, as it were, complete the unfulfilled aspects of our ancestors journey through life. On the one hand, the successors can celebrate the achievements of the deceased, on the other hand, they can also reach new levels of understanding regarding their ancestors failure to meet the expectations they had set for themselves and which we, as their successors, also set for them. By committing ourselves to the considerable effort of imaginatively reconstructing and understanding the reasons why our intimate ancestors have disappointed us, we not only release ourselves from the burden of this kind of causality of fate, we also develop the possibility of understanding them in a more coherent and rounded way than they were able to do for themselves. *Through this act of reconstructive remembrance we complete them.*

Terms like 'imagination' and 'reconstruction' are important. Anamnesis is not a simple act of remembrance as if history was composed of a series of facts to be discovered and collected. It is also a reconstructive remembrance from the point of view of maintaining and celebrating the bond of human fellowship that spans generations. 'Memory tempers imagination with the memory of injustice and suffering, militating against any illusion of impunity. Imagination tempers memory with the freedom to grow, to become co-creative ... Both together indicate the possibility of a radical intersubjectivity that can and does redeem.' (Garrigan 2004: 207). This kind of active remembrance not only enables a reconstruction and a completion of the 'failures' of our predecessors, it can also act as the living embodiment through time of the completion and success of the last prayers and despairing hopes of all those who suffered and died as a result of domination and oppression as well as those who died resisting it. Through anamnesis and also through our efforts to change society in ways that will prevent such suffering in the future, we *validate and fulfil the forlorn hopes of those who have lived and died before us.*

So far we have concentrated on the purpose of anamnesis with regard to the impact of the remembrance of ancestors on the living successors. However, it is not difficult to see how anamnesis can be an active influence on the behaviour of a living person in relation to how their successors will actively remember them after their death. That is, I can live my life in such a way that it *anticipates that my successors* (both individually and collectively) *will engage in acts of anamnestic remembrance for me.* If I do it for my ancestors, then surely my successors will do the same for me. This rationally grounded expectation would be enormously strengthened if the practice of anamnesis became recognized as a valid

secularisation of an essential religious concept. If, therefore, anamnesis became a secular sacred practice that was reinforced by being embedded in institutional practices and ritual procedures that operated at both the cultural and intimate levels, then we could live a life in the rational expectation that our successors would do their best to remedy the negative impact of our legacy through practical remedial actions and that they would also seek to understand our personal and ethical shortfalls through the hermeneutic act of imaginatively remembering us with a view to offering redemption and forgiveness for such inadequacies. By so doing they would maintain our anamnestic solidarity with them in the universal fellowship of humankind. We have, therefore, a *sound and rational basis for believing in the value and agency of hope*.

Anamnesis, situated in the context of communicative rationality and universal fellowship, can provide us with a powerful source of meaning and authenticity in life. The strong inter-generational connection that goes backwards and forwards in time provides not only a source of hope, but this deep human relationship in the face of injustice and despair provides a richly-textured *source of meaning and moral motivation as well as consolation*. Neiman correctly warns us that it is a mistake to suggest that the extra meaning to life that religion endows on its followers should be dismissed as something that simply makes life easier and more passive for them. 'Religion doesn't only make people passive, by shouldering some of the burdens of decision; it makes them feel more active as well. The window of transcendence it opens onto the everyday is an injection of spirit into a world of sluggish torpor.' What is true for religion is equally so for the secular counterpart that I am promoting. Living a life that is informed by anamnesis provides us with a greater understanding of our ancestors and enables us to relate to them in a mode of forgiveness. Through living an authentic life we are able to reduce the causality of fate during our lifetime. Through our anamnestic connection with our successors we can have *legitimate hope in their redemptive relationship towards us*.

How do we come to an understanding, from the anamnestic point of view, of those who have caused the pain, suffering and death of the innocent? From the perspective of some religions these perpetrators can be subject to eternal damnation. Damned for breaking the fellowship of the Kingdom of God. From the perspective of the secular sacred we do not have the divine privilege of judging these people to be damned. If all humans are part of the universal fellowship the immanent transcendental nature of this fellowship precludes anyone from

exclusion. Membership is neither an elective or a soteriological process, it is an inherent feature of being human. This, of course, does not preclude the possibility that membership of the fellowship can be subjected to penalties and restrictions against those who damage it. Nevertheless, for the perpetrators of violence, domination and oppression who are still alive then redemption from their 'sin' of transgressing the secular sacred is possible. The first step towards this would be for the perpetrator to be psychologically open enough to feel guilt and shame. This is primarily a therapeutic process of sensitising the perpetrator to the horror of his or her actions. Once the perpetrator feels guilt it becomes possible to atone for the sin that has been committed through sacrifice or compensating actions. Positive acts to undo the negative causality set in motion by the perpetrator's crimes would be an appropriate form of expiation. Redemption ensues when the perpetrator's actions are rewarded by the forgiveness offered by other people thereby enabling re-entry into 'full' membership of the fellowship. The process of guilt formation, punishment, sacrifice, compensating action and expiation by the perpetrator is matched by the process of understanding, compassion, acceptance, love and forgiveness by the rest of society. *Redemption is not a matter of divine grace but is a process of psychological transformation.*

But what about those perpetrators who die without completing this psychological transition? Is there some secular purgatory or her hell awaiting them? No, as before, the dead remain dead. So any sense of a 'redemption' after death does not take the form of some spiritual resurrection, but is rather an anamnestic metaphor. The unredeemed (in their lifetime) transgressors of the universal fellowship are, as already mentioned, our companions across space and time. I suggest, therefore, that a secularised concept of anamnesis enables us to maintain a historical relationship with such transgressors and, just as with the living, we should continue with the process of hermeneutic understanding through history such that our increasing depth of understanding can enhance our compassion not only for the victim of historical crimes but also for the perpetrators. The greater the crime the more difficult the compassion and the longer it may take for successors to achieve it. We are all who and what we are as a result of the sum total of all our collective and individual history. A client in psychotherapy gains greater autonomy and authenticity not from denying or rejecting his or her shadow, but from understanding it and reintegrating it through acceptance. Anamnesis may well enable us to offer such redemptive reintegration to the shadow side of our collective history.

If we can see the value in translating concepts like anamnesis from religion then I see no reason not to consider a similar translation of related religious rituals. Indeed, if anamnesis, as a social practice is to be effective, it will need to be embodied in individual and collective ritual practices.

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