Loving and forgetting: moments of inarticulacy in tribal India*

Piers Vitebsky *University of Cambridge*

Young Sora in Orissa, India, are 'forgetting' their dead. Where the older generation used shamans in trance to negotiate with ancestors in elaborate dialogues, their newly Baptist children refuse to talk to the dead or feed them, leaving their parents afraid to die for fear of neglect. Against a background of contemporary Indian nation-building, this article examines the differing emotional price paid for this disengagement by two young persons whom the author has known since 1975, as one becomes a Baptist and the other a shaman. Their struggles to be or to become a certain kind of person are revealed through recent extraordinary moments, precipitated by the author's presence, when verbal articulacy fails them. Their conflicts between filial attachment and repudiation, or shamanic vocation and recantation, are explored to show how changes in loving and forgetting can be revealed through new but fleeting forms of inarticulacy.

Religious change

Anthropologists sometimes use a moment as a device on which to hang an analysis. A man in a ritual rubs his bottom on his nephew (Bateson 1936: 13); the watching ethnographer writes the book *Naven*. The moment works as the foundation of a social analysis because we can take the event as typical – so long as we are not too concerned with change. But the untypical moment can also be revealing, and point to a tectonic shift in the relationship between a person's past and his or her future. In the current worldwide wave of conversions from local religions to global religions such as evangelical Christianity (Coleman 2000; Engelke & Tomlinson 2006; Robbins 2007), such moments can be sometimes poignant, sometimes catastrophic: Michelle Rosaldo's Christianized Ilongot friends cry when they hear her tape of their old headhunting song (Rosaldo 1980: 57-9), while Donald Tuzin's Ilahit expose their secret men's cult as a fraud one Sunday morning in church when he writes after many years to say he is coming back to visit (Tuzin 1997: 1ff.).

One previous Henry Myers Lecture (Fortes 1961) was entitled simply and confidently 'Pietas in ancestor worship'. It would be hard to be so uncomplicated about parents and children today. In a world dominated by anxieties about youth alienation, refugees, genocide, ecocide, and other forms of disconnection, annihilation, and erasure, we live with elaborate discourses about the fragility of continuity. More than just a 'moral

---

* The Henry Myers Lecture 2006

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.) **14**, *243-261*

practice' (Lambek 1996), remembering can become a moral imperative, while forgetting becomes a moral failure (cf. Connerton 2008).

The many works on 'memory' by psychologists and philosophers (e.g. Casey 2000; Hacking 1995) generally speak little about forgetting (apart from the clinical concept of amnesia). In anthropology, too, remembering has often been 'privileged over forgetting, and retention and stability are privileged over loss and change' (Cole 1998: 626), but authors have also pointed to the integral role of forgetting in social remembering (e.g. Battaglia 1993; Carsten 1996). Cole identifies, among several other types, 'voluntary remembering' (1996: 616), 'deliberate forgetting' (1996: 621), and bad memories which people would 'prefer to forget' (1996: 626).

It is this entwinement of remembering and forgetting which moulds relatedness (Carsten 2007) between persons over time. I shall explore the shifting nature of relatedness, and the emotional ambivalences and dilemmas which this provokes, when a community drastically changes the way the dead are forgotten.

The Sora are an aboriginal 'tribe' in Orissa, India. For centuries they have lived on the margin of the Hindu world with their own shamanistic 'ancestor worship' (Vitebsky 1993). Though their dialogues with the dead are uniquely elaborate, in other respects they form part of a wider zone in Central India of highland 'tribal' cultures which stand in contrast to the caste communities of the lowlands (Elwin 1964; Pfeffer 1997).

However, younger Sora are abandoning their parents' and grandparents' religion for Baptist Christianity.[1] I shall look at two moments in the adult lives of Paranto and Taranti (both pseudonyms), whom I have known since they were young in the mid-1970s. Paranto, a little boy, grew up to become a Baptist; Taranti, a teenage girl, became a shaman. Their acts of remembering and forgetting reveal a struggle to be a certain kind of person, who has certain kinds of emotional attachments. For Paranto, the struggle is to become a different person; for Taranti, it is to remain the same. Whichever turns their struggles take, and whatever the social implications, each must pay a price psychically.

Paranto was the son of my first Sora friend and host. When I eventually moved out of their hut in 1976 to set up a hut of my own, my friend gave me Paranto as a sort of adopted son to keep me company in my new home.

In 1992, I returned to Soraland after many years' absence. In the meantime, Paranto's father had died. I had not known, and so had not sent a sacrificial buffalo for him to eat in the Underworld. But even if I had sent a buffalo, he would not have received it, since his son Paranto – like most of his generation – had become a Baptist. Paranto was now a pillar of the church with children of his own. He had not cremated his father, not planted a megalithic memorial stone, and not engaged him in dialogue through the mouth of a shaman in trance. Though his father had been a shamanist, Paranto had given him a Christian burial.

In the last few minutes before leaving, I found myself alone with Paranto in his father's darkened hut where we had all lived together so many years ago. I asked him, 'Where do you think your father is now?'

'He may be up in the sky with Jesus,' he replied, 'or he may be down in the Underworld with our ancestors. How can we know? We don't talk to them any more'.

Suddenly, and quite unexpectedly, he flung his arms around my shoulder and started crying. In the paired phrasing of traditional Sora song, he sobbed,

You're going to a far place	*You're going to a distant place*
You're going where I can't feed you rice	*You're going where I can't pour you water*

This was the format and the sentiment of the old shamanist funeral lament, which Paranto had not uttered when his father died. Yet something about that moment made it possible for him to utter those words now – maybe even made it necessary. Years ago I had gone away, he assumed never to return. Now, after his father's death, I had reappeared and was about to go away again – perhaps forever. In my departure, was his father dying for a second time?

Then the moment was over. A crowd of friends and relatives burst into the hut to wave me off, including Paranto's own little boy, who, instead of receiving his grandfather's name according to the old custom, was called Livingstone.

Loving and forgetting in Sora shamanism

Religious change must be one of the major processes of our species. It is closely linked with culture contact, and in recent millennia with the spread of empires. History contains many accounts of rapid conversions from local beliefs to the religions of powerful outsiders. My moment with Paranto reveals the pain and dislocation which these simple stories mask. Paranto loved his father, but also has to forget him, in a sense which I shall explore gradually. I understand his sudden, uncontrolled, and incomplete fragment of mourning behaviour as a sign of the difficulty he has in accomplishing this under the transition from a shamanism to a Christianity.

In any community, remembering the dead is filtered through techniques of memorializing, sometimes at the behest of the dead themselves. These techniques often focus on material substitutes for the absent person (Volkan 1981). Their design and their very materiality seem intended to defy forgetting by solidifying the deceased, as if they have not gone and our relationship with them has not been changed by their departure. Though these objects help us remember, they also help us forget, by selectively controlling *how* we remember and forget. Yet ultimately even the most interactive object is relatively passive: it may have agency (Gell 1999: 164-6), but how far can it argue, negotiate, or be persuaded to change its mind?

The Sora shamanist answer is to bypass material representation very quickly. Cremation immediately reduces the body to ashes. An upright memorial stone is planted alongside the many dozens representing previous members of the lineage, and women may fall lamenting upon the stone as if actually embracing the deceased. But within weeks, people no longer remember which stone is whose. It is as if the stones were no more than the deliberately ephemeral *malangan* funeral sculptures of New Ireland (Küchler 1987). After the big day, the stone is no longer a focus of mourning and will never again receive any ritual or emotional attention. Nor will it ask for it: though the dead frequently demand our involvement, they do not do this though their memorial stones. Instead, a dead person will repeatedly borrow the bodies and voices of various shamans in trance, in order to speak in dialogues with the living.

This dialogic approach is reflected in the Sora vocabulary for remembering a dead person. The word most used is not a verb of cognitive remembering (*ayîm*), but the verb *olong*, meaning 'greet, engage, talk to'. I translated Paranto's remark above as 'We don't talk to them any more', but what he actually said was, 'We don't *olong* them any more'. The dead are remembered, and forgotten, in terms of your verbal encounters with them. The drama of *olong*'ing them (and feeding them with alcohol, tobacco, and animal blood) is framed by an initial summoning (*guding*, 'pull by voice') and a closing dismissal (*omda*, 'let go, release, send away'). So the process of remembering and forgetting the dead is cast in a relational vocabulary of engagement and disengagement. At each ritual, the dead are summoned, *olong*'d, and dismissed. But they will be back. You will talk to various line-ups of the same dead people again and again – when they make you ill, at the funeral of a patrilineage member or affine, or when they call you over to talk at someone else's ritual. What you remember is not simply a person, but a relationship. This relationship is still evolving, because you and all the living and dead people you know are still evolving, by means of everyone's interaction with each other.

This involvement and interaction are what I shall call 'loving' (much as Lambek calls 'caring' 'the modality not just of kinship or memory but of engagement in the world', 2007: 238, cf. 220). This is of course not the romantic attachment of lovers, but the domain of attachment and loss in the context of mortality. Some anthropologists argue for a culture's 'key emotions', such as the passion, *liget*, of Rosaldo's Ilongot (Rosaldo 1980). Levy (1984) calls these 'hypercognized' emotions. For the Sora, it is not that particular emotions are hypercognized, but that funeral dialogues provide an arena for the elaboration of emotionality as such; they are 'highly "concentrated" communicative events', as Besnier (1995: 111) characterizes the new experience – introduced with mission literacy – of letter-writing on Nukulaelae in Polynesia. This kind of loving is not so much an emotion in itself, as the enabler for a gamut of feelings which may include anger, resentment, and guilt as much as tenderness – a notion of loving as complex as anything in psychoanalysis.[2]

A key term here is *sinta*, a noun and verb which refer to the experience of feeling sorry for or missing someone. This word implies a separation, but also points to the possibility, and risk, of a mutual identification: the sorrow you feel for your dead carries the risk of sharing the pain of their illness and death, and of being infected by these. When you fall ill, this is because the attachment between you and a dead person whom you love (or who loves you) leads that person to start absorbing your soul, causing identical symptoms in you. As a substitute for your own soul, you offer them the soul of a sacrificial animal. If they accept the substitute, you recover; if not, you die from a repetition of their illness, and your identity becomes partially absorbed into theirs.

Whether for the stages of a funeral or to cure a sick patient, the basic format of Sora ritual is for a shaman (usually female) to sit down and enter trance. Her soul leaves her body and sets out on a journey to the Underworld, from where she sends up a succession of dead people to speak through her mouth and argue or negotiate with a crowd of the living. These dialogues are at their most intense when the patient's main attacker, or at funerals the deceased, turns up. In this typical example (simplified from Vitebsky 1993: 3-4, 171-2), a little girl has just died and her mother is too overcome with grief to talk, so that the girl is *olong*'d by her aunt. The girl's dual nature as both innocent victim and potential aggressor is clearly revealed. She starts by prompting feelings of guilt and then develops this into an explicit threat of repeated illness:

Dead Girl:	*(arriving from the Underworld, faintly)* Mummy, where are my gold nose-rings?
Living Aunt:	They must have burned up in the pyre, darling, we looked but couldn't find them.
Girl:	*(petulantly)* Why don't you show me my nose-rings?
Aunt:	They were so tiny. If I'd found them of course I'd show them to you. Oh my love, my darling, don't cause your own illness in others. Can you say that your mother and father didn't do enough sacrifices for you? They didn't turn their backs or refuse to

	help you, did they? Think of all those pigs they offered, all those chickens, goats, buffaloes, my lovely child ...
Girl:	*(addressing her silent mother, and crying)* Mummy, you were horrid to me, you scolded me, you called me Scar-Girl, you called me Leper-Girl, you said, 'You're a big girl now, why should I feed you when you sit around doing nothing?'
Aunt:	She didn't mean it, she couldn't help saying it. You were growing up and there were such a lot of chores to do.
Girl:	*(sulkily)* I want my necklaces. *(unreasonable childish tone)* Why can't I have my nose-rings? I have to go digging, shovelling and levelling fields in the Underworld, all without my nose-rings. I came out in scars all over, my fingers started dropping off. That illness was passed on to me, that's how I got ill.
Aunt:	But don't you pass it on, don't you give it to your mother and little sisters!
Girl:	If I grab them I grab them, if I touch them I touch them, if I pass it on I pass it on: that's how it goes.
Aunt:	Your cough, your choking, your scars, your wounds, don't pass them on!
Girl:	*(calling back as she returns to the Underworld)* My Mummy doesn't care enough about me!

Even though these are 'highly "concentrated" communicative events', the vocabulary and syntax are exactly the same as in conversations where all speakers are living, so that one could not work out from the text or the intonation alone who is alive and who is dead (though one can more openly say hurtful things which were repressed when all speakers were alive). Shamanic Sora culture is dedicated to verbal articulacy, and especially to the ability to argue one's own emotional position.[3] Indeed, the girl's emotional demands show that this is a highly prescriptive system, enforced through the shamans if not actually by them. All sides have to talk like this, because this just is how one talks.

The dead crave acknowledgement, and by making you ill they keep tugging to attract your attention. In dialogues, they contact you from around the cosmos to tell you their current location (which is linked to a classification of spirits and their illnesses); their corresponding emotional state; their intentions towards you, such as the little girl's threat to pass on her leprosy; and their demands. When a dead person makes you ill, this may be from a mixture of tenderness and aggression. But whatever motives a divination throws up, you are being brought into a shared, parallel state with the dead by sharing the first stages of their terminal illness. To regulate this, you may enjoy sharing good memories, but you also defend yourself against their envy and reproaches. Any over-identification with the dead must be broken, in order to make the living person separate once again. And so in every ritual the summoning, *olong*'ing, and feeding of the dead is closed off by *omda*'ing (dismissing) them again.

This vocabulary of engagement does not in itself contain any reference to time. Rather, it provides a framework for an integrated dialectic between remembering and forgetting. Sora dialogue has pace built into it, through what I have elsewhere called successive stages of emotional tone (Vitebsky 1993: 176-9). It is the dead person's early appearances that are most painful, as the shaman reproduces their speech habits and gestures with uncanny realism. The little girl responds to the mood of her mother by accusing her in words which echo what we might call the mother's own self-reproach: If only I'd realized how ill you were, if only I'd been kinder ...

This distress among the living is matched by the girl's inclination to pass on her illness to her family, causing further deaths. She is begged by her aunt not to perpetuate her own suffering in the lives of others. The girl's urge to transmit her illness is not a sign of her malevolence (indeed, she is childishly innocent). Rather, as the girl herself says, this is what recently dead people do: every illness or death is caused by someone close who previously suffered from the same condition. The mourners' fresh feeling of *sinta* and *abasuyîm* (pity or sympathy: literally 'a feeling which causes illness') makes them susceptible to her illness in turn.

But this is a dialectic of resolution. The cruel realism of the early dialogues reflects this shared vulnerability, but also opens up a possibility for redemption. In repeated dialogues over the following months and years, living and dead speakers will persuade, cajole, tease, remind, and deceive in their attempts to uncover each other's state of mind – and to change it. As ambivalences and resentments between them are negotiated, the dead are progressively liberated from the pain of their death, just as the living are freed from grief and guilt.

So this particular girl will gradually acknowledge that her family did their best to save her, and will allow the living to coax her away from the bad company of other leprosy victims and into the good company of her lineage ancestors, whose names are carefully chanted at each stage of her funeral.[4] She will gradually turn into an ancestor herself, and her influence on her family will become benign and her dialogues brief and casual. Instead of causing illness, she will start passing her soul-force into their crops and into every mouthful they consume – for this is a cyclical cosmos, and when the grief is exhausted, the dead are also the source of new life (we shall see that this completion of the cycle is denied in Baptist rhetoric, which sees only the spirits' demands and coercions).

The process of mourning will be complete when the dead girl gives her name to a new baby in the family. The naming ceremony will repeat the tunes and drumbeats of the funeral, but with a striking emotional transformation: at the centre of the stomping dancers, amid the shrieks of laughter and bawdy horseplay, there will be nobody weeping. Even further into the future, when this process is complete, this little girl will die a second time in the Underworld and turn into a butterfly. Butterflies are the lonely residue of persons, beyond the reach of dialogue; they are people who do not quite cease to exist, but with whom there is nothing left to be said. Since there is no one left alive to remember them, they are memories without rememberers (Vitebsky 1993: 231-5).

Thus, loving time follows the same trajectory as cosmic time, and both are experienced and managed through the articulacy of dialogues between the living and the dead. A proper ancestor is a person who has moved beyond the ambivalent, conflicted love of the recently dead to a love which is purely nurturing, while a butterfly is a former ancestor who has been dead for so long that he or she has moved beyond relationality altogether.

Sora Baptist Christianity

Canadian Baptist missionaries established a church in the Hindu frontier town of Parlakimidi (Parklakhemundi) in 1909, later building a mission bungalow and small hospital well up into the Sora hills. By the 1940s, they were already intervening against outside castes of moneylenders and their collaborators among the Sora headmen.

When I arrived in the 1970s, the villages around the bungalow were already largely Baptist and I had to move several miles away in order to surround myself with shamans and their clients. But in my fascination with this shamanic world, I seriously underestimated the scale or speed of Christian conversion in tribal areas – or of the Hindu backlash nationwide. Soon after I arrived, the authorities chased the last foreign missionaries out of Soraland, as from many other tribal areas. However, much Bible translation had already been accomplished, and the work of the departed missionaries was taken up with added zeal by literate Sora pastors, whose hierarchical power structure has now grown to match any branch of the Indian administration.

The government now embarked on a massive programme of 'development', reaching into the country's internal tribal frontier in a complete reversal of the protectionist, isolationist approach inherited from the British. In Soraland a few main paths were surfaced for jeeps during the 1980s and 1990s. Since around 2000 a motorable road and primary schoolhouse have reached even the smallest mountain village, drawing every Sora child into the curriculum and flooding the area with huge sums of construction cash, much of it captured, not by castes of moneylenders, but by young Sora men.

Throughout India since the early 1990s, the streams of nation-building and Hindu religious fundamentalism have flowed closer together (e.g. Hansen 2001). Hindu activists argue that 'tribes' like the Sora were always really Hindu underneath (a debate that dates back to colonial times, Guha 1999: 157-60); and that, rather than trying to convert the tribals to Hinduism, they are merely reminding them of their true (but forgotten) identity. However this may be, Sora are being drawn into one of two religious styles which both use non-local frames of reference and which between them leave no space for the small-scale shamanist worldview. Instead of engaging with ancestors in the sites they pass every day on their own landscape, Sora in neo-Hindu villages strive to find their place in a nationalist cosmology of ancient epic revival (Sora have now been found in the *Ramayana*), while in the Baptist villages where I have mostly lived they meticulously study the map of ancient Israel.[5]

The Sora old-timers in the 1970s had a different way of dealing with the outside world. They drank, danced, fought, laughed, and huddled under the protection of their shamans' spirit familiars, who were high-caste *kshatriya* Hindus – rajas, policemen, and clerks who could speak Oriya (the dominant regional language) and knew the mysteries of reading and writing. It was these spirits who married Sora shamans in the Underworld, cutting across the shamans' ordinary marriage above ground (to the chagrin of their earthly husbands) and giving them the power to go into trance. They even begat spirit children by their shamans. These children were themselves high-caste Hindus, who would initiate a shaman's successor by marrying her in turn (Vitebsky 1993: 56-61).

These high-status familiar spirits were a compensation for a distressing contempt for tribals in ordinary life. In seeking a place in the outer world, young Baptists turn this contempt inwards onto their parents; and my involvement with the old religion, my jungly ways, and my earthy language sometimes make me feel I am included, despite my white race. The next generation become teachers and market traders, show up in government offices with sleeked-down hair, white shirts, shoes, and long trousers, and are offered a chair. Their parents' economy, burning out their bodies on jagged mountainsides to raise scanty Neolithic crops and dying at 40; their hardened feet cracked from clambering barefoot over abrasive rocks; their women's bare breasts and their men's lanky shanks exposed through tattered loincloths as they stand obsequiously seeking an audience with disdainful officials; their awe at the snatches of garbled Oriya uttered by their shamans' spirit husbands – to their children who write Oriya at school, wear smart clothes, and fix their eye on government jobs, all these can only appear pathetic.

The new religion introduces new habits of body and voice. In church, men sit cross-legged on the right while women sit on the left, knees bent to one side and newly adopted saris drawn over their heads. The women do not cuddle or sprawl affectionately across each other, but avoid contact even among themselves; their small children are not bounced up and down on an adult's waist in a throbbing crowd of male and female dancers, but are drawn into their mothers' subdued demeanour.[6] The prayer, the hymn, and the sermon amount to a new kind of performance in which one does not speak, but is spoken to. Instead of squatting on the floor in dialogue with the dead through a female shaman, one is subjected to monologic teachings and exhortations by male pastors from a platform above one's head. Their speech is uttered in a new, haranguing intonation, sometimes mediated through loudspeakers – and offers no right of reply.

Instead of a series of harrowing but ultimately therapeutic conversations with his father, Paranto was offered a pastor's monologue at the graveside. Now there is a new reason why older Sora are afraid to die. Previously, parents' need to talk was matched by an equal need in their children; now, parents anticipate reaching out for dialogue but getting no response. The parents of Baptists die mute. A person's name, with the date of their birth and death, are scraped into the fresh cement of a Baptist grave and their photo is often pinned up in the house. These customs make use of newly available technologies and help to make the Sora more like other Indians; but I cannot help feeling that they also rely on the materiality and the personalization of the cement inscription and the photo to flow into a vacuum left by the disappearance of dialogue.

Words of disengagement are no longer part of an evolutionary process of transforming and redeeming the dead, but are used to repudiate them, as in this hymn which tendentiously links moral reform to letting go (*omda*) and giving up (*kadab*) former habits which link the living to them:[7]

alin ja kadabtai *aban ja kadabtai*
pogan ja kadabtai *aban ja kadabtai*

koran ja kadabtai *idal ja kadabtai*
kinsa ja kadabtai *idal ja kadabtai*

gatarsin goiberan *omdale sidba*
guaren singkuden *omdale sidba*

nami sering nami sering *Kristun a tangoren ñatenai*
nami sering nami sering *Kristun a sa'kai sa'kai'tai*
nami sering nami sering *Kristun a roi'tad gantenai*

I give up wine I give up liquor
I give up tobacco I give up liquor

I give up anger I give up envy
I give up pride I give up envy

horseplay and joking – abandon them! (literally '*omda* completely')
funeral megaliths – abandon them!

from today, from today I walk the Christian path
from today, from today I confess the Christian truth
from today, from today I enter the Christian straightness

A layman's moment of uncertainty (Paranto)

The repudiation of the dead need not happen only between generations, but may happen within a lifespan. Whatever the interplay between God's will and one's own agency (Asad 1996: 271-2), ancestors are deeply implicated in the formation of one's own identity and may resist being neglected. Though Paranto's dilemma is not signalled in his father's own voice, it is betrayed by a conflict within his own conduct. He can still understand my question (Where is your father?) because he was once the kind of person who was constituted by such relationships. His answer starts, 'I don't know *where* he is', which of course also means 'I don't know *how* he is'. It is exactly this which dialogue would have allowed Paranto to monitor, step by step, as he explains when he goes on, 'This is because I don't *olong* him'. Then, transferring his lost engagement with his father on to me, he adds, 'You're going far away, where I can't feed you'. This is also part of the wider relationship of engagement which is summarized in the word *olong*.

I shall argue that this moment reveals Paranto's confusion about how he feels, and about how to express this. Paranto has become uncertain how key emotion words like *sinta* (feeling the sadness of loss) actually work for him. Shamanists and Baptists have flatly opposed views on this. Shamanists say that holding dialogues with the dead 'cools' your feeling of *sinta*, that is, eases and reduces it. This is what Paranto used to say; but in 2005 he told me, 'I don't talk to my father because it would make me feel sad. If we talk again and again, we don't stop *sinta*'ing'. In saying this, he echoes the opinion of most Baptists and ignores the later stages of the funeral sequence in which verbal articulacy harnesses sad and illness-causing memories in order to make one well again. Instead of a technique of evolution, he sees a harmful and unchanging repetition.[8]

Paranto's uncertainty is reflected in a recurrent dream in which he sees his father on a path which leads down an abyss into the Underworld; above him rises a path to a gate in the sky. His father is dancing with his friends, oblivious to his son and out of reach of any *olong*'ing. Paranto is unsure about the value of these paths: one time the upper path seems easier, so he feels his father should avoid the lower one; another time the upper path seems too difficult, so that his father will inevitably go down below. The variants of this dream perhaps blend the shamanist path to the Underworld with the tension between the broad and narrow paths in Matthew 7: 13-14 (cf. Meyer 1999: 31ff.).

Paranto has also become uncertain about how to handle the verbal link between feeling and expressing. In Baptist company, there is no acceptable arena or discourse for expressing uncertainty about his father's state. But though this has become unsayable, it is clearly not unfeelable. In trying to say what he feels, Paranto can only fall back on a severed fragment of a previous cultural repertoire, a genre which still somehow matches the way he feels. The reason he says it to me, I believe, is not only that he unconsciously identifies me with his father, but also that I still share this cultural repertoire.

What is it that Paranto is articulating? What kind of utterance is he making? One kind of answer might be that he is trying to express or convey 'an emotion' which exists within. Anthropologists have explored emotion words such as love, anger, or sadness and debated the universality or incommensurability of their referents (Lutz 1988; Overing & Passes 2000; Trawick 1990). Though these authors develop subtle arguments about the context and deployment of these words, this kind of discourse still ultimately gives us an emotional economy of *nouns* and is constrained by their nouniness: it has difficulty in dealing with emotional changeability, ambiguity, or indeterminacy.

But what if, like the shamanist Sora, we want to focus not on the supposed identity or essence of emotions, but on emotional fluidity and mutability? The pre-Christian Sora language does have nouns for emotions, but (unike the Baptists' calques from New

Testament Greek) these are generally set in constructions which make their reference interpersonal: 'I feel love, anger, etc., *towards you*', or '*because* ...', followed by a predicate which draws the focus away from the noun towards the unfolding relational scenario in which it is enmeshed (Vitebsky 1993: 202-15, 258).

Such emotional utterances are akin to what Reddy (1997), in an article subtitled 'the historical ethnography of emotions', calls 'emotives'. Though he still deals with emotions as nouns, Reddy insists that emotional utterances are not simply descriptive reports of an inner state (1997: 330-1). Rather than constructing emotion, he argues that his emotives channel and orchestrate emotional expression (1997: 329-30). Certain conventional emotives can be 'authorized' in a given community (1997: 333) (and as the Baptist Sora demonstrate in front of our eyes, this authority can be historically terminated). Most interestingly, Reddy offers a theory of emotional change: in the very process of being uttered, such utterances can change our emotions; thus, changes in emotional *utterances* reveal, maybe even cause, *actual* emotional change.

In this, the shamanist Sora have anticipated Reddy, and have perhaps gone further by using emotion verbs far more than nouns. Rather than an *indexing of emotions*, with an implied correspondence between word and inner state, they offer us a *dynamics of emotionality*. This is the point of articulacy: in Sora dialogues, emotion *is* articulation; what one expresses is not single named 'emotions', but emotionality itself. The scenarios through which this flows evolve developmentally (as does the emotionality of all participants), and the entire process is managed, indeed driven, by dialogue. What the actors pass through can be described as a sequence of moods. In Sora, these have few names, and we can best infer them by noticing the shifts of emotional tone which tend to correspond to stages of mourning. Emotional utterances (Reddy 1997) now appear as crystallized moments of emotional intensity (Besnier 1995) in a universe which *runs* on verbal articulacy.

One might expect that the shift to Baptism would introduce new ways of articulating emotionality. But, so far at least, the change seems to have produced a diminution of emotional articulacy; and this is having a knock-on effect, not simply of changing emotionality, but of constraining it. If, on Nukulaelae, mission Christianity has introduced a new medium of emotional communication (through letter-writing), in Soraland it has removed an old one. Certainly, the pastors are fluent in their lengthy sermonizing. But even where it covers topics of emotion, morality, and eschatology, as the ancestors did, Sora Baptism has brought with it a sudden withdrawal of negotiated discourse, and the congregation remains conspicuously passive.[9]

The Baptist removal of the dialogic style of emotional expression means that the muteness surrounding the relationship between living and dead is a new kind of *emotional* muteness. I see Paranto's lament, quickly abandoned, as an attempt at filling in for this. The shamanist Sora lament is not just a rhetorical declamation, but a prelude to a two-sided engagement: it is structured in the expectation of a response, and invites the dead to emerge and enter into dialogue – as they always do. Baptists still sometimes lament, but without expecting a response – a continuity of form, with a change of significance. Paranto had not even done this when his father died; years later, at his unplanned, unritualized moment with me, he achieved a few lines of lamentation, perhaps the first he had ever uttered for his father, but could take them no further. Paranto's lament is an utterance of a very particular sort – an *impeded* utterance, an attempt at articulacy in a context where this is no longer welcome, and in a format which no longer works.

A shaman's moment of deprivation (Taranti)

I should like to look more closely at this sense of impedence by comparing Paranto's blocked lament with two other moments when someone falls into an inarticulacy which is likewise temporary, but this time total.

In December 2005, I walked unannounced into a Sora village where I used to live and went straight to the house of an old shamanist friend who had died. The first person I met was his daughter, a young woman in Baptist sari. She grasped my hand and squeaked uncontrollably for a full minute, before running away and hiding in embarrassment. This untypical behaviour was not the *impeded articulacy* of Paranto, which led to a partial performance of a lament. It was a moment (quite a long one) of complete *inarticulacy*.

I was to see another moment of inarticulacy a few days later. I was not able to stay long in the Sora mountains that year, so I sent messages to invite five shamans (three of them classificatory sisters from the same village) to join me in a cement house in the plains. These women trekked down the mountainside and turned up, one by one, two days later.

Shamans return to their Underworld marriage in nightly dreams and during trance, and can talk elaborately about the journey to the Underworld and their domestic life there with their alternative family of spirit husband and children. They describe this path as exquisitely beautiful, the beauty suffused with the terror of turning into a monkey, leaping down precipices and overcoming poisonous snakes and centipedes on the way. The earlier resentment of this alternative family life by jealous earthly husbands is now compounded by the embarrassment of their Baptist children. Buffeted between disapproval from their living family and torment from their neglected spirits, each of the three sisters dealt with this change in her own way. The boldest, one of the last of the great shamans, commented dismissively, 'My husband says I'm being promiscuous in the Underworld, but that's just his excuse for having affairs with other women up here!' The second, her older sister and one-time teacher, added, 'My husband made me give up, my children went Christian. But my Underworld children made me ill, they drove me crazy. Just a few months ago I started doing trances again, and now I don't get ill any more'. The youngest, Taranti, had given up altogether some years earlier, and was now estranged from her Underworld family.

But this occasion was extraordinary in many ways. The setting was harsh and unsympathetic. Away from the disapproving gaze of their Baptist children (though not from the later jungle telegraph), all five women quite unexpectedly started taking it in turns to go into trance and summon my dead friends to *olong* me. As her two sisters sat down, legs outstretched across the floor in the trancing position and invoking their helper spirits in unison with the distinctive incantation of their shared shamanic lineage, I was puzzled to see Taranti sitting alongside them: having renounced her spirits, could she be planning to take part? She drew her knees up to her chest, as if retreating from the possibility of trance, more than once. But finally she straightened her legs out across the floor and joined their singing:

teetering at the brink   *dizzy at the precipice*
don't glance back   *don't hesitate ...*

The other two shamans entered trance simultaneously, as their souls slipped through the floor and started moving down below the earth. But Taranti was out of practice and her trance had somehow gone wrong. Tears were streaming down her cheeks and she was whimpering wordlessly, at one point sobbing so convulsively that I feared she would choke. The others continued plunging down to the Underworld without her.

During their absence, through the babble of the dead, Taranti finally found her voice, and started to gasp out couplets improvised to the lamentation tune:

don't block my lovely path *don't block my beautiful road*
will I ever see you again, my darling *will I ever reach you again, my sweetheart?*

Held by the framework of this formal lament, Taranti started to recover her composure, but still she sat wretched and silent for a long time while I conversed with my dead friends, until her sisters returned from the Underworld and opened their eyes again. 'My husband down below caresses me with his words', she told me later.

> 'Come to me', he says. But I'm embarrassed because I've neglected him. I've got a baby girl down there, recently I cradled her in a dream, I miss her terribly. But my guides haven't abandoned me! They began to lead me, they didn't scold me. 'Come back to us!' they said, 'It was so beautiful with us!' they said. But I said No. I was frightened, I was ashamed. I just wept.

'If you simply blub, if you simply snivel, your words come out weak, your words come out garbled', commented her sister. 'You should say out loud all the things you did together, you should list all the things you miss'.

Intentional forgetting and the simplification of loving

I shall consider four aspects of these moments with Paranto and Taranti: differing experiential certainties about the reality of the spirit world; changes in loving and forgetting; new forms of inarticulacy; and finally my role in precipitating these moments.

Differing experiential certainties about the reality of the spirit world

Most of the time, as a good Baptist, Paranto convincingly *performs* his denial of the old cosmology – probably he even *feels* it. But his moment with me suggests that this is not a stable position. He sometimes uses the words 'may be' and still has dreams which place his father on alternative, ambiguously evaluated paths.

Paranto has not experienced either the shamanist Underworld or the Christian Heaven for himself. But Taranti knows the path to the Underworld is real. She has been there frequently, and has left half her life behind her there – perhaps the more satisfying half. While Paranto is not sure whether or not he is neglecting his father, Taranti says outright that her husband and child are waiting for her down there and that neglecting them pains her and makes her ashamed. This is not an uncertainty about either cosmology or emotion. The uncertainty which torments Taranti lies elsewhere, in a conflict in her relational obligations: she is denied the right to access this world, deploy it, and live in its terrifying beauty. Her husband and children have compelled her to dismiss the greatest joy from her life.[10]

Changes in loving and forgetting

The Sora show us how the meaning of emotional utterances should be understood against their position in time. Pre-Christian time is the time of bereavement therapy.

This is also the time of lineage continuity and replacement and cannot be hurried. Compared to the Christian transition to heaven, the shamanist ancestors' progress towards butterflyhood is very lingering, that is, attached to those they have left behind. Its measured pace is directly linked to the dynamics of living memory, which is where the loving, remembering, and forgetting goes on.

Baptist salvation time, by contrast, has two contradictory paces. It is simultaneously both instantaneous (the farewell at the burial) and indefinitely postponed (the second coming). Between the day of the funeral and some point in eternity, Sora Baptism omits the middle ground of much living memory. Earlier I suggested that the new materiality of Baptist family photos and inscriptions on graves might be a substitute for lost dialogue; now we can see that this materiality may also help to fill a gap in the timespan of living memory.

As Baptism collapses the slow, therapeutic time of the shamans, forgetting is becoming more urgent, suggesting not that forgetting is a failure of remembering (which would be merely a cognitive lapse) but the reverse: remembering is a failure to forget – a moral lapse under a new ideology which rejects the obligation to *olong*.

Yet *intending* to forget is logically impossible,[11] and in a Sora kind of situation we should rather talk about *desiring* to forget; like remembering, forgetting requires 'effort and energy' (Antze & Lambek 1996: xxix). Much of what I have described might better be called repudiation (after all, the hymn quoted above reminds us in detail what *not* to do). But this repudiation is done with the intention that forgetting will be its by-product. This forgetting is to be based not on ontological negation ('Of course spirits still exist, because they've got names'), but on negative evaluation backed up by determined neglect. If you neglect a spirit just a little but remain susceptible to it, it will come back and make you ill. If you refuse to engage with it altogether, it will eventually give up and go away; part of the attraction of Christianity is that it makes you immune to ancestor-induced illnesses.

The hymn directly reflects this shift: the basic vocabulary of disengagement (*omda*, *kadab*), which was previously used to dismiss a spirit at the end of a ritual *until the next inevitable encounter*, is now used by Baptists to *terminate the relationship altogether*. The poles of this shift resemble Bakhtin's (1984) distinction between unfinalizing and finalizing discourses. For Bakhtin, unfinalizing discourse is endlessly dialogic, not closed off by the voice of an author (in a novel, his special concern), the state (in politics), or, we could add, a single God (in theology). By contrast, finalizing discourse reaches its culmination in monologue (to say nothing of monotheism). Baptists take the shamanist terminology of repeated, temporary, and unfinalizing dismissal (*omda*) and change its usage to make it a finalizing terminology of closure.

Paranto's distress comes from the tension between these old and new usages. By exploring the Sora emphasis on attachment and loss, we realize how closely remembering and forgetting the dead belong to the same field as loving them. Through the sympathy or empathy of shared feelings and states (including sharing their sickness), loving someone who has died makes you more like them – initially. To forget them progressively through a sequence of funeral rites and sacrifices is to undo this resemblance, but the point of this progression is to create an alternative sequential relationship of ancestor and descendant.

So to change your mode of forgetting is also to change your mode of loving. This is not to change the object of your love – Baptist Sora still love their parents – but to change the *way* you love them. Under the new, finalizing form of forgetting, loving is simplified, both cosmologically and emotionally. People who fail to forget persist in loving in a way which is not only more complicated but is also becoming obsolete. Remembering the dead now appears as remembering them too much and too elaborately. Taranti's cry 'When will I see you?', like Paranto's sob 'You're going where I can't feed you', is cast in a previous format for expressing attachment and loss. The loss is double, since what has been lost is also a way of expressing loss.

New forms of inarticulacy

These Sora moments are not meant to be wordless; they are moments when conspicuous articulation is required, but fails. There are degrees to this failure. Paranto's impeded utterance could not be answered by dialogue. At that moment his longing for a response was particularly exposed, and I think my role as addressee and embracee was to provide at least a hint of this response.

But Taranti's moment of inarticulacy is an attempt at utterance that is so impeded that it is no utterance at all. Like the girl who squeaks, she is trying to express a feeling for which she has no words. But whereas that girl is a mere layperson, Taranti's moment of inarticulacy is a profound virtuoso failure: shamans are becoming un-needed facilitators and participants in a kind of interactive emotionality which is ceasing to exist.

Taranti is advised to handle her feelings through the traditional outlet of articulation ('You should say out loud all the things you did together, you should list all the things you miss'), and she does indeed find her voice by reverting to the conventional format of lamentation. But what of that moment before Taranti finds her voice again? Here is an unprecedented kind of feeling which the Sora language has perhaps never before been called upon to express: the loss of her ability to enter trance, without losing her capacity for remembering, loving, and longing. Taranti has been exposed to the extent of her loss because she has been offered an unexpected, freak opportunity to revisit the Underworld. Compared to a layperson like Paranto, a shaman experiences an exceptionally complex, multiple personhood, in which the most fulfilling parts of her life may be when she is incarnating others. But Taranti no longer has these powerful and passionate spirit others as part-authors of her own self. She has not simply lost a skill but has become a different kind of person, perhaps not one she wished to become; she is suffering not only from trance-deprivation, but also from simplified personhood; and she has just realized that this change is irreversible.[12]

If we accept Reddy's argument that historical changes in emotion can be traced by examining changes in emotive utterances, then we can take his argument one step further. Different emotion scenarios can give rise to different forms of impeded articulacy. It is not only through changes in *emotional utterances* that we can trace changes in emotionality; in this highly verbalizing culture, we can also see these changes in a new *inability to utter* – that is, in the emergence of new forms of *inarticulacy*. These moments of inarticulacy arise under new emotion scenarios which lack a matching expressive format. The people who experience them are caught by surprise. They do not have a new form of expression ready to perform, and for the moment, no existing form of expressivity can work. I suggest we can identify at least three kinds of scenario here:

- where some feelings can no longer be articulated, as in Paranto's frustrated desire to *olong* his father;

- where some feelings can not yet be articulated: the abruptness of their farewell to the dead perhaps betrays that Baptists have not yet worked out a comfortable procedure for pacing their feelings and their forgetting;
- where some feelings may never be articulated, as when Taranti suddenly realizes that she is no longer capable of entering trance, even when she tries: this moment of history, and indeed her entire life, may pass away without a corresponding expressive format ever coming into being.

As probably in many ancient conversions, the scenarios of loss in which Paranto and Taranti are caught are transitional ones, and the forms of inarticulacy which they create may have only a brief life which will bequeath the historian no trace. Under the limited horizons of the next generation's new certainties, these scenarios and their incomplete expressive forms will probably no longer occur. Most young Baptists already know little about the old culture beyond a pastiche about devil-worshippers who walked in darkness. The erasure of the dead is rapidly becoming fully internalized. We might call this repudiation or rejection. But the fact that people will no longer know that this has happened makes this also a true and profound forgetting. As well as forgetting what it is they have forgotten, they are already forgetting the fact that they have forgotten it.

This denial of the shamanist model of trans-generational continuity is the fulfilment of a new principle, that children's destinies will no longer repeat those of their parents. This is a reversal of the situation I knew in the 1970s, where a robust and outgoing style of life within the community was counterbalanced by a cowed timidity in engaging with the wider world. That generation exercised an elaborate but circumscribed agency as they manipulated the nuances of an inward-looking domain of intimate relations, while their shamans' Hindu helper spirits gave them cover by co-opting a hostile outside world in which the Sora had little agency in ordinary life. Their children, Baptists without point of comparison, live with a more minimalist theology and theory of the psyche. But it would not be correct to say that these young people's personhood has been diminished, as I believe Taranti's has. Many of those who seem demure and meek in church are assertive and resourceful in market and government office. In abandoning the intimate realm of dialogues with the dead and joining the feared world of officials and traders, they have transposed the complexities of personhood and agency to new domains of entrepreneurship, clerical work, and politics.

My role in precipitating these moments

These three moments of inarticulacy or impeded articulacy have been triggered by my own departure or sudden reappearance as a living age-mate of dead parents, speaking with an older generation's archaic metaphors, syntax, and intonation.

Yet these moments offer more than a representation or re-creation of a 'forgotten' past; their dynamic force comes from an encounter which may create further opportunities for articulation and reflection, on both sides. As I have matured from an impulsive young student to an elder who is addressed as 'Grandfather', I have also affected the lives of many Sora, while they in turn have changed my life by giving me an insight into human emotion different from anything I could have learned through 'Western' discourses such as psychoanalysis. In my own sometimes terrifying journeys to their beautiful alternative world, I have developed my own problems of loving and forgetting. In assessing the balance between my sense of loss and a new generation's sense of liberation, how can I regret their choice? What right do I have to speak up for these young people's parents and grandparents, who were my friends?

One of the most long-lasting roles an anthropologist can have is as a repository of memory, as a community's dead become voiceless for ever. One could adapt the title of Paul Connerton's (1989) book *How societies remember* to read *How societies forget – but their anthropologists remember*. Among a people who had no writing or means of recording, I made a collection of notes, photos, and tapes – the stories of hundreds of lives which at that time were preserved for my own purposes, but which decades later have developed an unforeseen force of their own. My memory and my notebooks have become an archive of passions in which these long-ended lives cry out for dialogue.

Whenever I spend time with Paranto I sense that he urgently wants something from me, something that I shall surely never be able to give him. One day his descendants may wish to use my notes and writings to reconstruct something of where they came from. This may not happen until long after Paranto and I have both gone; but if it does happen, it will be at least some reparation for his tears that day we were alone together in his father's old hut.

NOTES

I am grateful to the Royal Anthropological Institute for the invitation to deliver this lecture; to participants in the Magic Circle seminar in Cambridge and in Signe Howell's and Aud Talle's workshop on longitudinal fieldwork in Oslo, who allowed me to float initial ideas in 2006; and, for comments, to the following, who are not to blame for any remaining faults: Olivier Allard, Paul Connerton, Harri Englund, Stephan Feuchtwang, Martin Holbraad, Caroline Humphrey, Tim Jenkins, and Bruce Kapferer. I am also grateful to the Society for South Asian Studies (British Academy) for supporting my recent fieldwork in 2005. A fuller discussion of these topics, strengthened (I hope) by further extended fieldwork among Christian and Hindu enthusiasts, is due to appear in Vitebsky (forthcoming). A spoken version of this paper, with photos and film clips, can be seen (and downloaded) on *http://www.alanmacfarlane.com/ancestors/index.html*.

[1] The Sora are considered tribal because they live in the jungle and speak an Austroasiatic language which links them to Southeast Asia. For the controversial terms 'tribe' as well as 'shaman', see Vitebsky (1993).

[2] Shamanist Sora reverse Freud's (1957) model of bereavement, and indeed of personhood, by building an individual's feelings out of multiple social relations (Vitebsky 1993: 238-47). *Olong* is a word not of humility, as when addressing a prayer or petition to a god or king, but of interchange between entities whose hierarchical status is equal (even if ontologically their powers and needs are uneven).

[3] This is in striking contrast to my more recent experience with Siberian nomads, who at first baffled me with the expressiveness of their silences (Vitebsky 2005: 112-14, 122-3, 269). The paired parallel phrasing which completely encases Sora verse forms frequently also breaks out in prose conversation at moments of excitement or heightened emotion.

[4] The term 'ancestor' (*idai*) includes not only parents but also one's children, spouse, or anyone else who has died first. As a shaman's assistant in the 1970s, it was sometimes my job to chant these lists of ancestors.

[5] Though so far without finding any ancient Middle Eastern Sora. But the relationship with Hinduism is ancient, and the god Jagannath (Juggernaut), now an avatar of Vishnu, is said by Oriya brahmins themselves to have been stolen from the jungle Sora (Eschmann, Kulke & Tripathi 1978; Kulke & Schnepel 2001). Though I hope to remedy this in future fieldwork, my previous devotion to Sora shamanism and lack of sympathy with mission Christianity still leave me with insufficient insight into Sora Baptism (let alone neo-Hinduism). This gives me the opposite bias to Robbins (2007), whose call for an anthropology of a global Christian culture, based on 'discontinuity', risks making previous local cultures seem residual or incidental. The Sora further subvert Robbins's agenda by their parallel move in neighbouring areas of the 'same' culture to two rival fundamentalisms, returning us to Hefner's characterization of Christianity as 'a species of world religion' (1993: 4), but adding modern Hinduism as another such species. Where Baptism stresses radical discontinuity (as Robbins would expect), this new Hinduism, though comparably prescriptive and anti-pluralist, dwells on a return to a previous, lost state (thereby offering a sort of retro-continuity). Confrontations between Christians and Hindus in tribal areas can be ugly (Froerer 2006, and see the website *http://www.hinduunity.org*).

[6] Cf. St Paul in I Corinthians 14: 34-5: 'Let your women keep silence in the churches ... for it is a shame for women to speak in the church'.

[7] The personal declarations fit a particular Protestant style, distinctive not only in its puritanism but also in its emphasis on the 'I'. It is as if we are seeing classic arguments about the link between Protestantism and individualism acted out before our eyes. Catholic sensibility might place more emphasis on the communal 'we' (Ladrière 1973: 57-9).

[8] Perhaps coming close to Freud's idea that repetition without resolution can be compulsive and neurotic.

[9] Instead of the *olong* style between equals, Baptists address God by 'praying', which translates, humiliatingly to shamanists, as 'begging speech' (*gar-ber*). The formats of prayer are simple, for example: 'Thank you for providing [everything which previously was provided by ancestors, though this is not acknowledged]'. There is no need for a dialogic exchange of information: 'Lord God, what can I tell you, I'm a sinner, as you know' (*Gomang Kidtung, iten gamam, ñen pintu mar, amen galam*).

[10] This is a repression which is not only emotional and aesthetic, but also political. Both Baptism and neo-Hinduism constrain female agency and deplore women's existing freedoms in tribal life. In their new-found triumph, they tip the gender balance as shamans' frustrated husbands never managed to do.

[11] Elster calls this 'willing what cannot be willed', and argues that it depends on a confusion of internal and external negation. 'Forgetting or indifference is an external negation, a mere lack of awareness of x, whereas the desire to forget presupposes a representation of the absence of x and hence of x itself' (Elster 1993: 82).

[12] Perhaps I felt for her not only because she was distressed, but because I wanted her to go back to being the person I had known years earlier.

REFERENCES

ANTZE, P. & M. LAMBEK 1996. Introduction: forecasting memory. In *Tense past: cultural essays in trauma and memory* (eds) P. Antze & M. Lambek, xi-xxxviii. London: Routledge.

ASAD, T. 1996. Comments on conversion. In *Conversion to modernities: the globalization of Christianity* (ed.) P. van der Veer, 263-73. London: Routledge.

BAKHTIN, M.M. 1984. *Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics*, trans. C. Emerson. Manchester: University Press.

BATESON, G. 1936. *Naven: a survey of the problems suggested by a composite picture of the culture of a New Guinea tribe drawn from three points of view*. Cambridge: University Press.

BATTAGLIA, D. 1993. At play in the fields (and borders) of the imaginary: Melanesian tranformations of forgetting. *Cultural Anthropology* **8**, 430-42.

BESNIER, N. 1995. *Literacy, emotion and authority: reading and writing on a Polynesian atoll*. Cambridge: University Press.

CARSTEN, J. 1996. The politics of forgetting: migration, kinship and memory on the periphery of the Southeast Asian state. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (N.S.) **1**, 317-35.

——— (ed.) 2007. *Ghosts of memory: essays on remembrance and relatedness*. Oxford: Blackwell.

CASEY, E.S. 2000. *Remembering: a phenomenological study*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

COLE, J. 1998. The work of memory in Madagascar. *American Ethnologist* **25**, 610-33.

COLEMAN, S. 2000. *The globalisation of charismatic Christianity: spreading the gospel of prosperity*. Cambridge: University Press.

CONNERTON, P. 1989. *How societies remember*. Cambridge: University Press.

——— 2008. Seven types of forgetting. *Memory Studies* **1**, 59-71.

ELSTER, J. 1993. *Political psychology*. Cambridge: University Press.

ELWIN, V. 1964. *The tribal world of Verrier Elwin: an autobiography*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

ENGELKE, M. & M. TOMLINSON 2006. *The limits of meaning: case studies in the anthropology of Christianity*. New York: Berghahn.

ESCHMANN, A-C., H. KULKE & G.C. TRIPATHI 1978. *The cult of Jagannath and the regional tradition of Orissa*. Delhi: Manohar.

FORTES, M. 1961. Pietas in ancestor worship. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* **91**, 166-91.

FREUD, S. 1957. Mourning and melancholia. In *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. XIV, 239-58, trans. J. Strachey. London: Hogarth.

FROERER, P. 2006. Emphasizing 'Others': the emergence of Hindu nationalism in a central Indian tribal community. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (N.S.) **12**, 39-59.

GELL, A. 1999. *The art of anthropology: essays and diagrams*. London: Athlone.

GUHA, R. 1999. *Savaging the civilized: Verrier Elwin, his tribals, and India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

HACKING, I. 1995. *Rewriting the soul: multiple personality and the sciences of memory*. Princeton: University Press.

HANSEN, T.B. 2001. *The Saffron wave: democracy and Hindu nationalism in modern India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

HEFNER, R.W. (ed.) 1993. *Conversion to Christianity: historical and anthropological perspectives on a great transformation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

KÜCHLER, S. 1987. Malangan: art and memory in a Melanesian society. *Man* (N.S.) **22**, 238-55.

KULKE, H. & B. SCHNEPEL (eds) 2001. *Jagannath revisited: studying society, religion and the state in Orissa*. Delhi: Manohar.

LADRIÈRE, J. 1973. The performativity of liturgical language. *Concilium* **82**, 50-62.

LAMBEK, M. 1996. The past imperfect: remembering as moral practice. In *Tense past: cultural essays in trauma and memory* (eds) P. Antze & M. Lambek, 235-54. London: Routledge.

——— 2007. The cares of Alice Alder: recuperating kinship and history in Switzerland. In *Ghosts of memory: essays on remembrance and relatedness* (ed.) J. Carsten, 218-40. Oxford: Blackwell.

LEVY, R. 1984. Emotion, knowing, and culture. In *Culture theory: essays on mind, self, and emotion* (eds) R. Schweder & R. LeVine, 214-37. Cambridge: University Press.

LUTZ, C. 1988. *Unnatural emotion: everyday sentiments on a Micronesian atoll and their challenge to Western theory*. Chicago: University Press.

MEYER, B. 1999. *Translating the devil: religion and modernity among the Ewe in Ghana*. Edinburgh: University Press for the International African Institute, London.

OVERING, J. & A. PASSES (eds) 2000. *The anthropology of love and anger: the aesthetics of conviviality in native Amazonia*. London: Routledge.

PFEFFER, G. 1997. The scheduled tribes of Middle India as a unit: problems of internal and external comparison. In *Structure and process: contemporary society: tribal studies*, vol. 1 (eds) G. Pfeffer & D.K. Behera, 3-27. Delhi: Concept.

REDDY, W. 1997. Against constructionism: the historical ethnography of emotions. *Current Anthropology* **38**, 327-51.

ROBBINS, J. 2007. Continuity thinking and the problem of Christian culture: belief, time and the anthropology of Christianity. *Current Anthropology* **48**, 5-38.

ROSALDO, M. 1980. *Knowledge and passion: Ilongot notions of self and social life*. Cambridge: University Press.

TRAWICK, M.E. 1990. *Notes on love in a Tamil family*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

TUZIN, D.J. 1997. *The cassowary's revenge: the life and death of masculinity in a New Guinea society*. Chicago: University Press.

VITEBSKY, P. 1993. *Dialogues with the dead: the discussion of mortality among the Sora of eastern India*. Cambridge: University Press.

——— 2005. *Reindeer people: living with animals and spirits in Siberia*. London: HarperCollins; Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

——— forthcoming. *The ancestors' ultimate death: religious and emotional transformation in tribal India* [provisional title]. Chicago: University Press.

VOLKAN, V. 1981. *Linking objects and linking phenomena: a study of the forms, symptoms, metapsychology and therapy of complicated mourning*. New York: International Universities Press.

Amour et oubli : moments d'inarticulation dans l'Inde tribale

Résumé

Les jeunes Sora de l'Orissa, en Inde, sont en train « d'oublier » leurs morts. Alors que les anciennes générations faisaient appel aux chamans en transe pour négocier avec les ancêtres au cours de dialogues élaborés, leurs enfants, convertis au christianisme baptiste, refusent de parler aux morts et de les nourrir, laissant ainsi leurs parents appréhender une mort après laquelle ils seront négligés. Dans le contexte contemporain de la construction de la nation indienne, l'auteur examine le prix émotionnel divergent payé pour ce désengagement par deux jeunes gens qu'il connaît depuis 1975. L'un est devenu baptiste, l'autre chaman. Leur lutte pour être ou devenir un certain type de personne est révélée au cours de récents épisodes sortant de l'ordinaire, catalysés par la présence de l'auteur, où le pouvoir des mots leur fait défaut. Les conflits qu'ils connaissent entre attachement filial et répudiation, entre vocation chamanique et

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.) **14**, *243-261*

abjuration, sont explorés pour montrer comment les changements dans l'amour et l'oubli peuvent être révélés à travers de nouvelles formes fugaces d'inarticulation.

Piers Vitebsky studied ancient languages before becoming a social anthropologist working among shifting cultivators in tribal India and nomadic reindeer herders in arctic Siberia. He is Head of Anthropology and Russian Northern Studies at the Scott Polar Research Institute in Cambridge.

Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER, UK. pv100@cam.ac.uk