EDITORS

Sherry B. Ortner, Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley

A LIST OF TITLES
IN THIS SERIES APPEARS
AT THE BACK OF
THE BOOK

PRINCETON STUDIES IN
CULTURE / POWER / HISTORY

Culture / Power / History

A READER IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORY

NICHOLAS B. DIRKS, GEOFF ELEY, AND SHERRY B. ORTNER, EDITORS

Combs-Schilling

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

48. See my "Getting Down Off the Beanstalk."

49. A version of this paper was first presented for the conference Feminism and Mass Culture at SUNY-Buffalo (March 1988). I wish to thank Nancy Armstrong, Rey Chow, George Lipsitz, and Robert Walser for their valuable suggestions as I was revising the paper for publication.

• CHAPTER FIFTEEN •

Ritual and Resistance: Subversion as a Social Fact

NICHOLAS B. DIRKS

There is subversion, no end of subversion,
only not for us.

Anthropology and History

The social history of modern India has developed side by side with anthropology. In anthropology, as in social science more generally, "order" has typically been the chief ordering principle of discourse. When anthropology puts particular emphasis on order, it sanctifies it with the adjective "ritual." Ritual is not only principally about order, it is often the domain in which our sociological conception of society is properly realized. In this view, social relations are displayed and renewed and the hierarchical forms underlying social relations confirmed and strengthened by ritual.

While social historians of areas outside of South Asia (or other third world areas in anthropologyland) have worked in greater autonomy from anthropology, they have recently turned to anthropology to enable them to understand many aspects of social life that had not been addressed by political or intellectual history, and later proved equally intractable to the quantitative methods of early social history. In both cases, social historians have consumed anthropological theories and rubrics too uncritically, little realizing that interdisciplinary collaboration should leave neither of the constituent disciplines untouched. In this paper, I focus on everyday forms of resistance, critiquing both anthropological assumptions about ritual and historical reifications of these assumptions. In taking "ritual" as my subject, I also argue that too often the combination of the key terms "everyday" and "resistance" leads us to look for new arenas where resistance takes place, rather than also realizing that many more "traditional" arenas are also brimming with resistance. Finally, I seek to suggest that our old theories of either "ritual" or "resistance" are not all that are at risk in this enterprise; also at risk are the underlying presuppositions of order that undergird and normalize most historical or social scientific writing.

Ritual As a Social Fact

"Ritual" is a term that sanctifies and marks off a space and a time of special significance. Ritual may be part of everyday life, but it is fundamentally opposed to "the everyday." Anthropologists have typically identified ritual as a moment and an arena in which meaning is cathected and crystalized, in which social experience is distilled and displayed. As summarized by Geertz, Durkheim and Robertson-Smith set the terms of anthropological discourse on ritual by emphasizing the manner in which ritual "reinforce[s] the traditional social ties between individuals. . . . [T]he social structure of a group is strengthened and perpetuated through the ritualistic or mythic symbolization of the underlying social values upon which it rests."[1] Rituals are thus seen as embodying the essence of culture, "as dramatizing the basic myths and visions of reality, the basic values and moral truths, upon which . . . [the] world rests."[2] This is not to say that anthropologists have always treated ritual as static. In her important book on ritual in Nepal, Ortner (showing Geertz's influence) clarifies that while she says that rituals "dramatize basic assumptions of fact and value in the culture," she is, in fact, coding a more complex assertion, namely, that "such 'fundamental assumptions' are actually constructed, or reconstructed, and their fundamentality reestablished, in the course of the rituals themselves."[3] Nonetheless, as her more recent work indicates,[4] this earlier clarification reflected a particular moment in anthropology, when Durkheimian assumptions about meaning and ritual were being reevaluated but left basically unchallenged. Ritual might have been viewed as a process that was profoundly integrated into the complex and shifting social worlds of anthropological subjects, but ritual was still the principal site of cultural construction, and the study of culture was fundamentally about shared meanings and social values.

Some years later, when summarizing theoretical developments in anthropology since the sixties, Ortner[5] noted that ritual had been shifted from center stage by new concerns in anthropology with practice and everyday life. This new call to practice has been part of a general move away from traditional subjects, such as kinship and ritual, or at least away from traditional approaches to these subjects. Rituals were often seen as opposed to the everyday character of experience, even though it has been increasingly conceded that everyday life is highly ritualized. Pierre Bourdieu, the chief theoretical advocate of practice as a new focus for anthropology, critiqued the normative character of most social theory, in which meaning is analyzed as if it could be abstracted from the everyday contexts of production, reproduction, and strategic manipulation. Bourdieu argued that it was only by attending to the actual practice of rituals, such as gift giving—the contexts in which gifts were given, the multiple interests behind giving and receiving, the sequencing and timing of gifts and countergifts, as well as the differential nature of things given—that it would be possible to break away from the standard anthropological interpretation of social action and meaning. Nonetheless, even calls for practice-oriented anthropologies from such theorists as Bourdieu confirm the residual centrality of the cultural: in Bourdieu's theoretical proposals, "capital" is now modified by the adjective "symbolic."[6]

In recent years, as social history has become increasingly anthropologized, historians have appropriated ritual as a subject and employed anthropological perspectives on ritual. William Sewell invoked a Geertzian conception of ritual to demonstrate that ritual performances—in his particular story, rituals that employed old regime forms in postrevolutionary contexts—were used to symbolically mark and socially solidify the emerging communities of labor in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century France.[7] More commonly, Turner, Van Gennep, and Gluckman, rather than Geertz, have been cited when historians have attempted to analyze ritual. (Geertz has been used by historians principally for his semiotic theory of culture, not for his gentle critique of functionalist analyses of ritual.)[8] Following these anthropological authors, historians have typically been interested in such rituals as the carnival or the charivari, in rites of inversion or status reversal. Some historians have accepted the functionalist undergirding of anthropological writing about these rituals, concurring at least to some extent that rituals, in Gluckman's terms, "obviously include a protest against the established order" but "are intended to preserve and strengthen the established order."[9] As Natalie Davis puts it, rituals "are ultimately sources of order and stability in a hierarchical society. They can clarify the structure by the process of reversing it. They can provide an expression of, and a safety valve for, conflicts within the system. They can correct and relieve the system when it has become authoritarian. But, so it is argued, they do not question the basic order of the society itself. They can renew the system, but they cannot change it."[10] From a textual perspective, Stephen Greenblatt has recognized that the anxiety about royal authority induced by Shakespeare in such plays as *Richard II* and *Henry V* serves only to enhance the power of authority; as he says, "actions that should have the effect of radically undermining authority turn out to be the props of that authority."[11]

Nevertheless, many historians have recognized in the ritual of carnival something more than this, seizing on the prepolitical elements of class struggle and contestation, concentrating on the unsettling and disorderly aspects of the periodic inversion. In so doing, they usually have had to suspend the teleological framing they might have preferred to record as critics of the social order; rituals rarely became highly politicized, and often did lapse back into the social orders that produced them, whether or not that social order was reinforced or slightly shaken as a result. Subversion was either contained or transformed into order.

In literary studies, which since the translation of Bakhtin's extraordinary book on Rabelais in 1968 have become even more carnivalesque than social history, the relation between periodic disorder and subversion on the one hand and order and containment on the other has been widely debated. Terry

Eagleton is one of many critics of Bakhtin who think that Bakhtin's celebration of the political potential and meaning of the carnival is misguided:

> Indeed carnival is so vivaciously celebrated that the necessary political criticism is almost too obvious to make. Carnival, after all, is a *licensed* affair in every sense, a permissable rupture of hegemony, a contained popular blow-off as disturbing and relatively ineffectual as a revolutionary work of art. As Shakespeare's Olivia remarks, there is no slander in an allowed fool.[12]

Be that as it may, it is striking how frequently violent social clashes apparently coincided with carnival. And, while carnival was always licensed, not all that happened during carnival was similarly licensed. Carnival was socially dangerous, semiotically demystifying, and culturally disrespectful, even though it often confirmed authority, renewed social relations, and was rarely either politicized or progressive.[13]

In all these debates the question of whether ritual can occasion, or serve as the occasion for, resistance is read in terms of one specific form of ritual and one particular kind of resistance. We hear only about the carnival or the charivari, about rituals that involve reversal and inversion, not about rituals that are about power and authority of both secular and sacred kinds. And we evaluate the politics of ritual only in terms of a discourse on resistance that seeks out contestatory and confrontational upsurges by the lower classes. It is perhaps no accident that Natalie Davis was less affected by these discursive blinkers than many of her contemporaries since her most critical discussion of the carnival concerns the status of women who could not participate in public and politicized moments of confrontation, consigned as they were to the private, the domestic, and the particular. Thus a concern with gender has led some writers to a critique of the virile assumptions underlying most writings on resistance.[14]

Recent writing on everyday resistance has moved away from concentrating only on clearly "political" moments and movements, but the definition of everyday experience typically excludes such activities as ritual. For example, James Scott, who has made an important and eloquent plea for the study of everyday forms of peasant resistance, ignores the possibility that ritual could constitute an important site of resistance.[15] This is partly because of his basic economistic preoccupations and partly because he is suspicious of ritual. In his long and rich book, he makes only two brief references to rituals of status reversal, otherwise referring to ritual as constitutive of community. Scott exemplifies the way that many writers concerned with resistance accept with little modification the Durkheimian foundations of social scientific conceptions of ritual. Alf Ludtke, who has exemplified the concerns of a number of German historians in relation to the recovery of the everyday experience of the working class, has also ignored the possible importance of ritual.[16]

Meanwhile, anthropologists have continued to be interested in ritual, though only rarely in its resistance possibilities. An important exception has

southern Africa and who (like Ortner) was clearly deeply influenced by the practice theory of Bourdieu. Comaroff has written about the repressed and oppressed tensions of the violently established and violently maintained hegemony in South Africa. She found that

> while awareness of oppression obviously runs deep, reaction may appear erratic, diffuse, and difficult to characterize. It is here that we must look beyond the conventionally explicit domains of "political action" and "consciousness"; for, when expressions of dissent are prevented from attaining the level of open discourse, a subtle but systematic breach of authoritative cultural codes might make a statement of protest which, by virtue of being rooted in a shared structural predicament and experience of dispossession, conveys an unambiguous message.[17]

Comaroff goes on specifically to argue that ritual constitutes one of these unconventional domains, suggesting that "ritual provides an appropriate medium through which the values and structures of a contradictory world may be addressed and manipulated." Comaroff thus sees the syncretistic ritual and religious movements that have accompanied capitalist penetration into the third world as "purposive attempt[s] to defy the authority of the hegemonic order." Indeed, she argues that "such exercises do more than just express revolt; they are also more than mere acts of self-representation. Rather, they are at once both expressive and pragmatic, for they aim to change the real world by inducing transformations in the world of symbol and rite."[18] It is this mode of situating ritual practice, belief, and symbolism in a political world of hegemony and struggle—a world in which representation itself is one of the most contested resources—which I follow in this paper.

But I also seek to go further, starting with a more basic premise. I will not evaluate ritual practice on the basis of whether or not it aims to change the "real world," however much it may lack self-consciousness. Rather, I will look at traditional village rituals in India that appear to have the effect of restoring social relations and upholding relations of authority, both within the village and between it and the larger political unit of the kingdom or state. I will seek to determine if the way in which order and disorder have been narrativized as basic components of these rituals enables us to recognize and understand the multiple foci and forms of disorder as I encountered them—for anthropologists have viewed ritual not merely as a sociological mechanism for the production of order, but also as a cosmological and symbolic site for the containment of chaos and the regeneration of the world (as we, or they, know it).

Elsewhere I have argued that current anthropological writing on ritual underplays, both at the level of kingdoms or large political units and at the level of village rituals and festivals, the social fact that ritual constitutes a tremendously important arena for the cultural construction of authority and the dramatic display of the social lineaments of power.[19] Although I presented examples of conflict, I saw conflict largely as a product of the breakdown of

centrality of authority to the ritual process, ritual has always been a crucial site of struggle, involving both claims about authority and struggles against (and within) it. By historicizing the study of ritual, we can see that while rituals provide critical moments for the definition of collectivities and the articulation of rank and power, they often occasion more conflict than consensus, and that each consensus is provisional, as much a social moment of liminality in which all relations of power (and powerlessness) are up for grabs as a time for the reconstitution and celebration of a highly political (and thus disorderly) ritual order. Resistance to authority can be seen to occur precisely when and where it is least expected.

The Festival of Aiyanar

The ritual I will focus on is crucial here because although it is only one of several village rituals, it is the one that inaugurates all other village rituals, often setting the calendrical and cosmological agenda for the yearly ritual cycle. The festival of Aiyanar, called the *kutirai etuppu*, was also critical in that it vividly reflected and displayed the hierarchical relations within the village, with the village headman, or *ampalam*, as the ostensive center of these relations. The priests for this ritual, who were also the potters (Velars) who made the clay horses that were consecrated in the central ritual action, had to obtain permission from the ampalam in order to begin making the clay horses. The ampalam was the host for the festival, and his emblems were as important in the procession as the clay horses themselves; the ampalam received the first honors, which he then distributed to the other members of the village at the conclusion of the ritual. In short, the ampalam represented the totality of the village, in a rite that was seen and said by some to celebrate and regenerate the village itself.

When I was in the "field"—for me, the little kingdom of Pudukkottai, one of the largest of the little kingdoms in the early modern period of the Tamil-speaking region of southern India, and under the British Raj, the only princely state in the Tamil country—it took little time to realize that Aiyanar was a critical deity, and the yearly festival in his honor a crucial festival, in local ritual life. Village elders and headmen would regularly take me to their own shrine of Aiyanar as the most important stop on the village tour. They would tell me all about their village festival—how it was famous for miles around, how I would be able to observe and recognize the political centrality of the headman, that I should definitely plan to return to their village on the occasion of the festival. Clearly ritual was important, and clearly this was the social ritual par excellence, at least in the postindependence days of a post-royal kingdom. During the course of my fieldwork, I attended and took extensive notes on about twelve of these festivals in different villages through-

Because of my interest in local social relations and structures of authority, I was drawn into this festival, which became a chief focus of ethnographic research.

There was one festival in particular that I looked forward to attending. village headman had been an especially rewarding informant, and spent m hours telling me about the complex details of social organization in his lage and his *natu*, the territorial unit that was coterminous with the settlen zone of his subcaste group (also called "natu") of Kallars, the royal cast Pudukkottai. He was a patriarch of classic proportions. He told me about festival of Aiyanar with the care and comprehension of a radio cricket c mentator, and as the festival neared, he even visited my house in town on occasions to submit to further questions and my tape recorder. I was exactly when the festival would begin, and we agreed that I would ar soon after dusk, to participate in the final preparations, which would cu nate in the commencement of the festival around midnight (like many o rituals, the festival went on through the night). When the festival was st week away, I expected a formal visit from the headman to invite me a honored outside guest, but when he failed to turn up, I assumed that he unable to come because he was enmeshed in the myriad preparations fo festival. On the appointed evening I drove my motorcycle the requisite th five miles across potholed tarmac and dusty bullock cart tracks, only to a in a village that was virtually dark, with no visible evidence of any appr ing festivities. The village headman looked dismayed and surprised rolled up on my motorcycle, though less dismayed than me, since I hea I switched off my engine, the unmistakable hiss of a rapidly deflating tir devastating effect of a large acacia thorn's union with my nonradial tire headman told me that the festival had been called off, and that he had I I would have guessed this since he had not come with the formal invit In any case, he said, he could not have come to tell me that there would festival, since this would have been inauspicious, and would have m even more unlikely than it already was that the festival could take plac this admirable foresight had not turned things around. The festival co be organized: a long-standing factional dispute in the village was not end, resolved, and the festival became yet another casualty of this My immediate concern, apart from the fact that my tire was flat and I carrying a spare, was that I had lost a brilliant opportunity to match narrative, and practice, to follow up the story of a festival that I h tracking industriously over the preceding weeks and months. But as instructed his son and assorted relatives to hitch up the bullock cart to for my long and bumpy transport back to town, my disappointment y bewilderment—for I learned that the festival on which I had garne exquisite detail had not taken place for seven years, and that no o village had any genuine expectation that it would take place this yea Most fieldwork stories can be allegorized. We begin with calm s dence, our initial assumptions and convictions still unchecked by th

realities and serendipities of the field. We then find ourselves in some disastrous predicament, which in unsettling us (and sometimes our informants), enables us to cross the fault line of cultural difference, to familiarize ourselves with the concerns and logics of new social terrains, to achieve new forms of communion with our anthropological subjects, to attain wisdom. In fact, at the time I was simply seriously annoyed. Nevertheless, I tell my story here to suggest that although I had been aware of the extent to which the festivals of Aiyanar gave rise to conflict and dispute at the time, it was only then, and increasingly over the years since, that I changed the way I thought about ritual. I began to realize the extent to which this story illustrates the flip side of my concern with how village rituals reflected and displayed political authority and political relations. I had begun thinking about Aiyanar by using his festival to attack Dumont's notion (which he developed in a number of places, notably in an important article on the festival of Aiyanar in Tamil Nadu)[20] that religion and ritual always encompass politics and power. I argued that the festival, far from revealing the transcendence of a religious domain and the uncontested supremacy of Brahmanic persons and principles, was in large part about the intersections of power and social relations in the village, locality, and kingdom. The royal symbolism of Aiyanar, the ritual centrality of kingship, and the local power of the headmen were all confirmed and displayed by the ritual process. But having established the political character and referents of the festival, I still found it difficult to come to terms with the facts that these festivals were always sites for struggle and contestation, that speech about the festivals reflected concerns about ritual order and auspiciousness that were part of a another ritual order, different from that of the ritual event itself, and that even when the ritual event did not happen, it was as significant as when it did. I came to realize that the nonevent of the called-off ritual was not, in fact, a nonevent, after all.

During the rest of my fieldwork, I learned that many of the other great events of ritual calendars were similar nonevents. The festivals of Aiyanar did not happen almost as often as they did. Moreover, when they happened, they did not always include everyone in the village, or result in the village communal harmony that I had previously assumed; indeed, this communal harmony was disturbed not only along the so-called traditional lines of caste or faction but along developing class lines as well. I also learned that while at one level, the festival was about the reestablishment of control over disorder of a threatening nature, it was also about the range of possibilities that existed precisely at the moment of maximal contact between order and disorder. But it is now time to backtrack to the festival itself, before we allow it, as it did that night for me, to deconstruct itself.

In Pudukkottai, Aiyanar was often the principal village deity, though some villages include temples of Aiyanar in which the village deity was said to be a goddess. According to most of my informants, the most significant feature of Aiyanar was his role as the protector. He was more specifically called the

who took refuge with him. Aiyanar's shrines were always located on th riphery of the village, in order best to protect the village from outside pr tion, as well as from the forces of danger that lurked in the forests and w lands just outside the zone of village civilization. The kutirai etuppu fes (the installation of the ceramic horses) began a month before the main fest day. The head of the potters (Velars), the community that made the terra-c offerings and often acted as principal priests for Aiyanar, would take a ha ful of clay (*pitiman*) from the village tank. The pitiman was placed in a br plate and handed to the village ampalam, who then returned it to the Vel along with the ritual dues. The ampalam had to make this gift, signifying permission for the festival to begin, to entitle the Velars to proceed with preparation of the offerings. The gift was made in part in the form of *puja*, blessed return of a gift that was first offered to the superior being. The centi position of the ampalam was thus enunciated and displayed at the moment the festival's inauguration.

Throughout the festival itself, though each one varied in details, the role the ampalam was particularly conspicuous, and as important as that of th deity. The festival began and ended at his house, the central locus of all vi lage gatherings. There, the first ritual action of the festival had taken place month earlier, when the ampalam returned the pitiman to the head of the Ve lars. Similarly, the first ritual action of the festival day was often the puj performed to the ampalam's family deity, with the gift adorned with the em blems that represented and encapsulated the family's heritage. Granted by the Raja, and passed from generation to generation within the family, these emblems now symbolized that this festival was sponsored by the village ampalam, a festival at once personal and public, the private puja of the ampalam's family and the public performance of the entire village.

The central action of the festival was a procession from the ampalam's house to the temple of Aiyanar on the outskirts of town. Crowds of villagers accompanied the terra-cotta horses that were to be installed before the shrine of Aiyanar. At the temple a "Sanskritic" *naivedya* (offering) was made to Aiyanar, at the conclusion of which a goat was sacrificed to the subsidiary deities Karuppar and Muni. Much has been made of the fact that when the goat sacrifice is conducted, a curtain is drawn before the shrine of Aiyanar, who is vegetarian and to be protected from the sight of bloodshed. The sacrifice is carried out immediately in front of the shrine, though ostensibly to a different deity altogether.

In Dumont's well-known analysis of this festival, he places too much importance on the opposition of purity and impurity (deducing from diet that Aiyanar is principally modeled on the Brahman, even though in behavior and legend Aiyanar is far more like the king) and on his contention that Aiyanar's relation to other village deities reflects the encompassment of the political by the religious. The kingly aspects of the deity and [illegible]

festival is part of his larger refusal to grant that a king can, in certain contexts, encompass and incorporate the divine, the Brahmanic, as well as the social and political constituents of caste solidarity and warrior strength. In the village, where the king was represented by the ampalam, the festival at once elevated the ampalam and his political authority, displayed the ampalam's relation to the king, effected an identity between the latter and the village, and produced, through the celebration of a festival on behalf of a god who so dramatically exemplified the royal function, the conditions under which the village could be victorious against the forces of evil and danger.

But this is not the whole story. It is precisely the political permeability of ritual that makes possible a succession of contested performances, readings, and tellings. In India, kingship had been the dominant trope for the political, but far from the only one. As I stated at the beginning, the festival of Aiyanar frequently did not happen, or occasioned everything from violent dispute to multiple celebration, as in one village where three separate village festivals took place under the leadership of three rival castes and their factional affiliates.

For example, in the early 1920s in Tiruvappur, a village close to Pudukkottai town and made up mostly of Kallars, weavers, and service castes, the Velars petitioned that they were under no compunction to receive the pitiman from the village headman. They insisted that since the headman's *inam* (benefice) lands did not carry the stipulation that he should give the pitiman, there was no other authoritiative basis for the claim that the pitiman could be given only by the headman. The headman in turn petitioned the government that the performance of the festival without his permission, granted through the pitiman, was an infringement of his hereditary right, as proved by the fact that his family had been granted inam lands with the specific injunction to conduct the ordinary pujas and other festivals in the temples of Aiyanar in Tiruvappur. Both petitions employed the same colonial bureaucratic logic, giving inams (and the authority of local headmen) a rational legal basis they had not had in precolonial times.

For the Diwan's assistant, the Diwan Peishkar, the resolution of the case rested first on the proper interpretation of the significance of the grant of pitiman. His inquiries, in line with my own more recent ones, led him to decide quite correctly that the grant of pitiman signified far more than the intended cooperation of the nattars (elders): "If it signifies mere cooperation without the slightest tinge of authority or idea of special privilege the villagers would not have objected to the continuance of the system. On the other hand, the grant of pitiman is considered to be a grant of permission by the nattars to conduct the kutirai etuppu. Both the nattars and the artisans view it in this light and it is why the former are unwilling to lose the privilege and the latter anxious to discontinue the system." He then had to decide whether this privilege could be sustained under the bureaucratic terms of service implied by the wording of the inam grant, which was vague enough to accommodate both the intepretation put forward in the petition and the one in the counterpeti-

tion. The Diwan Peishkar investigated customs in other temples of Aiyanar to determine precedent, only to find that each case differed, hardly the stuff of precedent. To further complicate matters, the Diwan Peishkar felt that he had to determine whether the dispute concerned the hereditary privileges of the headmen as traditional caste headman or, in a deliberately alienating bureaucratic move, as state functionaries.

The Brahmanical Diwan Peishkar was also troubled by his belief that religion was an individual concern, and that all devotees should be able to commission the Velars to make horses for them without the intervention of the Nattar. Such control over the individual vows of others seemed to him "revolting to a devotee's sense of honour and reason." The Diwan Peishkar recommended that the Nattars be allowed to commission the installation of clay horses on their own behalf, but not on the behalf of others. The separation of the individual rights of Nattars from their right to commission clay horses on behalf of the entire village only made sense, however, in terms of a newly formulated bureaucratic conception of religion, since the individual vows of devotees would have been encompassed by the social fact that the festival, even when contested, was a village festival. The Diwan Peishkar's recommendation struck at the core of the headman's objections, since he saw his privilege as an enactment of his authoritative position in the village temple and, indeed, in the village at large. But in the invention of an autonomous domain and logic of religion, the underlying social issues were ignored. The struggle between the service and dominant groups was a struggle over authority, and thus had its most visible and important expression in the Aiyanar ritual, which itself resisted bureaucratic appropriation by the new Brahman-British religious sensibility (though it succumbed to the bureaucratic definition of the *inam*).

As it turned out, the Diwan was less zealous than the Diwan Peishkar to upset the local structure of authoritative relations in Tiruvappur. He recommended that the Nattars continue to be vested with the right to give the pitiman. He did, however, insist that the Nattars had to signify their permission by giving back the pitiman immediately and routinely, thus heading off the mischievous possibility that they might abuse their right, a sacred trust. "Authority" was defended in name, but was undermined by the attempts of the bureaucratic establishment to make religion an individual and private rather than a social and public affair. Although this did not allay all the concerns of the petitioners, they had at least been able to use the language of bureaucratic control to make an important formal complaint.

Indeed, Tiruvappur had been the scene of many similar disputes at least as early as 1885. At one point, the local Paraiyars ("untouchables") had asserted themselves against the ampalam by refusing to beat drums outside the temple. In another instance, the Velars had resisted the authoritative claims of the Kallar headman, denying his privilege to carry the scythe used for the ritual slaughter and present it to the Velars, who actually did the cutting. On one occasion they had even refused, in their role as priests, to offer *pracatam* (the

transubstantiated offering) from Aiyanar to the ampalam. Like his 1920s counterpart, the Diwan had upheld the rights of the ampalams, at the same trying to rationalize the exercise of these rights.

Many similar disputes took place, but only a few of them leaked into official view, usually because the disputes were dealt with in summary (and no doubt brutal) fashion by the dominant groups. So although these files alerted me to a record of contention, it was only in towns close to the court, and also in bigger towns and temples, such as those studied by Appadurai and Breckenridge,[21] that ritual was a clearly contentious affair in the historical record. Many of these disputes concerned the distribution of honors and pracatam in temples and locked a dominant lineage and its headman in fervent dispute with each other; otherwise, the disputes were usually buried by the dominant group (which had to seek no higher authority). Thus, when Appadurai and Breckenridge proposed that ritual in south India involved conflict, they proposed a radically new sense of the kinds of resources over which conflict developed, but referred for the most part to factional forms of conflict. In the Indian context, however, factional dispute has been the only acceptable form of social conflict. I am arguing here that conflict took place between social groups at all levels of the social hierarchy, and that conflict is always present in the basic structures of Indian social organization. Indeed, as I suggested above, I only realized the range (and subtlety) of dispute and contestation through a combination of ethnographic accident and historical investigation.

There were many other instances in which ritual turned out to be a core arena for resistance, particularly for groups, such as artisans and "untouchables," who could resist by simply withholding their services. The closest thing to a municipal strike in the history of Pudukkottai town took place in the early 1930s, when the untouchables protested the establishment of a municipal crematorium by withholding their ritual funeral services from all their patron groups. The municipality backed down in short order because of the consternation of one high-caste family after another, who felt they were dishonoring their dead. And Kathleen Gough has vividly documented the breakdown of village ritual in rural Tanjavur, where untouchable groups, fired in part by the growth of a local communist movement, have increasingly withheld their ritual services from village festivals.[22] But Gough's assertion that village rituals would not recover from the effects of recent change and growing class consciousness has not been sustained by the experience of the last thirty years. In fact, village rituals continue to be important precisely because of their association with conflict.

Although village rituals were clearly sites for struggle between elite groups and their factions over who was in charge, this, too, was only part of the story. Rituals were generalizable sites for struggle of all kinds, including—as my earlier story suggests—the struggle between discourse and event, between what could be said and what could be done. Ritual was a discursive and practical field in which a great deal was at stake and a great deal was up

site for appropriation as well as for struggle. The headman of the darkened, quiet village had appropriated the interpretive function of a ritual that he always knew would not take place; the absence of any actual event was an embarrassment only when I pressed my curiosity and showed up without the proper invitation. The Brahman administrators of Pudukkottai appropriated the dispute for their own purposes, of undermining the religious authority of rural Kallar elites and implementing new colonial standards for the evaluation of religious activity and the establishment of religion within a newly created domain of civil society. Anthropologists have appropriated ritual to advocate the religious dimensions, character, and force of the social, which in the case of Dumont's transformation of Durkheim, is located in a world of religiously validated hierarchy. These appropriations are all examples of the way ritual has become central to the field of power relations in southern India. But these same appropriations have never fully succeeded in containing the power of ritual, as they have always been checked by the profoundly subversive character of traditional ritual practice (at least as I observed, and didn't observe, it in southern India)—for not only did ritual discourse and ritual practice operate at angles to each other, both discourse and practice were open to a multiplicity of contesting and resisting agencies, even when these agencies were themselves constituted by (or in relation to) the concealed agencies of colonial hegemony.

Possession and Danger

I have so far completely ignored one of the most important but also complex sources of agency and action in the festival of Aiyanar. I do not mean the symbolism surrounding the lord Aiyanar himself, but rather his incarnation in the form of the *camiyatis*, the people in the village who during the course of the festival were routinely possessed by the lord Aiyanar. Possession was an absolutely critical part of this and other village festivals in the south, and aside from the goat sacrifice and the feast, it was the most charged event in village ritual practice.

In one fairly typical festival that took place in a village near Pudukkottai town, all but one of the people who were to be possessed by Aiyanar were members of the dominant Kallar caste. Though the ampalam was the central character, as the festival unfolded attention was increasingly focused on the camiyatis. Initially chosen for possessing special spiritual powers, the five Kallars were the hereditary camiyatis who participated in the festival each year. They walked immediately behind the drum-beating Paraiyars. Not yet in full trance, the camiyatis began to show signs of possession as they walked on to the beat of the drums, their bodies sporadically quivering at the touch of Aiyanar, who was shortly to enter into them. The procession walked straight to the small temple to Aiyanar, which, like the others on the board

and the camiyatis, then worshiped the subsidiary deities, Karuppar and Muni. The camiyatis then picked up bags of ash and began walking back to the village, accompanied by the Paraiyars. As they walked through the village, the women of each house came towards them and poured water over their feet to cool them. The camiyatis blessed the women with the ash they carried. We walked through the Kallar section of town by way of the ampalam's house, to the Velar settlement on the eastern side of the village. There, the procession was welcomed by the playing of festival music by the pipers of a nearby temple and the explosions of firecrackers. The five Kallar camiyatis stood before the newly decorated terra-cotta horses, soon to be installed in front of the Aiyanar shrine.

A Paraiyar from a nearby village came forward and carefully dressed the camiyatis in special clothes. The Paraiyar wore a garland made of silver balls, his head was wrapped with a red cloth, his chest was draped with multicolored strands of cloth, a new towel was tied around his waist, and garlands of bells were wrapped around him. His face was painted with vermilion and sandalwood paste. This Paraiyar was called the *munnoti*, the leader, the one who went first. In a few minutes he became possessed on his own, to the music of the drums and horn (*nadaswaram*). He began to jump wildly when the incense and camphor smoke was shown to him, and he stared fixedly at the sky. He suddenly leapt into the crowd, snatched the ampalam's spear, and began to beat the ground with it. He was jumping and running around and through the crowd, all the while circumambulating the six figures. The ampalam then came up to him, garlanded him, and smeared sacred ash on his forehead, after which the ampalam was finally able to retrieve his spear. After this, the munnoti led the other camiyatis into states of possession. Someone whispered in my ear that the munnoti was the burning lamp that lights other lamps. Full possession was achieved when the munnoti held the camphor up to the other camiyatis, one by one.

Now that all the camiyatis were fully possessed, the procession was ready to commence. The Paraiyars went first, followed at some distance by the pipers, and then by the munnoti and the five Kallar camiyatis; next came the terra-cotta offerings sponsored by the village, followed by the smaller offerings of individual villagers. Behind them walked the ampalam, surrounded by many of his kinsmen. As the procession moved around the village, on its way back to the temple of Aiyanar, villagers came up to the camiyatis to be blessed, often asking questions about the future. The camiyatis frequently stopped to make prophetic statements either in response to specific questions or about general problems afflicting the village. When we reached the temple, the eyes of the terra-cotta figures were opened with the blood of a cock, sacrificed by the munnoti (who was then given the cock). The terra-cotta animals were then installed in front of the temple. A grand puja was held to Aiyanar. The Velar priests offered tamarind rice, broke coconuts, and then held up the flame in an act of worship, after which they offered the sacred ash to the worshipers. Then the priests left Aiyanar's shrine, pulling its curtains closed.

Shortly thereafter, a goat was sacrificed by one of the camiyatis to Karuppar, and after this, the ampalam distributed the pracatam from both pujas to the constituent groups in the village. One by one, the camiyatis drifted away, each to be relieved of the extraordinary privilege and exhaustion of the possession. The festival ended with much feasting, and an all-night dramatic performance.

It is clear that possession was a central part of the ritual drama. But what was possession all about—what did possession signify? Most of the literature on possession deals with the nasty kind, when it is the devil rather than the lord who has taken up residence within a mortal. But the munnoti is the exorcist's opposite—a man whose skill and power is precisely to induce possession rather than rid us of it. But this, too, is an extraordinary form of power, and one that has many dangers. It is significant that for this role an "untouchable" is chosen; while all the regular camiyatis are of the dominant Kallar caste, the one person who makes their possession possible could never be invited into their houses or be allowed to dine with them. And his power was not completely contained by hierarchy, for there were moments of real fear when he seized the ampalam's spear and began dancing wildly about; the fear of Aiyanar was clearly enhanced by his choice of this unruly Paraiyar as his principal vehicle and agent. And the Paraiyar appeared to contain not only the full ferocity of Aiyanar, but also the contradictions of Aiyanar's multiple symbolism and the festival's ritual connotations. For when the Paraiyar seized the spear, he simultaneously signaled its potential appropriation and confirmed (and perhaps enhanced) the spear's (and the ampalam's) centrality and power.

When, a few days after the festival, I went to visit the Paraiyar in his nearby hamlet, the contrast was difficult to fathom. It was midafternoon, and the Paraiyar was sleeping off the effects of a morning spent consuming a huge amount of arrack. The Paraiyar combined in his person an exaggerated deference and a smoldering bitterness. On the one hand, he acted as though he were deeply honored that I should visit him; that he failed to recognize me for a moment or two seemed due more to drink than to any difficulty remembering my presence in the festival through the daze of his own possession. On the other hand, he took great pleasure in puncturing my illusions about the festival. He told me that there was a rival festival in the village hosted by Konars (shepherds), and as he spoke, he almost laughed at the hollow claims of the Kallar headmen, who could no longer control an inferior caste group. Thus the very man who played such a critical ritual role in the festival clearly had a good measure of contempt for his patrons. And his patrons were no longer masters of the only game in town.

Thus perhaps we can appreciate rather more the level of danger encoded in the ritual seizure by the Paraiyar of the ampalam's spear, the subtextual presence of contest and disorder. And the seizure was not the only moment of danger, not the only reason why containment was a live issue throughout the festival. Aiyanar was clearly hard to handle, and those possessed by him had

to negotiate a delicate balance between playacting and overacting. I was repeatedly told that the possession was real, that it took people many years to learn how to accept the visitation of the lord, that it required the supervision of a man of special powers both to learn and to do, and that after a spell of possession, it would take days and sometimes weeks for the possessed person to return fully to normal, exhausted and shaken by the experience. And I was told that if a camiyati turned out not to be really possessed, merely playacting, he would be ridiculed and excluded thereafter from the festival and its proceedings. After all, the festival was critical to the well-being of the village, and if Aiyanar was misrepresented by an imposter, then the festival might fail, and certainly the advice handed down by the lord to the anxious and enquiring villagers would be spurious. There were also times when possession could prove too much; the camiyati was called the vessel, and when this vessel could not contain the concentrated power of the lord, it might crack. In such instances, the camiyati would not recover from possession, he would stay deranged and disturbed, and then there would be need of an exorcist.

It is possible to account for all of this with a traditional view of ritual. Van Gennep was keenly aware of the danger and disorder that was part of ritual, and built this into his explanation of liminality and ritual transformation.[23] But his theory has a tendency to contain danger too readily, too automatically, and to assume that disorder is ultimately epiphenomenal. I would propose here that possession was a form of ritual practice that was genuinely dangerous and always already subversive. Part of the subversiveness had to do with what we have already considered, the constant possibility of conflict, fission, paralysis, and hermeneutic, if not agonistic, explosion. But the subversiveness had also to do with the politics of representation and misrepresention, as did the implosions of power, inherent in both the role of the headman and that of the camiyatis.

The festival was a powerful spectacle in large part because of the dramatic role of the possessed camiyatis. The festival seemed to me at times, particularly since I attended many different festivals in different villages, like theater. Victor Turner has already observed this, using the term "ritual drama," by which he meant that ritual could be analyzed as though it were an unfolding drama, with the participants as actors who engaged in the unseen forces of life through the vicarious agencies of ritualistic enactment.[24] But if what I witnessed was theater to the participants, it was very different from what has come to be accepted as theater in the West. As Stephen Greenblatt notes, "[T]he theatre elicits from us complicity rather than belief."[25] But in rural southern India, there were elements of both complicity and belief; there were roles and masquerades depended on far more than skillful artifice and conceit. Further, there was the possibility that something could go wrong, and this provided an urgency and unpredictability to the drama that makes Turner's phrase seem both too dramatic and vaguely sacrilegious. One of the inescapa-

be inauthentic, was that all agency and all representation—authority itself—in the ritual was at risk as well. Identity was most fragile at the moment of its transformation and multiple reference. And the risk that the possessed might be faking it no doubt raised the possibility that the headman, whose authority and connections with the king were both celebrated and renewed in the festival, might also be faking it. After all, everyone knew, even though I had not yet been told, that the headman claimed a sovereignty over the entire village that was not granted by the rival shepherds. It was the compelling, contestable, and dangerous components of the ritual drama that also raised the stakes. The spectators did not simply gaze; they vied with one another to participate more actively and more centrally in the festival, to interlocute the camiyatis, to see the cutting of the goat, and to collect and consume the *prasada*—the transubstantiated return—of the lord.

I have given just a few illustrations to suggest what I might mean by the subversive nature of ritual practice and discourse. I will close with one last observation. Each ritual event is patterned activity, to be sure, but it is also invented anew as it happens. When I witnessed one festival, there was frequent confusion about what was to be done. At one point, a participant in the festival leaned over toward me, realizing that I had seen many similar festivals, and asked me what I thought they should do next. At the time, I thought that I was already intruding too much on the authenticity of the ritual event, and that to offer an opinion—and I did have one—would be to cross the fragile threshold of legitimate participation implied in the oxymoronic motto of anthropology: participant observation. But I was wrong, for the authenticity of the event was inscribed in its performance, not in some time- and custom-sanctioned version of the ritual. And the authenticity of Aiyanar's festival, in particular, was inscribed in its uncertainty and its contestability—even when it didn't actually take place.

Anthropology and Aiyanar

I have argued that the festival of Aiyanar is about (and provides opportunities for) resistance precisely because it is also about the display and achievement of power. My reading of the ritual challenges both general anthropological assumptions about ritual and, more specifically, Louis Dumont's sense of Aiyanar's conformance to his more general theory about caste and the ideology of hierarchy. My reading also challenges a more political interpretation of the festival by Christopher Fuller in his tightly argued essay, "The Hindu Pantheon and the Legitimation of Hierarchy."[26] Fuller finds, contrary to the expectation that high forms of religion might best legitimate existing social hierarchies, that "south Indian Hinduism's substantialist representation of Sanskritic deities does not legitimate relationships of inequality at all."[27] In fact, the religious sensibility surrounding the Sanskritic deities simply deni[es]

to social hierarchy. However, Fuller extends Dumont's argument about Aiyanar, suggesting that the "burden of legitimating caste hierarchy is instead left to village deities."[28] While Fuller argues that village deities resist "the ideal world of Brahmanical superiority through absolute independence," they do so "relationally in the idiom of hierarchy." Indeed, village deities symbolize the "continued inferiority and dependence" of the low castes.[29]

Fuller bases his argument on the structural relations of symbolic transactions in village rituals, specifically, on the relational definition of village deities and the clearly marked distinction between vegetarian forms of puja and animal forms of sacrifice. He sees high and low forms of local deities symbolically correlated with high and low forms of worship, forms associated not only with diet but also with procedures of worship. He then assumes that these high and low forms, which ritually and symbolically seem mutually interdependent, correlate with high and low forms of caste, thus legitimating the caste structure through ritual practice.

Fuller is not unaware of the possibility that popular religion can embody political resistance, and carefully contrasts his interpretation of Aiyanar with Genovese's reconstruction of the role of resistance in the religious life of American slaves. Whereas American slaves could transform "Christianity from a religion which, in the eyes of white slaveholders, legitimated slavery into a fount of resistance to it"[30] through identifying Jesus with Moses, Fuller can imagine no similar possibility of transformation or resistance in south Indian village religion. Not only does Fuller imagine the caste system to be fundamentally immutable, he writes as though the symbolic correlations between high and low deities on the one hand and high and low castes on the other presupposed an acceptance of the structure of hierarchy. His interpretation is possible not only because he leaves the problematic relationship between king and Brahman in the person of Aiyanar aside but also because he accepts Dumont's account of the ritual performance, devoid of any contradiction, disorder, or contest.

I would suggest that Fuller's reading is partial not only because he uncritically accepts a Dumontian interpretation of caste but also because he employs a notion of ritual predicated on certain fixed assumptions about order and power. This is true despite an admirable attempt to consider the social implications of ritual practice, for he correctly sees ritual as embedded in societal relations and social meanings. However, the social categories that appear to be inscribed in the ritual order of things do not entail an acceptance of hierarchy.

In fact, the curious relationship of Brahman and king in the figure of Aiyanar, and the precarious balance between "high" and "low" forms—village and forest, power and possession, nonviolence and violence, vegetarian and nonvegetarian, among others—would suggest a very different reading of the ritual and its social meanings. To the extent that the categories of "high" and "low" are constructed anew in any given ritual setting, we must be attentive as well to the contests over authority and power that take place around and through ritual means and idioms. We need not make Genevese's case that ritual is a fount of outright resistance in order to find struggle, disorder, and appropriations from below taking place through, and within, ritual practice. Certainly, in the south Indian case, the relations between Brahmans and Kallars (members of the royal caste in Pudukkottai) or between Kallars and Paraiyars (remember the munnoti's expertise and precedence in divine possession) are not nearly as unproblematic as assumed in Fuller's, not to mention Dumont's, analysis. Not only are caste identities and relations deeply politicized, they are contested throughout the field of ritual practice; all symbolic correlations within the ritual domain and between it and the social are opened to doubt, question, contest, and appropriation. Because of the open and disorderly character of the ritual process, ritual is one of the primary arenas in which politics takes place.

Ritual Disorder and Order

As we increasingly, and from differing perspectives, examine ordinary life, the fixtures of ordinariness thus give way to fractures, and we see that struggle is everywhere, even where it is least dramatic, and least visible.[31] Even in the heart of anthropology, ritual now seems to be as much about contest and struggle as about power and order. Struggle becomes visible where previously we could not see it, a trope for a critical vision of the world. Consensus is no longer assumed unless proven otherwise; even more unsettling for our social science, rebellion and resistance can no longer be identified through traditional indices of the extraordinary. The ordinary and the extraordinary trade places.

We should reflect briefly on the potential epistemological implications of finding resistance, rebellion, or disorder, everywhere. In most of our social scientific thinking, order is presented as a universal human need, an expression of reason and the basis of the social. Order thus becomes naturalized, while all that produces and is produced by disorder becomes marginalized as extraordinary and unnatural. When naturalized, order is an ideological tool, which works to suppress or contain disorder and subversion.

Ironically, many current understandings of discursive domination (following Foucault) or hegemony (following Gramsci) are at least in part informed by notions of order that seem antipathetic to the posture of critique, for our notions of power appear both totalizing and a priori. "Power" is virtually synonomous with order, even though as used currently, the term implies a critical stance on order. Thus in denaturalizing order, we must also denaturalize power, attending to its own fissures and dispersals. In turn, we should not see resistance as a pure counterpart to power, for there are dangers in reifying our concepts of struggle. But if order can be seen as an effect of power rather than its condition, then resistance, too, can be freed from the (teleological) requirement that it establish a new order in order to be recognized as significant.

Power need not be seen as either a cause or a first principle. Power is, rather, a relation, or, more precisely, an endless series of relations, characterized—we now emphasize—by struggle. Although struggle may always, as Foucault suggests, be interior to power, it (as our current preoccupation) can seriously subvert our normal assumptions, about both power and order.[32]

The festival of Aiyanar is about power and disorder, about order and resistance. For at the same time that the power of the deity and the headman are displayed, this power is distributed to others and opened to potential contestation. At the same time that the ritual order of precedence among groups in the village is rehearsed and inscribed in the structures of worship, the resistance of subordinate or factional groups, and the resistance of multiple interpretations, can be effectively deployed. At the same time that representation, in discourse or event, makes ritual claims about order, representation itself becomes the object of struggle. At the same time that worship transforms disorder into order, disorder becomes available for the spirits of the dead and the spirit of unrest. Ritual now appears not only as a powerful way to produce the reality effect of the natural, but also as a way to contest and even appropriate that reality itself. For ritual—like the anthropological concept of culture itself—is not always principally about order, and it does not always contain the disorder of things.

Notes

I am grateful to my colleagues in history and anthropology at the University of Michigan for their comments in seminars when I delivered this paper. I am also particularly indebted to Val Daniel, Geoff Eley, Steven Mullaney, Gyan Prakash, and Sherry Ortner. The opening epigraph is Stephen Greenblatt's transformation of Kafka; see Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 65.

1. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 142.
2. Sherry Ortner, characterizing Milton Singer's views, in Ortner, *Sherpas through Their Rituals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 1.
3. Ibid., 2.
4. Ortner, *High Religion* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989).
5. Ortner, "Theory in Anthropology since the Sixties," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26, 1 (1984).
6. Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, translated by Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).
7. William Sewell, *Work and Revolution in France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).
8. See Stuart Clark, "French Historians and Early Modern Popular culture," *Past and Present*, no. 100 (1983); and Hans Medick, "Missionaries in the Row Boat? Ethnological Ways of Knowing as a Challenge to Social History," *Comparative Studies in Soci d Hi 29, nr 1987)*

10. Natalie Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1965), 130.
11. Stephen Greenblatt, "Invisible Bullets," in J. Dollimore and A. Sinfield, eds., *Political Shakespeare* (Manchester, N.H.: Manchester University Press, 1985), 40.
12. Terry Eagleton, *Walter Benjamin: Towards a Revolutionary Criticism* (London: Verso Press, 1981), 148.
13. See the argument by Peter Stallybrass and Allon White in their *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986).
14. See Rosalind O'Hanlon, "Recovering the Subject: Subaltern Studies and Histories of resistance in Colonial South Asia," *Modern Asian Studies* 22, no. 1 (1988).
15. James Scott, *Weapons of the Weak* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).
16. Ludtke has written that protests should be "regarded as occasional manifestations of a wide complex of structured processes and situations" and that "research into traces of suppressed needs should not be confined to manifest expressions of dissatisfaction, opposition, and resistance." Alf Ludtke, "Everyday Life, the Articulation of Needs and 'Proletarian Consciousness'—Some Remarks on Concepts" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), 4. See also Ludtke, "Organizational Order or Eigensinn? Workers' Privacy and Workers' Politics in Imperial Germany," in Sean Wilentz, ed., *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual, and Politics since the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985).
17. Jean Comaroff, *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 196.
18. Ibid.
19. See Nicholas B. Dirks, *The Hollow Crown: Ethnohistory of an Indian Kingdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
20. Louis Dumont, "A Structural Definition of a Folk Deity," *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 3 (1959).
21. Arjun Appadurai and Carol Breckenridge, "The South Indian Temple: Authority, Honour, and Redistribution," *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, n.s., 10, no. 2 (1976).
22. Kathleen Gough, "The Social Structure of a Tanjore Village," in McKim Marriott, ed., *Village India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955).
23. Arthur Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).
24. Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process* (Chicago: Aldine Press, 1969).
25. Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations*, 119.
26. Christopher Fuller, "The Hindu Pantheon and the Legitimation of Hierarchy," *Man*, n.s., 23 (1987).
27. Ibid., p. 37.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. See Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).
32. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1 (New York: Vintage, 1980), pp. 94–97.