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Fieldwork Terminable and Interminable

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Michael Lambek, *Island in the Stream: An Ethnographic History of Mayotte*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018. 19 figures, index, 334 pp. ISBN: 978-1-4875-2299-5

Piers Vitebsky, *Living Without the Dead: Loss and Redemption in a Jungle Cosmos*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017. 4 maps, 11 diagrams, 62 figures, index, 380 pp. ISBN: 978-0-226-47562-2.

In 1975, unbeknownst to one another, Piers Vitebsky and Michael Lambek, began ethnographic fieldwork in two remote corners of the world. Lambek installed himself in the village of Lombeni (pictured on the cover of his book) on the island of Mayotte, which lies between Mozambique and Madagascar. Vitebsky found his own thatched-roof village, Rajingtal, in the highland Sora region, in the state of Odisha (Orissa), close to the border with Andhra Pradesh in eastern India. The two were on remarkably similar missions to study forms of religion that involve trance and the voicing of communications from the realm of the dead. Years ago, they produced outstanding books on this topic.¹ They continued to visit the original ethnographic areas tracking the lives of their earliest interlocutors, strengthening bonds with their peers, mourning the dead alongside them, and forming relationships with the younger generations. It is probably safe to venture that, until recently, neither author imagined writing a book that would take forty years of fieldwork as its subject.

¹ Lambek, *Human Spirits: A Cultural Account of Trance in Mayotte* (1981); Vitebsky, *Dialogues with the Dead: The Discussion of Mortality among the Sora of Eastern India* (1993).

If, as John Lennon put it, “Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans,” then these books examine that accumulation of intermediary stages, outcomes, and new plans made in their wake. The human condition involves learning from the past, straining toward the future in moods such as rational planning, hope, expectation and resignation (Bryant and Knight 2019), and holding it all together in a present. In these books the anthropologists call on their ethnographic experience of many years of presents, each one lived against the horizon then visible. The result may be characterized as “ethnographic history,” to use Lambek’s label (p. xxi), which highlights “the density, texture and experience of change itself” (p. xxvi).

In this review I point to many convergences between these two books in order to explore further the ethnographic study of change. Yet it must be acknowledged that these are distinctive authors and some individualizing background is necessary. Piers Vitebsky came into anthropology after earlier training in classical philology. In addition to ancient Greek he also learned modern Greek and I once asked him why he did not stick with the anthropology of Greece (as I had). He replied that he dutifully visited the classical sites, but while admiring the victory columns and relief sculptures in Rome and Persepolis he found himself identifying with the vanquished people carted off as slaves, or depicted in ethnographic detail offering tribute to the emperor. He nonetheless carried his philological skills over into anthropology and they are on clear display in his attention to Sora language (he is currently working on a dictionary), and poetry. Parallel long-term field research among another shamanic society, the Eveny of northeastern Siberia, one of the coldest places on earth, punctuated his research on the Sora. The Eveny had been drafted into the Soviet Union with its confident long-term planning, but were left hanging when that fell apart. As he (Vitebsky 2012) points out, on his watch the Eveny lost their future, while the Sora, as will be understood better below, lost their past.

The Canadian anthropologist Michael Lambek studied for his doctorate at the University of Michigan, and has spent his career at the University of Toronto where he holds a prestigious Canada Research Chair. His book is published in the series 'Anthropological Horizons', which he established in 1991, already drawing on the Gadamerian idea of the horizon that he deploys extensively in *Island in the Stream*. Since the 1990s he has come steadily to an interest in memory and trauma (Antze and Lambek 1996) and to seeing spirit possession as a way of relating to the past in what he terms a 'poiesis of history' (Lambek 1998, 2002). One of his early forays into this area may be seen in his 1995 article "Choking on the Qur'an" presented here in revised form. In addition to Mayotte, Lambek has conducted research in northwestern Madagascar, and also in Switzerland where he touched on similar issues of people relating to their forbears and feeling them in their present, including their intimations of their own past lives (2007). Lambek pointedly theorizes change through the lens of German philosophers of history, whereas Vitebsky presents a more seamless narrative ethnography of the change entailed in the Sora conversion to Christianity. It is their common commitment to capturing life as lived in the confusion of change that leads me to interrelate their evidence, and read them in terms of each other.

At the time of Lambek's first visit, the Mahorais (as the people of Mayotte are known) were in the midst of voting to remain with France rather than claim independence. In 2011 they officially became an overseas department with full French and EU citizenship rights. French money rolled in, thatched dwellings gave way to cement, and the travel time from the capital to Lombeni was cut to 45 minutes. People now eat imported rice, store frozen chicken in their freezers, and work office jobs rather than scratching a living from the earth. Daily conversations often take place in French rather than Kibushy (a Malagasy language). Lambek concedes that a book could have been dedicated to politics as the main catalyst of change, but that held little appeal for him (pp. xxiv, 22). Had Vitebsky set out to

study social change he would have stuck with the Baptist missionaries he visited briefly on his first trip to the Sora. Instead, he asked them for the names of villages where they were encountering the greatest difficulty making converts and went there. By the end of his third decade of fieldwork, however, the Sora had largely converted to Christianity or Hinduism, and the Sora language (a member of the Austroasiatic Munda family) was disappearing.

Vitebsky is candid about his romantic fascination with shamanism that led him to downplay the inroads Christianity was making already during his early fieldwork. Had post-colonial studies and the anthropology of Christianity been popular in the 1970s the careers of these two anthropologists might have developed very differently.

In the end, however, Lambek does provide an account of political and economic change on Mayotte that is all the more satisfying for its oblique approach through detailed observation of everyday life in Lombeni. And Vitebsky does render a singular, intimate account of conversion distinguished by his rich knowledge of the prior form of Sora life. In part, their success may be attributable to the ethnographic standards of structural-functionalism that held sway when they departed for the field (Lambek, p. xxvi), and arguably still hold sway today. This holistic approach recommends collecting “anything” in hopes that it will eventually come in useful (Strathern 1999: 8; Holbraad and Pedersen 2009: 386; Dalsgaard and Nielsen 2013: 8). The “ethnographic moment” cannot thus be reduced to a specific time of fieldwork. Theoretically, it is interminable, open to as many new connections and contextualizations as future minds might bring to it. In the case at hand here, both ethnographers have been living their respective ethnographic moments for nearly half a century, reframing their understandings and responding to the surprise that new interrogatives such as “change” and “historicity” introduce. As Gadamer, quoted in Lambek’s epigraph to his Chapter One (p. 5), captured it: “To exist historically means that knowledge of oneself can never be complete.”

An illustration of this adage would be the bespectacled, severe-looking Sora Christian Monosi whom Vitebsky noticed during that first encounter with Baptist missionaries in 1975 at a place called Bethany Bungalow. Having risen in the Baptist ranks as a translator of the Bible, Monosi badly damaged his reputation by marrying a second Sora animist wife. The pastors sidelined him for bigamy. This opened an extended phase of independent thinking that allowed him to indulge ever more deeply in Sora cultural materials in one of those surprising turns indicative of the incompleteness Gadamer identified. He began to collaborate with Vitebsky on translating shamanic songs, thereby performing a balancing act between the world he had left behind and the Christian world to which he remained committed.

The reader comes to feel similar familiarity with numerous other personalities in Vitebsky's book, aided by the more than sixty photographs beginning with the striking portrait (p. 6) of Ononti, the funeral shaman of Rajingtal, other shamans and teachers such as Dumburu and Doloso, and the picture of the author wearing a loincloth should not go unremarked. If these characters are like bones to the story, then Monosi is its spine. As Vitebsky writes of him near the end of the volume:

Someone who continues to evolve is Monosi, the subtle visionary who suffers from the tension of a progressive prophet who also feels nostalgia – not only behind his time but ahead of it, as he has been all his life....An anthropologist may not be so different from a missionary after all, since we both draw out personal narratives that go beyond those that people are used to articulating, show them new perspectives and change their lives. Monosi's vision of a Christian future has accelerated beyond his control and rendered his past irretrievable (p. 327).

The most elite shamans among the Sora, the funeral shamans, travel to the underworld with the aid of *ildas*, helpers in the form of local powerbrokers such as warrior-caste Hindus, soldiers, and local middlemen who have long oppressed the Sora. In the shamanic cosmos

they become allies opening the way to the recently deceased, who speak through the shaman about the circumstances of their life and death. This combination of religion, psychotherapy and law (p. 81) evokes tearful dialogue with living relatives who respond to the demands of the deceased. If there were a worry about violating the sacred by recording these songs, that was dispelled when Ononti casually overheard Vitebsky listening to a recording of her. Far from being alarmed, she demanded that he replay it over and over (p. 26). As immediate objects in the field the recordings could serve as entertainment, stimulating interest in present performances. For the Christian convert Monosi, listening to the songs at a remove “awakened long-lost resonances from his father’s chants” (p. 140), propelling him into the “nostalgia” alluded to above, but also into a more extensive historical experience (Palmié and Stewart 2019) where the past was at once objectively past, yet also lived subjectively from the inside.

Both ethnographers frankly recognize their very first visits as indelible baselines; dramatic moments of thrown-ness in the Sora and Mahorais worlds that remained a measure of later times (Vitebsky, p. 324; Lambek, p. xxv). The long-term ethnographer, as sporadic visitor over the years, as witness to special occasions and events, and as party to long discussions and intimate friendships may serve for the local people as chronometer. At a critical point, bridging into his book’s conclusion, Lambek relates how, in the 1990s, a young man walked up to him and declared, “*Monsieur, vous avez marquez ma jeunesse* (you made an impression on my youth)” (p. 269). He reflects:

Without exaggerating my significance, the point is that my presence indexed a period of historical change, and I no doubt served for some people as a kind of foil against which they could reflect on their own changing ideas, circumstances, and opportunities” (ibid.).

The long-term ethnographer's presence can also have a chronotopic effect, transporting local people into particular envelopes of time. These could be shared phases of life similar to those activated upon meeting an old school friend at a reunion (Smith and Eisenstein 2016); or they could be transportations into the mythic past of the Sora as seen in the case of Monosi; or, as Lambek suggests, the anthropologist's presence may serve as a mirror in which the locals discern their present and future; who they are, and aspire to become.

This last suggestion is consistent with Lambek's analysis of changing forms of wedding celebration. During the period of preparation to join France, a wedding invitation in formal French arrived. The festivities began with a "*dîner-dansant*" to which guests wore elegant European clothing, dined on dishes such as *crudités* with mustard vinaigrette, and enjoyed a multi-tiered wedding cake topped with cherries before hitting the strobe-lit dance floor to the sounds of a genre of Western popular music known locally as "*boum*." In so doing, according to Lambek, they rehearsed their Frenchness in "a deliberate, reflexive and consciously creative process, seeing oneself as another, catching oneself in the future, maintaining the distance of the spectator even as one is acting the part" (p. 191).

This interpretation gains persuasiveness when contrasted with the complex earlier system of redistributive feasting known as *shungu*. Attention to exact reciprocity within a given age group meant that celebratory meals involved careful measurements of meat and rice. On occasion the meal could be broken into its component elements and the meat distributed raw to members of the exchange circle in a non-commensal counter-prestation. The transition to a money economy entailed the commoditization of rice and meat, which introduced inflation into the system and made it difficult to establish equal measures over time. This, and population growth, ultimately forced the abandonment of *shungu* by the early 1980s. On the other side of the *dîner-dansant*, a wedding practice known as *manzaraka* has taken hold since incorporation into France. It involves conspicuous expenditure such as the

thousands of euro notes placed by the groom's womenfolk in the mouth of the bride, or the groom's so-called "*valise*", a gift to the bride now delivered as a truckload of household appliances, jewelry, and clothes in transparent gift wrap. Where the *shungu* ended with the advent of a money economy the *manzaraka* takes over, celebrating not only money and inequality, but also claiming relation to local Islam through its incorporation of traditional Muslim elements. Lambek reads these three rituals in Geertzian fashion as stories the Mahorais tell themselves about themselves: as egalitarian, as ambivalently French, and as powered by the younger professional generation in a "papaya world" (*dunia papay*) – so named because the young fruit rest above the older, larger fruit on a papaya tree (p. 178).

Each of these rituals arises against the horizon of its time (i.e. the specific historical context). With the passing of an era (or horizon), forms such as the *shungu* may be abandoned, but new forms emerge in their wake, combining old features with innovations in "successive acts of interpretation" (p. 223), demonstrating an additive not an exclusionary cultural logic (p. 271). The transitions between successive ritual forms may vary from calm to turbulent (p. 242). Lambek weds his approach to an anthropology of ethical life which sees the various marriage rituals as efforts to work out, in performance, appropriate ways of being a good person doing the right things in changing times. How to manage equality, how to bear Frenchness, and how to reconcile modern prosperity with traditional Islam have been successive moral questions danced out against shifting horizons.

Both authors supply relevant historical background for their studies. Vitebsky presents the political system of local Sora headmen, their collusion with local non-Sora intermediaries (*bariks*), and their role as servants of the former kings of the area. On the basis of original archival research he explains the high incidence of tiger maulings in the 1930s as a fig leaf explanation of village deaths in order to avoid police investigations that frequently involved the extortion of innocent "suspects". The real value of these books lies, however, in

their ethnographic histories that locate instances where change is processed existentially in practice rather than conceptually objectified in synoptic narration. As the Indian state consolidated direct rule over Soraland, and the *barik* system dissolved, the police and bureaucrats who served as guides for shamans in the underworld began to disappear (p. 178). The gravestones set during animist times (and never meant to be permanent) have been re-purposed as fence posts, and Christian grave markers now anchor the dead, who rest unavailable for shamanic dialogue. The language has begun to change internally under pressure of new terms and concepts such as “belief” that have been translated into Sora with neologisms. These are just some examples of lived change.

The rapidly altering world is literally taking the words out of people’s mouths, plunging them into disconcerting experiences of inarticulacy as seen in two different cases adduced by Vitebsky near the close of his book. After an absence, the anthropologist meets the Baptist convert Paranto, his “nephew”, son of his oldest friend, Inama, who had passed away in the interim. They sit in silence for a while before Vitebsky asks where he thinks the dead are now. “How can we tell?” Paranto replies, “We don’t talk to them anymore” (p. 191). Whereupon he broke down sobbing and uttered a fragment of a traditional funeral lament: “You’re going to a distant place // You’re going where I can’t pour you water.” In sobs and broken verse, theretofore relegated to silence (and evoked by the chronotopic anthropologist), Paranto measured the gap between shamanic past and Christian present. In the other example, the anthropologist re-connects with the (former) shaman Taranti, who had abandoned active practice. Momentarily inspired by a gathering of other shamans she attempts to go into trance, but fails. The success of a shaman depends on the helpers in the underworld, including an *ilda* husband, and their cooperation depends on maintaining relationships through frequent visits. Failing to enter trance, Taranti emerges sobbing: “Why couldn’t I do it...I was terrified on the path. I came back, I woke up...I gave up twelve years ago I’ve

forgotten...” (p. 313). These troubles with words, dialogues and relationships stand as instances of ethnographic history where we may discern the personal experience of historical transition.

Cultural change on Mayotte is less lamentable, perhaps because of the additive, polyphonic accommodation of change as opposed to abrupt and definitive conversion among the Sora. Spirit possession has long co-existed with Islam, yet Islam explicitly does not accept that the dead may appear and speak through mediums. Anytime a Muslim gets possessed by a *trumba* (deceased royal ancestor), even if that spirit is itself Muslim, there is a contradiction. The Mahorais are not immune to ironic reflection on the situation as when a young novice medium began to choke while possessed. Some explained that she had been ill, and that her mother had given her liquid with the Koran dissolved in it as medicine. This irritated the *trumba*, causing it to gag. One tradition was having trouble swallowing the other. Lambek delicately peels away the layers of this cultural onion, in essence reading it as a parable of the occasionally scratchy accommodation between Islam and possession. More than just a bump in the road of a legal fiction, this general case may be read as a reflection of Mahorais historical consciousness, an ongoing performative rumination on the present and its antecedents.

In another stunning piece of ethnographic history, Lambek tells the story of Nuriaty a medium who, like Taranti, abandoned her vocation sometime in the 90s. She later dreamt of the local saint vacating his tomb at a nearby beach, spirited away in a boat by Muslim figures from the past. As Mayotte’s infrastructure and financial situation improved, day-trippers from town had been picnicking at the beach and possibly urinating on the tomb. Her dream processed the insult to the saint, and figured a rescue party that included Sultan Mawana Madi, the last Sultan of Mayotte before the arrival of the French in 1841. The vacated tomb of the saint made a moral comment on the bankrupt state of local Islam. But the story did not

end there. Nuriaty began to be possessed by Sultan Mawana Madi. As his only medium on Mayotte, Nuriaty's relevance shifted from Lombeni to the whole island. Politicians began to consult her and she was invited to move to the capital. The episode presents a dream of historical orders (in both senses) that continues, through spirit possession, to map out an ordered relationship among Islam, France and the main linguistic communities of Mayotte. Politicians and historians could have laid out such plans in policy proposals or narrative histories; Nuriaty did it performatively, via the autonomous imagination (Stephen 1989) accessed in dream and trance.

Like Taranti and Nuriaty, we are all historical beings before we come to designate "history" as an object of interest, a starting point that the philosopher David Carr has insisted upon throughout his career (1986: 3, 2014: 231). Through the accumulation of particular experiences such as selling items on e-bay one comes to be generally experienced (in the sense of skilled) at that activity. The tacking back and forth between these two types of experience, distinguished by Dilthey as momentary (*Erlebnis*) and cumulative (*Erfahrung*), is the basis of personal "historicity". The whole of a person is built up from particular experiences, which are interpreted in terms of the accumulated whole, which changes with each additional experience in a hermeneutic circle.

The idea of 'historicity' and its applications within anthropology have not yet been fully worked out (Stewart 2016). Lambek furthers the task considerably by connecting the above idea of the historicity of human being that developed in phenomenology and hermeneutics (Dilthey, Husserl, Heidegger, Gadamer), with an anthropological idea of historicity that may be applied to cultural forms such as spirit possession.² In his rigorous

² This leaves aside the most common meaning of the term, "historical factuality", as in Trouillot's (1995: 29) use of historicity 1 and historicity 2 to refer to what actually happened in the past (*res gestae*) and the later accounts of that past (*historia rerum gestarum*). Bringing this dimension of the term into convincing anthropological relation with the other two senses is part of the broader challenge of historicity for anthropology.

introduction Lambek (p. 14) transfers the hermeneutic circle model of individual historicity to the dynamic social interpretation and reinterpretation of shared texts and public performances such as the wedding rituals considered above. Each successive performance is carried out in light of preceding performances, while superseding them. Formal analogy thus stands as one aspect of the relationship between public texts and individual being, although one might object that at the public level there is not the same type of preservation and integration that one finds in the executive consciousness of the person. Perhaps it is less about analogy and more to do with the active interactions between persons and social institutions that allows us to think of the historicity of public texts.

The phenomenological tradition considers that Being (*Sein*) is always a Being-with (*Mitsein*) meaning that individual historicity always already has a social dimension (Carr 2014: 54). Visits to the shaman or medium are, furthermore, often impressive experiences for individuals who interpret themselves at the same time as they read their social texts. The formation of persons and institutions is thus simultaneous. What is more, people may actively resort to rituals such as shamanism at moments when they find themselves stuck in a hermeneutic circle that spins but does not gain traction. Rituals such as Sora shamanic séances address this stuckness and move people toward reconciliation with the dead, thereby preventing them from remaining in states of fixation such as melancholia (Vitebsky, p. 124). The experiences of Taranti and Nuriaty may be understood as just such moments when the dynamic personal synthesis of experience has been impeded because the past cannot be brought into relation with their present and their intimations of the future. The blockage becomes manifest to Nuriaty in dreams through which her internal perceptions become public texts in their telling and in her practice as a medium. Individual historicity and the historicity of social texts thus affect one another in the quest for transcendence, which works in both directions. In the words of Simmel: “Life is both past and future; these are not just appended

to it by thought...” (cited in Lambek, p. 12; Simmel 2010). If, as Simmel viewed it,³ life is a process of transcendence involving the constant encounter with externally- or internally-imposed boundaries and their supersession, then Sora shamanism plays a role in individual development, and shamanic ritual develops in response to social performances. Personal and public institutional historicity are intertwined.

This brings out the central difference between Mayotte and Soraland, where the new Christian horizon imposes absolute monotheistic obedience. Monosi is the only example of someone living with plural sympathies; for the rest it is a radical break with the past (Meyer 1998) with all the sorrow that might bring to those whose close kin are locked into a no-longer accessible shamanic cosmos. Taranti and Nuriaty both issue *cris de coeur*. Nuriaty, however, finds a way through the constricted channels to the past and future to mobilize a compelling vision, while Taranti’s route to the past is impassable denying her the vitality of present synthesis. The result is the breakdown into inarticulacy that Vitebsky witnesses; what de Martino (2012) would call a “crisis of presence”. Her tears are her apperception of change in a story she tells herself about herself in the middle voice⁴, her sad comment on the change that she is; a position of resignation worth contrasting with the optimistic contemporary activist exhortation to “be the change you want to see.”

Lambek takes Gadamer’s idea of the “fusion of horizons” as a description of the internal hermeneutic processes of individuals *and* collective texts (ritual, dance, etc.) respectively. He makes a significant contribution by concentrating on that matter rather than following the usual application of Gadamer’s signature idea to the relationship between persons, for example, between an ethnographer’s horizons and the horizons of the people

³ “[T]he innermost essence of life is its capacity to go out beyond itself, to set its limits by reaching out beyond them; that is, beyond itself” (2010: 10).

⁴ The middle voice is a grammatical form in languages such as Ancient Greek used to indicate instances where the subject is both the actor and medium – the one doing the action and undergoing change as illustrated in these English-language examples: “the clothes are washing in the machine”; “the meal is cooking.” See White (2007).

being studied. This approach involves recognizing that “they” are on the same journey as “us” (Gadamer 1994: 305). The fusion of horizons cannot be achieved by psychologistic empathy, or by entering their world via Collingwood’s rationalistic re-enactment in the imagination, but by fusing our horizons with theirs in a meaningful interpretation in our present. Although Gadamer criticized Dilthey for being too romantic, the latter accurately captured the situation when he wrote: “[W]e are historical beings first, before we are observers (*Betrachter*) of history, and only because we are the former do we become the latter. . . . The historical world is always there, and the individual not only observes it from the outside but is intertwined with it (*in sie verwebt*)” (Dilthey cited in Carr 2014: 71). Although the formulation addresses “history” I think it could equally apply to the ethnographic study of other people. Lambek remarks that he fixed on the “horizon” idea in order to avoid choosing between history and anthropology (p. 16).

An illustration of the ethnographic use of one’s own historicity to understand another may be seen in Renato Rosaldo’s (1989) realization of how the tragic death of his wife enabled him to understand statements made by Philippine Ilongot headhunters more than a decade earlier. Initially he dismissed their claims that rage drove them to take enemy heads. After his wife fell from a mountain path during a later field visit the loss exposed him to feelings of rage that enabled him to comprehend the enigma of Ilongot headhunting. Novel experiences, as Rosaldo observed, “reposition” (1989: 7) social science researchers and open new possibilities for understanding. Another example where the question of personal historicity in long-term ethnographic research comes to the fore may be seen in Katherine Verdery’s, *My Life as a Spy* (2018). With the help of recently declassified secret police files, Verdery reconsiders her experience of studying Romania since the 1970s. The files, which codenamed her “Vera,” reveal how many supposed friends were reporting on her activities during the first two decades of fieldwork. This provokes an unwinding of her own historicity,

and that of her interlocutors, leading to new reflections on what was happening during fieldwork. Verdery's candor about her own vulnerability, error and regret opens further dimensions for the study of historicity via the historicity of the researcher, a matter that extends beyond one-off dramatic experiences, to the perpetual activity of synthesizing back and forth between past, present and future.

Vitebsky and Lambek might have developed more reference to their own historicities (ie. autobiographical, formative experiences) beyond the field, but we do learn a good deal about these two authors through their ethnographies. One final example indicates both the unexpected parallels between their works, as well as the entanglement in local sociality that comes with long-term field research. Soon after he moved into Lombeni, people wondered if Lambek was a liver thief. Only near the end do we learn that this was the subject of a dream that his "sister" Mariam had in 1975, but only divulged to him in 2015 (p. 269). Dreams are difficult enough to recall the following day. This one was recounted for the first time after forty years indicating an amazing strength of affective social connection. Vitebsky recounts that in the early days of fieldwork, he stayed with a friend whose daughter, Lokami, was ill with fever. During the night Vitebsky dreamed that a snake entered the house and picked up an egg in its jaws and attempted to make off with it. He stopped the snake and made it put the egg down. His host interpreted the dream to mean that he had saved his daughter from a child-swallowing spirit (p. 39). Some thirty years later, Lokami is one of the few remaining funeral shamans. Explaining her calling she says: "Isn't this what you saved me for when I was little?" This was her first ever mention of that dream. To live for three or four decades inside the dream of another; that is testament to a fusion of horizons beyond what even Gadamer might have imagined.

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