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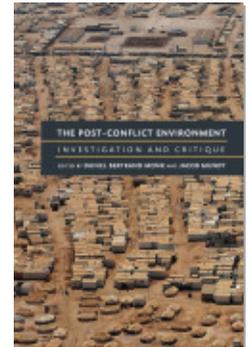
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CHAPTER 2

Peacebuilding

The Performance and Politics of Trauma in Northern Iraq

SARAH KEELER

ABSTRACT

This chapter deconstructs peacebuilding as a site of Neoliberal interventionism by highlighting preconceived notions about and the reification of what constitutes a post-conflict environment (PCE), what comprises officially sanctioned trauma and suffering, and what counts as recovery. This is done via an analysis, drawing on examples from post-2003 Iraq, of two interrelated levels integral to doctrines of peacebuilding and the promotion of good governance: mental health and trauma work and the introduction of market economy standards and the advancement of consumerism as a recuperative act on individual and societal levels.

Prevailing attitudes and practices within peacebuilding increasingly posit mental health as a necessary area of post-conflict intervention that will reform damaged psyches in the image of Western cultures of individualism; where such interventions do not bring about full recovery, this is attributed to inherently dysfunctional cultural qualities. Here, the PCE itself is reified, and the imagined beneficiaries of peacebuilding practice brought to life through behavioral norms—performances—facilitated by medical interventions. They respond as expected according to their role allocation as victims of the conflict sanctioned and reified by the official narrative. Thus trauma work facilitated by the Neoliberal peace paradigm addresses only “acceptable” post-conflict suffering, clearly demonstrating the formation of a specific entity, on which peacebuilders (and local populations alike) exert their influence, knowledge, and recovery work.

The fully recovered citizen in the PCE is considered rescued if he or she expresses well-being through full participation in the (re)constructed market economy and exchange of external production and domestic consumption; that is, in becoming a consumerist citizen. Spaces of consumption become the fora in which local people are encouraged to recover, to feel better about themselves and their political and social opportunities as citizens in the PCE. This confluence of ideas of economic and psychic recovery, of human and consumer rights, is demonstrative of how the PCE is transformed into a specific concrete reality by the very privileged actors who either benefit from intervention, consider it a Kantian imperative, or both.

INTRODUCTION

The term *peacebuilding* has come to encompass a wide range of post-conflict interventions by the international community, as well as grassroots initiatives from local NGOs and civil society actors. However, despite the proliferation of such interventions and initiatives as developed in the post-Cold War era, neither the terminology itself, nor its application in international settings, has done much to dispel its often-ambiguous nature in meaning or form.¹ In item fifty-seven of his 1992 *Agenda for Peace*—in many respects a definitive document in this new era of peacekeeping operations—UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali described “the concept of peace-building as the construction of a new *environment*”² in the wake of conflict. What this new environment might entail, be it conceptual, material, or socio-political is elusive. Indeed, as a generic term encompassing many of the specific domains analyzed elsewhere in this volume, “peacebuilding is apparently little more than a composite of neoliberal problem-solving strategies,”³ with scant attention paid to the ideological and pragmatic assumptions underpinning its application. Given the ways in which peacebuilding has come to function as a kind of vague panacea “to mobilise significant political and economic resources for increasingly intrusive third party interventions,”⁴ recent decades have seen its advance into myriad post-conflict settings,⁵ and alongside it the pervasive if at times malleable notion of exactly what constitutes those same settings. Not only is the (highly flexible) notion of peacebuilding increasingly invoked among theorists and practitioners in development studies, anthropology, security studies, and a host of other disciplinary fields, it has also become something of a household concept, held as a kind

of positive, progressive ideal against which little critical inquiry has occurred, not least amongst the very “benefactors” of such peacebuilding operations in “war torn” societies or post-conflict environments. With an awareness of this pervasiveness, and its relevance to practitioners, benefactors, recipients, and observers, in the analysis that follows I advance a view of peacebuilding as a kind of cultural terrain which both concribes and is imposed upon the post-conflict environment. Accounting for both the ideological legacies of imperialism and earlier forms of global intervention from which contemporary peacebuilding partially stems,⁶ as well as the agency and variability present in culturally contingent settings at the broadest level (and that with which peacebuilding is most concerned), my exploration “insists on interpreting violence and conflict in all the detail of social and cultural contexts, contexts which they also powerfully shape” in order to “show that they are formative of socio-political relations on the widest as well as the smallest scale.”⁷

Speaking of what he calls the high modernist taste for mapping not only geographic terrains but consequent social realities, James Scott remarks on “the apparent power of maps to transform as well as merely summarize the facts that they portray.”⁸ By exploring the cultural and social mapping of post-conflict environments as well as their physical realities, I aim to show how peacebuilding functions as a process of meaning making mutually created by actors “within” and “outside” this reified space. This not only problematises the chronological and geospatial boundaries of the post-conflict environment, but reveals peacebuilding itself to be a kind of ethnographic site populated by “victims,” “perpetrators,” “recipients,” “donors,” “assessors,” “observers,” “practitioners,” and others as *social roles* rather than absolute positions. Such an analysis of the post-conflict environment, for the purposes of the present volume, addresses the need to elucidate the particular relationship between the object constituted in the practice and performance of such roles⁹ and the ways in which in mutually defining relations, subjectivities in post-conflict societies shape these interventions. Further, in practical ethnographic terms such an analysis highlights processes whereby, rather than marking any conclusive disjuncture between the cessation of conflict and the emergence of peace and peacebuilding processes, “post-conflict” environments represent terrains of ongoing tension and residual violence, normalized into structural power relations and channeled into and performed through the kinds of social roles cited above, much as Mundy’s exploration of transitional justice as an important site in which the

politics of naming determines not only the role allocation for actors but also the very understanding of peace and justice. Specifically here, peacebuilding initiatives, set within the normative structures of global relations of inequality and intervention, may in fact advance the very systems of conflict and domination they seek to ameliorate, and unwittingly become caught up in the societal dispersal of residual violence.¹⁰

The semi-autonomous Kurdish region of northern Iraq represents these liminal realities between war and peace in a particularly interesting way, given its position *within* a state still caught up in the ravages of war. The Kurdistan region alone is internationally lauded as a beacon of democracy and prosperity within this otherwise grim picture of contemporary Iraqi politics of violence. Given its relative stability and quasi-state status,¹¹ Iraqi Kurdistan is also an ideal (and idealized) recipient of the kind of peacebuilding initiatives that effectively serve to recast the post-conflict environment in their own image, along the way investing notions of personhood, citizenship, and social and economic relations that sustain the archetypal social roles described above. For example, because of security concerns in wider Iraq and the relative stability in the north, the majority of aid and NGO activities operate from the Kurdistan region, where a glut of international aid, investment, and attention is focused; if Iraq as a whole is a disaster beyond repair (so a realist view might hold), then *Iraqi Kurdistan* is ripe for and responsive to the various kinds of interventions that aid, investment, and wider international attention promote. And the Kurds—government, civil society, individuals—play their roles well, whether as the infant democracy cast in the likeness of their benefactors, the perpetual and deeply traumatized victims of Arab (or Iranian state) aggressors, or the enclave of secularist cultural patterns in the face of Islamist expansion. The Iraqi Kurdish ethnic minority, numbering some six million, have since the 2003 invasion become the exemplary, the “worthy” Iraqis within international Neoliberalism.¹² Whatever the commitments (or lack thereof) from the international community to the idea of sustained Kurdish autonomy, the payoffs for this responsiveness on the part of the Kurdistan region have been foreign interventions and private interests alike consistently and intensively engaging with the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in what amount to processes of state- and nation-building; this even while the international community continues to assert the political integrity of Iraq as a whole.

In what follows I focus on data derived from my own fieldwork in Iraqi Kurdistan between 2007 and 2010,¹³ also drawing on comparative material

from Sri Lanka and Latin America, in exploring, via several inter-related themes, the ethnographic site of peacebuilding. My own situatedness within this site stems from my initial role as a teacher of sociology to students in Iraq, and later to my observation and evaluation of numerous local peacebuilding initiatives funded by such actors as USAID, UN Assistance Mission for Iraq/UNDP, and the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), for which the university where I worked was asked to provide on-site programme assessment, and for which I subsequently acted as a freelance consultant. This in turn led to my academic research on the place of trauma work within wider peacebuilding agendas. This straddling of two perspectives—of critical analysis from the point of view of academic distance, and of praxis on the ground—not only allowed me to observe at close range the everyday practices and processes of peacebuilding. That I myself occupied some of the roles which I interrogate herein has also allowed me to problematize the subjectivities (my own and those of others) formed through interpersonal relations, practices of “professionalism,” and local logics of dependence and need. I contend that the underlying but pervasive state-centric approach of peacebuilding conceives of a particular social and political landscape that has its corollary in geographic and material landscapes in the post-conflict environment. That is, the available roles for social actors, or at least those roles that gain recognition and legitimacy within peacebuilding in the broadest sense, effectively promote the transformation of post-conflict societies—and the peoples that make them up—along Neoliberal lines which simultaneously uphold as desirable “Western” forms of modernity, while emphasizing the supposedly endemic inability within post-conflict societies to achieve those forms without external interventions. Instrumental in this is a frequent ignorance of the role of cultural, social, and community dynamics, which are not absolutes but continually shifting, in the implementation of peacebuilding initiatives. Recognition that communities and individuals within these cultural spaces shape practices and meanings of peacebuilding in important and shifting ways is also forgotten or ignored. Even where such awareness is ostensibly taken into account, the interpretation of fixed positions as opposed to social roles for actors within peacebuilding can exacerbate if not lead to further tensions and forms of structural violence in stages of “post-conflict.” Thus both peacebuilding and the post-conflict environment come to be represented and understood as reified absolutes, rather than as ideas or cultural spaces constantly in the process rendering meaning through relations of inter-subjectivity. The current and

pervasive representation of peacebuilding as a universalist “model” clearly invests these meanings with Neoliberal (political, economic) intent—not as contingent and culturally derived, but as absolute.

With reference to Iraqi Kurdistan, I look at the ways in which these issues impinge on the notion of the Self promoted in peacebuilding, and consider this in the context of trauma work. I argue that the conception of the Self promoted in Western psycho-social readings of human development (and trauma) are congruent with conceptions of the Self necessary for the advancement of a Neoliberal economic model, in which growth and consumption are seen as the panacea for post-conflict recovery. Indeed, I view the proliferation of peacebuilding NGOs, and their increasingly competitive bids for (Western) funding, as emblematic of this coalescence of conceptions of the traumatized Self on the one hand, and of the citizen-as-consumer on the other. These tendencies are to be observed, in Iraq as elsewhere, in myriad discursive and political practices in which “neoliberal policies and ideologies have generally called for the subjugation of political and social life to a set of processes termed ‘market forces.’”¹⁴

My eleven months of intensive ethnographic fieldwork in hospitals in Erbil, Kurdistan region, observing the performance,¹⁵ treatment, and attitudes towards women sufferers of “hysteria” provided ample opportunity to observe these inter-subjective constructions of the post-conflict environment, the social roles which populate it, and the political economy of trauma at work in Iraqi Kurdistan. Dichotomized representations of “Western” modernity as a sought-after ideal to be mimetically performed and inculcated by indigenous, educated modernizers, are reflected in both the treatment of patients and the changing attitudes of doctors to the illness categories surrounding “mental health.” Thus, young women who express unrestrained despair in their performances of trauma are often casually denigrated¹⁶ as coming from “traditional,” poor, or “village” families (and therefore as lacking the skills necessary to present their trauma in “appropriate” ways—despite the fact that my observations suggested a great deal more diversity to the patient profile), while those who self-identify as “traumatized” or “depressed” are seen as having legitimate ailments worthy of “real” therapeutic response, but also as being imbued with the tools to engage in inter-subjective relations of rehabilitation along rational, bureaucratized, lines. The ways in which such rationalizing inter-subjectivities are shaping post-conflict responses to trauma, as well as marginalizing as “traditional” or “irrelevant” other forms of expression or response, were made more apparent to me in

my work with older generations of medical practitioners. Although previous systematic work on the topic is absent, my enquiries suggest that not only do women's expressions of social suffering reflect pervasive conditions of inequality, and may in any case have roots in cultural practices of lamentation,¹⁷ but also that both points may have been readily recognized in therapeutic settings in earlier generations where today they are silenced or denigrated as "backward" or anti-modern, a further site of intervention to be "rehabilitated" by local medical staff and those in the NGO sector, both Kurdish and foreign. Despite the fact that even in the contemporary context "hysterical" episodes may be treated effectively (providing relief to patients and families) through recourse to local folk explanations—that is, exorcism of malevolent spirits by local religious specialists—such practices fall outside the realm of linear, modernizing progression in the post-conflict space. In other words, medical professionals in Iraq, often in collaboration with those in the international peacebuilding sector, increasingly subscribe to normative ideas about "appropriate" expressions of, sources of, and treatments for suffering which call on new ideas of the Self, subscribing to explanations of post-traumatic stress wrought by finite events in Iraq's political history, and identifying the solution in large-scale, externally funded and conceived, interventions. Patients, young women in particular, are also becoming (consciously or otherwise) engaged in these shifting beliefs, structures, and inter-subjectivities, the social and political efficacy of which is apparent. Resources and attention are available to those who are traumatized by finite events, who find a rational language for narrating this (in contrast to the wailing and often incoherent suffering of "hysterics"), and above all, who present their ills within sanctioned (medical) spaces that draw on "the use of rationalized, bureaucratic techniques of assessment to authenticate, categorize, and legitimize particular forms of suffering."¹⁸

Emerging explanatory models coalesce around these supposedly neutral practices of peacebuilding in medicine, reconstruction, and the rational technologies of both. Ryad, a recent graduate of Erbil Medical College who now works in the emergency hospital, treating women's breakdowns on a daily basis, explained to me, "Every Iraqi patient, every Iraqi person [. . .] they have a lot of problems, conflict [. . .] we have been through so much [. . .] so no one of us are normal."¹⁹ Like many Iraqi professionals working in the area, the means by which to advance social and political stability for Ryad rests partially in an identification of the ways in which Iraqi society is pervasively pathological. For local practitioners and international NGO workers,

remedying this trauma, this “abnormality” is part and parcel of advancing Neoliberal political structures, particularly economic practices. For example, Heartland Alliance, a mental health organization working with US Agency for International Development (USAID) funding across the Kurdistan region, identifies its aim “to develop a cost-effective, efficacious treatment intervention for traumatic stress specifically focusing on victims of torture”²⁰ indicating the assumed presence of a normative “traumatic stress” in relation to political violence, the efficacy of an external (US) treatment intervention model, and the benefits of aligning these with wider market forces of cost effectiveness. While these initiatives have been partial in terms of reaching therapeutic spaces in Kurdistan as a whole (indeed, while several of the doctors I worked with were aware of the existence of Heartland Alliance, none had had any direct contact with their programs, leaving me to wonder about their reach), local doctors increasingly employ tropes of trauma in explaining social behaviors and link these more explicitly to political violence and the Kurds’ role as victims of finite, culturally specific historical events. The place of Kurdish cultural identity within this dynamic both shapes and is refracted back through, for example, the ways in which trauma is conceptualized and treated primarily through a distancing from “backward” and “indigenous” attitudes and practices. This discourse, for practitioners and beneficiaries, is rife with symbols of the backward character of traditional Kurdish society which is both irremediable after traumatic exposure to conflict but can be elevated through education (by outsiders) and intervention, brought into a universal realm of post-conflict order, progress, and growth so central to a global political economy.

Through large international apparatuses managed by the likes of USAID and International Organization for Migration (both big players in the Kurdistan region), the establishment and funding of local peacebuilding and other reconstruction activities—taking place in a competitive free market in which recipients of service become merely bidders for and consumers of a product—increasingly not only serves corporate interests²¹ but emulates those very corporate structures that facilitate entrenched inequalities in bringing about “peace” or “rehabilitation.”²² Local NGO initiatives and individual beneficiaries among the population are called upon to demonstrate the efficacy, efficiency, and deliverability of these strategies, while “state-sponsored and non-state interventions [. . .] contributed to the commoditization of suffering.”²³ Before turning to a more detailed discussion of the ways in which these processes in Kurdistan region place trauma work within

a Neoliberal political economic model, I turn briefly to a discussion of the shortcomings in the literature on peacebuilding which have prevented such observations and critiques.

THEORIES OF PEACEBUILDING: CONCEPTIONS OF “LOCAL,” “UNIVERSAL,” AND THE LEGITIMIZATION OF INTERVENTION

The extant literature in peace and conflict studies, even while informed by various disciplinary trajectories in the social sciences, has been reticent to address the tangible consequences of protracted conflicts at the community level, and their relationships to changing social relations wrought by trauma and loss of basic trust.²⁴ This practice of “seeing like a state,” even in conditions which help to exacerbate historic conflicts, not only serve to “flatten” complex on-the-ground diversities (as well as potential sites of violence)²⁵ but can be instrumental in shaping new forms of identity. Peacebuilders may scramble eagerly, in the wake of violent conflict, to identify social categories of protagonists and antagonists,²⁶ or the “worthy” recipients of their interventions. The Kurds in Iraq, strong allies of the Americans as well as foreign investors more generally, have joined this cast in the Iraqi context as the requisite victims of the Ba’athist regime.²⁷ If Saddam’s *Al Anfal* campaign had genocidal intent, peacebuilding initiatives in the post-Saddam era have adhered just as stringently to fixed readings of ethnicity and its place in the new Iraq. At the same time, local populations, embedded as they are within the inter-subjective relations of this context, are instrumental in shaping post-conflict societies’ own conceptions of themselves on the world stage and in grounded social relations.

Rarely do such narratives critically consider the ways in which the privileging of reified identities and the groups they are said to represent may exacerbate inter-communal tensions and existing conflicts, or contribute to new forms of violence at the interpersonal, community, and state levels. In part, this shortcoming is explained by the “standard operating procedure” approach taken by peacebuilders, and the fact that the literature still emphasizes pragmatic dimensions of peacebuilding at the expense of theoretical or ideological considerations.²⁸ Further, while the literature within peace and conflict studies has increasingly engaged with the notion of non-state actors as important units of analysis (and prescriptive intervention) in the global

terrain of so-called new wars, on the whole theorists and observers alike have been slow to consider the ways in which this diffusion of conflict dynamics penetrates everyday experiences at the interpersonal level in post-conflict societies—in the form, for example, of spiraling levels of gender violence²⁹ or “lawlessness.”³⁰

The fact that peacebuilding paradigms tend to be uncritical of the ideological stances and assumptions they promote, as well as ignoring the ways in which peacebuilding *practices* help to measure, label, and thus (as in a feedback loop) shape the very conditions of conflict they seek to remedy, is certainly tied with their UN heritage.³¹ Despite assertions to the contrary, individual and institutional actors in the cultural terrain of peacebuilding seek to quantify “war-torn societies” or “post-conflict environments” as sites of objective knowledge, reifying and locating them geographically, historically, and culturally, without much consideration for the ways in which our active relations and negotiations with these sites is instrumental in *producing* that knowledge, as much as our notions of intervention or “rehabilitation” are shaped by the knowledges of those actors who occupy this space. As the main proponents of and actors in peacebuilding in the 1990s, the UN, prompted by the political will of its member states, continued to promote its agenda tied to ideas about sovereign states. At the same time, in attempting to operationalise lessons from earlier forms of peacekeeping which called for the strengthening of “civil society,” that mandate was at times effectively undermined.³² The UN peacebuilding paradigm has been, from its inception, split at its very root; through the UN promotion and strengthening of entities that look like states, together with the advancement (and formalization) of social and political processes which may run counter to this.

Overall, the favored Neoliberal approach supports the “universal” status quo rather than acknowledging the “crucial uncertainty and indeterminacy”³³ entailed by an analysis which might incorporate an awareness of the inter-subjectivities which shape the post-conflict environment as a cultural terrain. At the same time, through the promotion of particular kinds of personhood implied within the identification and treatment of trauma, a statist, collective, and generic approach is complemented by its antithesis, in the form of the emphasis on the individual Self in both therapeutic and economic dimensions of peacebuilding. A notion of the Self at the core of assumptions about the therapeutic and economic remaking of societies, this is a decidedly Western, middle-class, invocation³⁴ inhabiting

a world divided between the “enemy-other” (of the past, fundamentalist ethics, and ethnic identity) and an “ideal-other” (of the future, rationalist ethics, and civic identity). The ideal-other is similarly reproduced via the “us”/“them” boundary where “they” should become what “we” imagine ourselves to be.³⁵

This version of the Self promoted in (dichotomized) intervention strategies (and echoing the ideas of the Kurdish professionals cited above) is situated within the same temporal reading of societies transformed through conflict, in which peace is seen as a “logical” and inevitable outcome of modernization and development interventions.

Significantly, much peacebuilding fails in diverging from older, explicitly imperialist paradigms of foreign intervention in its portrayal of war-torn peripheral societies as passive, simply waiting for foreign intervention and the development of democratic, peaceful institutions.³⁶ Even where agency is afforded to people in post-conflict environments, as with research on “perceptions” of peacebuilding intervention,³⁷ it is often done as a means to identify this as a challenge to operations, and thus determine effective strategies for managing or overcoming, rather than incorporating, local views.³⁸ In this it does not differ significantly from the “hearts and minds” doctrine³⁹ of the George W. Bush Administration in Iraq and Afghanistan.⁴⁰ Local populations, while being mined for “indigenous” capacities that might assist peacebuilders in their task, are effectively written out of the process, as well as the reflections on practice which might improve peacebuilding initiatives overall. Although for some “what is needed is a close, hard look at this new form of peacekeeping, at the challenges it poses for the United Nations both in principle and in practice, and at the patterns of success and failure on the ground,”⁴¹ no comparable process of reflection on local voices, culturally contingent strategies, or collaborative practices within peacebuilding is seen as necessary. This attitude is co-opted at the social level in Iraq, as local people respond to and incorporate themselves into these paradigms as a means both to make sense of rapid social and economic change in the course of peacebuilding, and in pragmatic terms, to gain the visibility that will privilege them in this system. This is evident in the practices around and performance of post-conflict trauma; both discourses and practices of trauma are embedded within global markets of meaning and money,⁴² and in the same way that a state-driven Kurdish self is shaped by and shapes Western ideas of and strategies for the Iraqi state, so too the individual, passive self—

victimized, traumatized, without agency—gains legitimacy in the international community and local peacebuilding through the performance of these post-conflict inter-subjectivities by local populations.⁴³

Thus, while preaching a novel humanist transformation from militarized *peacekeeping* to civil society-oriented *peacebuilding*, we are often presented with a narrative “mystified in the language of emancipation,”⁴⁴ employing these tropes to legitimize ongoing intervention. Much literature now focuses on “participatory decision making,” “local knowledge,” “indigenous leadership,” and a host of other opaque terms designed to empower and involve the recipients of peacebuilding interventions. However, in keeping with global trends in the privatization of social responsibility, an overarching assumption places the *onus for* “failure” of the state, and the pathology of political and cultural processes, squarely in the social realm, with few accompanying *rights to* self-determination. In other words, global inequalities are naturalized as being inherent to cultural forms, and with them the idea that the development of effective political structures is only possible through the intervention (and charity) of those few with the capacities for recognizing and building these.

In order to explore how these normative structures are promoted via peacebuilding interventions and local/global inter-subjectivities, and to illustrate how this can in turn contribute to structural violence, I discuss below how peacebuilders and KRG government actors re-imagine Iraqi Kurdistan as a temporally and spatially “post-conflict environment.” In so doing, I further develop a focus on the performance of individual inter-subjectivities embedded within trauma, and link this with processes of free market economic liberalization, considering how in both instances a universalized notion of the individual Self is a central feature.

PROCESSES OF VIOLENCE AND PERFORMANCES OF TRAUMA IN IRAQI KURDISTAN

For nearly forty years, the Kurdish population in northern Iraq has experienced continual instability and exposure to various forms of protracted violence in campaigns organized by the Ba’athist regime, due to the machinations of American intervention in the region, through uneven, factious participation in the Iran-Iraq war, and finally through the factional violence sparked by internecine rivalries between the two dominant Kurdish guerrilla

groups operating in Iraq throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP).⁴⁵ While throughout the 1980s this inter-state war visited regular bloodshed and instability on the Kurdish population in northern Iraq, it was the *Al Anfal* campaign which most spectacularly devastated the Kurdistan region, and solidified collective internal sentiments amongst the Kurds as a threatened minority nation within Iraq's borders.

During this period in Iraqi history, village destruction, forced relocations, mass executions, disappearances, and rapes by the Ba'athist regime became routine experiences for people living in the Kurdistan region, whether or not they had actively participated in the guerrilla insurgencies. Although the *Al Anfal*, and particularly the Halabja massacre—in which 5,000 civilians were killed in a single morning of gas attacks on the town not far from the Iranian border—were later cited as justification for US-led incursions into Iraq, the international community had little comment at the time these atrocities were taking place. The Halabja massacre has crystallized in Kurdish popular consciousness and social memory as one form of expressing suffering and commemoration as sanctioned by official voices, both those of Kurdish nationalist interests and the international community. This official sanctioning does not, of course, prevent contestations over the subject of Halabja either, particularly in relation to the alleged participation of KDP *peshmerga* (rebel forces), and later to the healthcare and provisions for livelihood made by the KRG for the survivors of the gas attacks.⁴⁶

In 1991, in the wake of the massive refugee crisis among Kurds in the first Gulf War, the Americans undertook *Operation Provide Comfort*, which later led to the establishment of the northern Kurdish region of Iraq as an official “safe haven” within the country. Although little actual government support was provided by the US, this twelve year period in Iraqi Kurdistan initially allowed for the establishment of a relative degree of stability, the decline of open political violence, and a massive influx of aid money from Western countries, leaving the Kurdistan region in a unique, liminal position between conflict zone and peaceful society within the wider fortunes of Iraq. This unique status and the long series of political processes in which it was embedded lend a certain absurdity to the task of pinpointing the moment when conflict “ended” in Iraqi Kurdistan, marking the temporal beginning of a *post* phase.

While for the most part the KRG has been highly successful in stabilizing its territorial integrity and the safety and security of its people, this integrity

and separation is not absolute or without cost, and the more heated continual conflict still visiting southern Iraq manifests in various ways in the Kurdistan region. For example, huge numbers of Iraqi Arabs seeking refuge have crossed the KRG border, particularly Christians from Baghdad, settling in Ainkawa, the Christian Quarter in Erbil. This means ongoing exposure to the social and personal realities of conflict, and in many respects a heightened awareness of potentially antagonistic religious, ethnic, and regional identities.⁴⁷ Even during the period of my own fieldwork in 2007 to early 2008, Turkish military incursions into Iraqi airspace served to psychologically destabilize the population and threatened real political confrontation. Here too conflicts cannot be viewed or analyzed in isolation, but are embedded in complex and often convoluted global and regional realities. For its part, the KRG, given its “head start” in processes of reconstruction and peacebuilding, has been relentless in its drive, exploiting the status of model democracy in Iraq, at the same time as the region continued to be implicated in contradictory processes of ongoing violence, economic and political consolidation, and contestations over memories of its traumatized past.

Excluded from the officially sanctioned record, however, are forms of everyday suffering that nonetheless pervade social life; they do not adhere to the modernist reading of Iraqi Kurdistan as a beacon of progressive democracy in an otherwise chaotic political landscape. Nor do they register with the wider priorities of peacebuilding or its generic rendering of the post-conflict environment. Instead, narratives of both ongoing suffering and residual violence which I observed, and which co-exist with both the mundane and euphoric characterizations of what in many respects represents an ideal of post-conflict recovery, are sidelined.

As discussed previously, this is aptly demonstrated in the performance, treatment, and increasing attention paid to trauma and mental health in normative practices that de-legitimize systemic forms of (gendered) suffering, “resignifying post-conflict violence as noncritical,”⁴⁸ *post*-traumatic, something to be rehabilitated through cost-effective, efficient means, with patients and sufferers themselves often treated as nothing more than consumers in a marketplace of peacebuilding services. While women may act in compliance with or resistance to the social roles made available within the terrain of the post-conflict environment and the trauma work of such organizations as Heartland Alliance, their “choices” in this regard can certainly be said to influence the extent to which their experiences gain recognition.⁴⁹ Women I spoke with might describe their torment as emanating from *dil*

grana (literally a “tight heart”), and cite myriad, interconnected forms of social suffering from the domestic (abusive husbands or in-laws, confinement in the home) to governmental (lack of basic resources or livelihoods), all of which they feel are ignored by local medical practitioners, NGOs, and the international media. Such relatively powerful actors, in fulfilling their roles in the post-conflict environment, are likely to consign this female suffering to a simplified, one-size-fits-all category of either hysteria or trauma/PTSD.⁵⁰ Recalling Benjamin’s critique of the state of exception, but also echoing the complaints of women in Kurdistan, Summerfield points out that “the danger of the medicalisation of everyday life is that it deflects attention from what millions of people worldwide might cite as the basis of their distress—for example, poverty and lack of rights.”⁵¹ In other words, it pathologizes as “cultural” (and therefore naturalizes as endemic) what may be pervasive social and economic conditions.

The deterministic character of much post-conflict reconstruction, directed towards particular visions of and desires for modernity, further ignores ongoing expressions of violence which permeate society as a whole. Instead of recognizing the ways in which conflict trajectories and political/interpersonal violence can be seen as points on a continuum, embedded within ongoing political and economic processes, such patchy memorialisation and selective forgetting in the context of continued suffering relegate subjectively experienced trauma to the realm of the “uncanny,”⁵² casting it as something outside the frame of national memory, irrelevant, exceptional, without a “function.” Articulating explicitly the notion that individual expressions of trauma represent a kind of deviance, one Kurdish diaspora returnee discussed with me the relationship between levels of domestic violence and the political history of Kurdistan. “Has Europe overcome its experience of WWII?” she asked, somewhat rhetorically. Without waiting to be answered she said, “so it will be at least two generations before we can even think about being normal again.”⁵³ In seeking to address these realities, much research on violence and collective trauma suggests that true recovery necessarily involves the incorporation and reconciliation of experiences from a diverse range of actors, including those cast as “enemies,” external, marginal, or antagonist to the national memory.⁵⁴ The imagining of the post-conflict environment advanced via peacebuilding initiatives often prescribes a script by which those collective traumas are performed and which identify fixed social roles, of “perpetrator”/“victim,” “male”/“female,” etc. For example, gendered readings of Iraqi society in the run-up to and since

the 2003 invasion often cast Iraqi women as perpetual victims, not of foreign occupiers, but of Iraqi *men* and their patriarchal societal norms, a narrative to which many elite Kurdish feminists (usually from the position of exile, and highly criticized by female activists in Kurdistan itself) have heavily subscribed.⁵⁵ Recognition of the social complexity of grounded relations is selective, often diverted into simplistic narratives.⁵⁶

TRAUMA, GENDER, AND RESISTANCE

In Iraqi Kurdistan discursive practices of post-conflict modernity and the performance of trauma they facilitate inscribe gender and power in particular ways. The discourse surrounding PTSD and the “global flow of knowledge on war trauma”⁵⁷ are misleading, because they seem to suggest that individuals and communities who do not or cannot fruitfully seek and be treated for their traumas in such a way that aligns with Western notions of the Self, “appropriate” interventions, and the Neoliberal global system more generally are simply irremediable. The ideal subject of military, peacebuilding, or therapeutic interventions responds favorably to *post*-conflict, *post*-trauma rehabilitation, while those who do not are ascribed with atavistic tendencies inherent to the society in question. The linear temporal trajectory of post-conflict is echoed in discourses of the post-trauma character of stress, in which, in psychosocial understandings, the subject compulsively revisits a traumatic event in a kind of meaning-making exercise. And like the intractable and mentally unsound patient dealing repetitively with their initial trauma, conflict-ridden societies may compulsively and uncontrollably return again and again to their historical conflicts, dysfunctional and atavistic as they are.

The increasing awareness of war trauma and the concomitant importance of PTSD discourses have become a central feature of both the management of refugee populations in Western states⁵⁸ and in peacebuilding work in war-torn societies,⁵⁹ and have led to an overall reduction of “analysis of war to an unexplained spectacle of horror.”⁶⁰ This emphasis on (social and cultural) pathologies, and the accompanying portrayal of violence as causeless, or emanating from the general lawlessness of conflict-ridden societies,⁶¹ effectively overwrites the forms of structural violence at the heart of the global relations which also serve to legitimize foreign intervention and/or peacebuilding initiatives.⁶²

Even assuming we ignore the violence at the heart of the Neoliberal citizen-as-consumer ideal, and underscored by the same notion of the self as that promoted in Western therapeutic norms, there remains a substantial problem in the pragmatic application of war trauma discourses and therapeutic interventions within the PTSD trope in such a way that often ignores the “new languages and social and cultural differences which likely script traumatic injury, resilience, and healing very differently from western middle class, white, Anglo points of view.”⁶³ Beyond the obvious cultural limits of this construct, the emphasis on “war trauma” present in such discourses propound a “war begets trauma” perspective the corollary of which is “peace begets recovery.” A logical follow-on from this is the view that, when the wider peacebuilding initiatives associated with PTSD programs do not yield observable, efficient results within a linear conflict trajectory, they can be understood as having “failed.” This line of thinking reiterates the failed states discourse in psychosocial terms, and its contribution to “perceptions of the need to discipline damaged and culturally mal-programmed citizens into appropriate behavioral norms,”⁶⁴ highlighting the ways in which social and community dynamics come to subtly reiterate the concept of the state as central.

But on the contrary, “irremediable” suffering, where present, can equally be understood as a form of resistance to the (often violent) therapeutic interventions of the state, and its Neoliberal expectations surrounding social life, selfhood, and the body.⁶⁵ In the broadest sense, the “insurgency”⁶⁶ of trauma as expressed by hysterical women, in its very incoherence, renders chronological readings of post-conflict prosperity equally meaningless, such that “power, after investing itself in the body, finds itself exposed to a counter-attack in that same body.”⁶⁷ Medical anthropologists have identified ways in which culturally contingent practices may serve to contain rather than promote violence in conflict-ridden societies,⁶⁸ as well as noting the efficacy of seemingly “irremediable” post-conflict trauma in asserting ongoing suffering in the face of portrayals of societal recovery, stability, and security in the post-war era.⁶⁹

For example, resisting a characterization of post-conflict peace which appears meaningless in the face of ongoing social, psychological, and physical violence, for widows in Guatemala the psychological illness that accompanies pervasive fear and trauma, “rather than an acute reaction [it] is a chronic condition.”⁷⁰ In such circumstances, the efficacy of peacebuilding initiatives that might “remedy” such ailments is drawn into question. This chronic

state of fear is, in addition to being a source of suffering, also a form of resistance against these prescriptive attempts at linear temporal meaning-making by peacebuilding (and state) narratives. Local medical practices too, eager to demonstrate their “modern” credentials on the one hand, and systematically oriented to patriarchal structures that habitually violate and degrade experiences of female suffering—irrespective of “war”—on the other, feed into this repression of agency or “insurrection,” as doctors’ narratives described above demonstrate. In acts which belie a denied agency and that rile against normative readings of post-conflict, traumatized people and societies, “through their bodies also chronicle the social, cultural and political transgressions that have been perpetrated against them,”⁷¹ in such a way that belies the efficacy of liberal peacebuilding in the post-conflict era, and offers instead a vision of daily life in which conflict is still present, and linked backwards and forwards to structural and systemic violence in community life and the international system. My own work with female hysteria sufferers in Iraq suggests similarly that women’s sickness which remains “irremediable” despite the post-conflict security now enjoyed in Kurdistan region,⁷² and its attendant peacebuilding developments particularly in PTSD, works for these women to “(re)present through their bodies the horrors that they had experienced, and as such illness has become a powerful communicative force.”⁷³

Foucault’s seminal studies of madness⁷⁴ remind us of the intimate link between violence and mental illness. For Iraqi women, this was particularly true in two senses: hysterical episodes of mental ill health perform and record realities of physical, structural, military, or political violence witnessed or directly experienced. These non-normative expressions of trauma are threatening to the ideal (and gendered) Self, to grand narratives of a stable, peaceful society in a phase of statebuilding, and thus to the symbolic and social underpinnings of the nation itself, and consequently must be subdued. They also belie the uncritical investment and faith in technological modernity—both within Iraq and amongst international peacebuilders—as a means by which the post-conflict society recovers. Taken from this point of view, Iraqi women’s embodied suffering serves as a kind of living archive which brings the profound and psychic trauma of years of exposure to violence, war, and oppression into daily lived realities, and whose outbursts of illness assert a kind presence,⁷⁵ a visibility in the face of the denial and forgetting that many see as the work of peacebuilding, reconciliation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction; a very real and “permanent visibility” which none-

theless exerts power over and defines ideas of the self and individual behavior.⁷⁶ Thus in a very real sense hysterical outbreaks among Iraqi women are a deviant form of protest against both the quotidian daily realities of oppression, surveillance, and threats of violence under which women in Iraq live, and of the grand narratives of gender and ethnic identity and state-building with which they interact. This is not to uncritically portray Kurdish women as victims of processes larger than themselves. Indeed, it is precisely the sorts of inter-subjectivities discursively structured by and within the imagined post-conflict environment, which have created spaces where such dispossessed voices participate in global political economic realities involving processes of modernity, intervention, reconstruction, and peacebuilding; what Argenti-Pillan calls “the global flow of trauma discourse.”⁷⁷ Herscher, elsewhere in this volume, has demonstrated how the conception of “local” and “external” actors in reconstruction agendas not only casts the former as passive recipients of the aid of the latter, but equally positions local forms of agency and power as marginal and deviant. Likewise, in relations laden with power, collective and individual expressions of trauma (in Iraq and elsewhere) shape and are shaped by peacebuilders’ notions of “the healthy society,” and with it, “the pressure for evidence from the body”⁷⁸ in the global marketing of trauma, intervention, and rehabilitation.

A tension exists, however, in these discursive practices of meaning making. As an alternate reading of the post-conflict environment and an embodied record of ongoing violence, these unsanctioned performances of trauma also represent a deviation from the grand narratives of post-conflict Iraqi Kurdistan, touted as “the other Iraq” in KRG promotional materials, and portrayed as a

joyful, peaceful place [. . .] where Arabs, Kurds and westerners all vacation together [. . .] that has practiced democracy for over a decade, a place where the universities, markets, cafes and fairgrounds buzz with progress and prosperity.⁷⁹

Hughes and Pupavac demonstrate how such narratives promoted by foreign peacebuilders and local elites characterize “the powerlessness of ordinary people, manifested as passivity interspersed with bouts of destructive rage, [such that] that foreign intervention must act not only upon the state but upon society also, to create new individuals with the capacity for self-government.”⁸⁰ Taken to its conclusion, these assertions form the underly-

ing logic of and justification for peacebuilding as governance. That is to say that peacebuilding, while not having the same official mandates as *peacekeeping* operations, has more far-reaching, social aims at its heart, and is therefore of necessity an ideological venture akin to “winning hearts and minds.” In any case, military interventions and those of peacebuilding increasingly bleed into one another in contemporary conflict management; they are present in

attempts to police the collective action of civil society and, most intrusively, to reconstruct culture and the very personality of individuals through psychosocial intervention involving both formal and informal education, from parenting classes to relationship counselling.⁸¹

The kind of advancement of the individual Self as understood in PTSD discourses and their operation within peacebuilding, in addition to being potentially damaging to local apprehensions of self, community, and society,⁸² are also those that fit most conveniently into the kind of consumer-as-citizen ideology of post-conflict peace embedded within reconstruction efforts involving the development of commercial spaces and heritage/leisure parks.⁸³

Another striking example of the ways in which subaltern voices run counter to official narratives of progress can be seen in the “rehabilitation” of “heritage” architecture in Erbil. The historic *Qalat*, or Erbil Citadel, is the central landmark of the urban landscape. Until 2003, it was also home to a large community of displaced Kurds whose homes and land had been confiscated in the Ba’athists’ Arabization policy which formed part of the demographic battle for the oil-rich Kirkuk region. The regime forcibly removed many Kurdish families, and of those who were not offered land in neighboring regions, many found themselves in Erbil, where they soon occupied the disintegrating old dwellings atop the citadel, building lives and homes at the time unimpeded by local authorities. With few material resources at their disposal, most eked out an existence selling cigarettes or toiletry items in the nearby bazaar, with young children aiding in the family livelihood. Shortly after the invasion, as the KRG set to consolidate its cultural as well as political presence on the new mapping of the region, plans were made to declare the *Qalat* a UNESCO world heritage site and renovate the historic buildings at its summit; this decision involved the removal of the Kirkuki families who had resettled there in previous years. Although the KRG made official provision assistance for the relocation of these families, in practice such support rarely

reached its targets. When I began work with an NGO providing mobile health services in some of the more impoverished shanty towns on the outskirts of Erbil, I met many such people. Forced from their already tenuous existences and fragile sense of community they had managed to build in their dwellings atop the *Qalat*, they had now become doubly displaced. Disenfranchised from the national narratives of progress and peacebuilding quickly laid out in the wake of the allied invasion, many suffered from an acute sense of hopelessness and an apathy towards the promises of the increased autonomy of the KRG. Dilkhosh, a thirty-nine-year-old mother of five whom I came to know, explained to me flatly:

I am useless now. No home, I cannot feed my children, who will surely have to leave this country to survive [. . .] The life here [in the shanty town] is nothing, it can bring nothing but shame. Once I hoped the new Kurdistan would look after her people, but the government does not care for people like us [. . .] they promised us many things when they came to take us from our homes [in the *Qalat*]*—*that was long ago now. We are dying here, with nothing. What shall I do Sarah khan? I might as well die, at least my children would be free to leave easily then [. . .]⁸⁴

This narrative of an alternate and forgotten suffering in contemporary Kurdistan constitutes a form of “structural violence” on the part of political actors and an international system, one on which new economic paradigms of development in the KRG are predicated. In this way, pervasive conditions of misery and marginalization are a daily experience for those on the lowest ranks of an increasingly affluent society in which the new infrastructure is ill equipped for distribution of basic resources.

Such realities raise questions concerning the extent to which the mere *conception* of the post-conflict environment (to say nothing of its inclusion in myriad policy-oriented documents) is involved in constitutive relation with what effectively *becomes* a reified entity. In this context, “seeing like a state” is, in fact, complicit in the kind of “euphemized violence” engaged in “the forcible definition of social units as bureaucratic categories to be administered and controlled.”⁸⁵ These initiatives of administration and control may effectively worsen the already degraded social fabric, such as norms of family interaction and integrity,⁸⁶ and thereby further advance in the post-conflict environment the conditions of *disintegration* in society that were

present in the conflict itself. For example, talking of the intimate relationship between cultural notions of self, family, and community, and political violence in Argentina, Robben illustrates how

these assaults transgressed the deep-seated opposition between the public and the domestic domain [. . .] the disturbing intrusion of a threatening outer world, and lasting damage to the self by the transgression of deep-seated cultural values.⁸⁷

However, similar processes may equally be observed in post-conflict as well, set in motion as much by peacebuilding as by the “traditional” perpetrators of political violence. In Iraqi Kurdistan, where the devolution of security into the hands of the local *peshmerga* forces was touted as a positive step in the demobilization of guerrilla forces and the wider peacebuilding agenda for the northern Iraqi provinces, the use of family members as informants for each other’s activities for the sake of “security” effectively advanced pervasive conditions of mistrust and loss of social, psychological, and familial security in the name of a peacebuilding agenda. This kind of “violation of the home by the State, and the invasion of the inner by the outer reality”⁸⁸ is in many respects merely the flip side of the coin that disregards culturally contingent notions of Self and community, in favor of the generic psychosocial relations propounded for the recovery of the universal post-conflict environment. These social and political relations involve dynamics of power that are embedded in and draw on both “local” and “foreign” subjectivities.

For example, an increasingly salient articulation of pervasive structural violence is the perception amongst the general population of a continual surveillance by government operatives and society at large, implied in intertwined discourses about interpersonal gossip and official intelligence gathering. In a society reeling from decades of rule by a repressive police state, and in which marginal voices continued to be silenced by various and sometimes coercive means, these discourses had very real implications for the levels of trust in the authorities and community, and in personal feelings of safety. Feldman argues that the recourse to discussions about gossip and belief in its power are articulated ways of making sense of the incomprehensible in war in a situation where surveillance and constant threats of violence are pervasive features of political control and repression.⁸⁹ In Iraqi Kurdistan, widespread perceptions of almost continual monitoring by the govern-

ment security services have become features of lived experience in the post-conflict setting. Or, as one young man put it to me somewhat ironically, “*gossip is a national sport here in Kurdistan; but it is a very dangerous one.*”⁹⁰

THE SPATIALIZATION OF TRAUMA, CONSUMPTION, AND “RECOVERY”

Although pervasive in the cultural terrain of peacebuilding, these narratives of post-conflict, like the non-normative expressions of trauma to which they are often connected, are marginalised within hegemonic accounts of the post-conflict environment. While official forms of memorialisation were now being undertaken, particularly focussing on the Kurds as victims of the *Al Anfal*, these often serve the purpose of eliding recognition of *Kurdish* state perpetrators of violence within larger narratives of an oppressive Arab state.⁹¹ Beyond official remembrances of the *Al Anfal*, the rush towards outward, Western-directed displays of post-conflict modernity in the immediate post-conflict context contribute to erasure of the physical and spatial reminders of trauma at the collective level. In 2006 construction work began on the lavish and impressive Sami Abdul-Rahman Park on the outskirts of Erbil, partly incorporating the site of a Ba’athist prison where Kurdish dissidents were imprisoned, tortured, and executed in the 1980s. While this is widely recognised amongst the generation of Iraqi Kurds old enough to remember the years of Ba’athist oppression, it is reported privately, in hushed tones, while any recovery of traumatic memories which may accompany this has been sidelined by more public proclamations, and the branding of the leisure park as a marker of prosperity and peace. Incorporating an outdoor cinema, exhibition centre, cafés and restaurants, a man-made boating lake and extensive gardens, as well as statues and monuments to various historically important Kurdish folk figures, Sami Abdul-Rahman Park is indeed a respite from the often oppressive crowding, noise, heat, and general sense of surveillance which often permeates Erbil’s city centre. Families, groups of young, unaccompanied women, and older people mingle in the shade of its lawns, and while a general sense of convivial ease pervades the locale, elliptical references to the site’s more malevolent past in the social memory lead one to wonder at what may become of these memories in the face of such progress, what appears as almost careless denial.

These spatial transformations in the post-conflict environment are sig-

nificant as a key feature in the impetus towards a free-market economic version of modernity at the heart of post-conflict peacebuilding. The material dimensions of this environment then entail the construction of Western-style spaces of consumption, notions about “good” citizenship emplaced therein, and “healthy” rehabilitation, rather than creating spaces for the airing of historical traumas and non-normative expressions of that trauma that do not fit statist goals of economic expansion. The post-conflict environment should ideally be connoted by—alongside buzzing markets, cafés, and fairgrounds—contained memorialisation of trauma, if not its ongoing, lived experience, in such a way that speaks materially and socially of “the mechanisms through which these agencies have attempted to transform war-shattered states into liberal market democracies”⁹² and the new forms of sociability these entail. Indeed, in Iraq as elsewhere, many peacebuilding initiatives have come to replicate the kind of competitive, free-market norms associated with capitalist enterprise, as peacebuilding NGOs take on a kind of corporate form and operating principles, battling it out for UN and USAID funding therein, demonstrating the increasing “NGOism” of such ventures. In a perfect merging of economic liberalization with the peacebuilding “industry” in Iraq, the KRG has instituted a policy in which all petroleum companies conducting exploration in Kurdistan engage in “corporate social responsibility” programs which see them providing healthcare services for victims of chemical attack, building rural schools and water supplies, or sponsoring “peace training” in government offices. Most of this work goes to NGOs whose employees hold stakes in the same petroleum companies, and in effect, the majority of on-the-ground peacebuilding work is in some respect undertaken by private companies, whose “social responsibility liaisons” often take a direct hand in management and evaluation of specific projects. Much as Goetze’s observations of statebuilding highlight the ways in which state actors and corporate interests have been privileged and essentially come to define notions of stability in the post-conflict environment, the on-the-ground operation of a peacebuilding industry in Iraq challenges underlying assumptions about a supposedly universal ethic and speaks to its challenges of legitimacy, recalling the cynical words of Chidi Anselm Odinkalu:

local human rights groups exist to please the international agencies that fund or support them. Local problems are only defined as potential pots of project cash, not as human experiences to be resolved in just terms, thereby

delegitimizing human rights language and robbing its ideas of popular appeal.⁹³

Despite this potential lack of popular appeal among its beneficiaries in the post-conflict environment, the economic liberalization continues apace, with political, material, and social ramifications. It formed an important aspect of Boutros-Ghali's original *Agenda for Peace* document, which explicitly centered these concerns in its new notion of peacebuilding; item 7 recognizes that "many States are seeking more open forms of economic policy, creating a world wide sense of dynamism and movement."⁹⁴ This ethos was recently echoed in the words of Iraqi president Jalal Talabani (himself a Kurd and founding member of the PUK), who stated in a recent edition of British newspaper *The Guardian*:

Now that he [Saddam] is gone we have a great opportunity to overcome our *isolation from decades of modernity* [. . .] We value the ability of British business to unlock our resources through increased investment and by trading with us. Iraq is becoming increasingly open to commerce, which is a means of giving our people the better way of life that they seek and deserve.⁹⁵

Perhaps here we see most clearly the kinds of co-constitutive intersubjectivities discussed; oppositional assumptions about the societies of the world are implied in a language that otherwise suggests universals—states that actively seek open and dynamic forms of economy stand in contrast to those passive, closed, fixed societies traumatized and maladjusted by conflict, and awaiting Western intervention, the imposition of this dynamism and movement, the "unlocking" of resources. There can be no doubt about the dimensions of this "better way of life" as promoted by the often converging policies within the KRG and wider processes of peacebuilding. This vision of the recovered post-conflict space—and its supposed evidence of successful peacebuilding interventions—as being marked by the emergence of a liberalized free market flooded with consumer products and experiences also speaks powerfully to desires amongst private citizens and the population as a whole. Particularly for the nearly half of the Kurdish citizenry under the age of thirty, whose sole exposure to Western-style free-market democracy comes in the form of American television and other popular culture, such possibilities for consumption, and to express Self and identity therein, are intertwined with often nebulous ideas of political and social freedom and

consequently compellingly represent the promise of modernity. In a similar fashion, the emerging discourse around PTSD, medical attention, and the modernization of services encourages a system in which patients are also consumers, in which experiences of trauma and suffering are articulated according to finite, rational scripts which simultaneously pander to deeply held cultural thinking about the authority and legitimacy of the (male) biomedical purview as intrinsically “modern.” Thus to engage in practices of material consumption, as to engage in the performance of trauma, equally invokes this notion of modernity as a recuperative influence, and thus contributes to the subjectivities of consumption.

In this volume, both Herscher and Hourani (dealing with Kosovo and Lebanon respectively) have invoked the notion of drama—prescribed narratives, stage sets, actors—in elucidating how global corporate capitalism has come to represent the inevitable economic paradigm promoted through reconstruction and aid efforts. My own ethnographic observations detail how these same processes and representations have penetrated not only policies of recovery but the social attitudes of individual citizens in the formation of these subjectivities of consumption.

In Iraqi Kurdistan, there is also a link between the kinds of economic liberalization under way and the kinds of “nation-building” projects they undertake as a previously persecuted ethnic minority and which peacebuilding also increasingly sees as its remit. This entails the elision of social and material dimensions of peacebuilding, to the extent that the built environment comes to stand for the collective will and identity of the people; a people cast as the ideal recipients of benevolent Western peacebuilding initiatives by virtue of their minority status, the Kurds exemplify the “other-ideal” in a dichotomous process of meaning making; the essentialist “good guys” in peacebuilders’ readings of post-conflict restitution. As public space is being redefined, those voices marginalized within liberal economic policies of the KRG and its Western allies are silenced; this includes not only locals seen as representing a “backward” version of ethnic identity and Kurdish culture, but those whose ongoing suffering refuses to adhere to the official narrative of Kurdistan region Iraq as being a success story in the midst of occupation, a beacon of hope for the wider Middle East, the triumph of the modern. Increasingly, being a good citizen means being a good consumer, of products and images fusing a pristine and essentialist ethnic identity and heritage, with its liberation by Western modernities. This can be linked to biomedical discursive practices in that both regimes serve to contain, regulate, and re-

duce the body to a mere space on which a rational vision of the Self can be exerted. In many respects, however, this push towards material modes of modernity, towards modernization and citizen sociability through acts of consumption, comprises an attempt to overwrite histories of collective violence and trauma, which conversely are implicated in the perpetration of further symbolic and structural violence.

This merging of recovery-from-trauma and citizen-as-consumer discourses was brought powerfully to life in an article that appeared in the *Kurdish Globe*, Erbil's English language weekly, in October 2009. Entitled "The Future of Erbil Is in Nishtiman Mall: The Construction Boom in Kurdistan," the article states:

Since the war in Iraq ended in 2003 a large amount of money has been injected into Iraqi Kurdistan. Prior to the war in Iraq, Kurdistan was a region lacking many of the basic necessities that are needed for a well functioning society. No proper water supply. No proper supply of electricity. No proper order.⁹⁶

The article, while ignoring the fact that as of 2010 the majority of households still do not enjoy electricity and that many rural communities have no safe water supplies, goes on to talk of the "modernized" roads of "new and international standards" and the proliferation of "new Western shopping malls" that would "rival the most luxurious shopping malls of Dubai." The most telling feature of the article, however, is a photograph that appears midway down the column. It is a generally non-descript image of Erbil's skyline, on which are visible the many cranes hoisting the building blocks of recovery, the shopping malls and gated housing developments; these new, generic structures of concrete that will usher in for the eyes of the world, the international community, and especially the people of Iraq, their recovery, their reconstruction in the post-conflict era. The caption reads "This is what nation-building looks like." In this reading, the post-conflict environment is characterized by new roads, new houses, new shopping malls—the harbingers of liberal peace. The post-conflict environment imagined by the builders of this peace elides commercial development and modernization with post-conflict recovery.

An ideally imagined post-conflict environment—or at least, a successfully recovering post-conflict environment—is characterized by these elements of the new economic zone as an alternative to the conflict zone. Indi-

viduals in the post-conflict environment, we are led to believe, achieve *self-realization* through therapeutic interventions helping them to deal with their post-traumatic stress, and *self-fulfillment* through acts of consumption and general participation in the post-conflict ideal of the consumer-citizen. All this is delivered via the benevolent hands of Western intervention, to a passive and waiting population in which “individuals, communities and whole societies are traumatised from war, and trapped in cycles of violence perpetuated from generation to generation,”⁹⁷ incapacitated, desperately in need of intervention.

CONCLUSIONS

The literatures on landscape,⁹⁸ embodiment,⁹⁹ and medical anthropology¹⁰⁰ all provide important signposts to the ways in which the cultural practices and social roles that populate this space may be further, fruitfully interrogated to form a better understanding of how such practices help shape and imagine the post-conflict environment. The narrative devices and social roles which characterize the cultural terrains of the post-conflict environment and of peacebuilding, particularly through selective recognition of suffering, the promotion of normative psycho-social practices of personhood and rehabilitation, and the marginalization of non-normative practices in these areas as cultural appendages of “backwardness,” imply an absolute, neutral, and linear process of modernization. Economic liberalization, increasing medicalization, and notions of the Self, which underpin both, are central to these supposedly neutral performances and processes. Nonetheless, the prevailing lack of critical attention to these ethnographic spaces of inter-subjectivity has meant the agency of “traumatized” peoples and communities has been overlooked in their co-constitutive role shaping the post-conflict environment together with and as peacebuilders. And in neglecting the inter-subjectivities that emerge from, and are encouraged by, the privileging of certain narratives of trauma and bodily practices of suffering on the one hand, and consumption as a restorative experience on the other, the pragmatic enactments of peacebuilding may serve to advance the very conditions of inequality, violence, and trauma they seek to ameliorate, as well as silencing the diverse ways in which “violence continues to pursue its victims long after the slaughter ends.”¹⁰¹

Notes

1. Eva Bertram, "Reinventing Governments: The Promise and Perils of United Nations Peace Building," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 39, no. 3 (1995): 387–418; John Heathershaw, "Unpacking the Liberal Peace: The Dividing and Merging of Peacebuilding Discourses," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 36, no. 3 (2008): 597–621.
2. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace* (New York: United Nations, 1992), my emphasis.
3. Heathershaw, "Unpacking the Liberal Peace," 599.
4. *Ibid.*, 599.
5. Paul F. Diehl, "Paths to Peacebuilding: The Transformation of Peace Operations," in *Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in Post-War Societies*, ed. Thomas D. Mason and John A. Booth (London: Routledge, 2006).
6. Roland Paris, "International Peacebuilding and the 'Mission Civilisatrice,'" *Review of International Studies* 28, no. 4 (2002): 637–56.
7. Michael Gilson, "On Conflict and Violence," in *Exotic No More: Anthropology on the Front Lines*, ed. Jeremy MacClaincy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 102.
8. James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 87.
9. Cf. E. C. James, "Ruptures, Rights and Repair: The Political Economy of Trauma in Haiti," *Social Science and Medicine* 70, no. 1 (2010): 106–13.
10. *Ibid.*; cf. Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (London: Profile Books, 2009).
11. Gareth Stansfield, *Iraqi Kurdistan: Political Development and Emergent Democracy*, RoutledgeCurzon advances in Middle East and Islamic studies (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).
12. Although this view prevails within scholarly writing as well, including the works of Stansfield (2003) and Gunter (Michael Gunter, *The Kurds Ascending: The Evolving Solution to the Kurdish Problem in Iraq and Turkey* (New York: Macmillan, 2008), this pervasive portrayal of the Kurds as a kind of idealized, worthy, perpetual "victim" is encapsulated beautifully in a *Vanity Fair* article by liberal polemicist Christopher Hitchens in April 2007: Christopher Hitchens, "Holiday in Iraq," *Vanity Fair* (April 2007), <http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/features/2007/04/hitchens200704>, accessed December 2012.
13. This fieldwork was part of a British Academy grant funding a wider project looking at the ways in which Neoliberal notions of Selfhood are advanced via the increasing medicalisation of governance in post-conflict reconstruction agendas.
14. Paul Farmer, *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 5.
15. I employ the term *performance* here not to diminish what are very real expressions of trauma and hysterical episodes of despair for the women of Kurdis-

tan, but to highlight the ways in which the wider “post-conflict environment” creates an imperative for *normative expressions* of that trauma, which both legitimises a standardised, chronological view of violence in the Kurdistan region, and conditions the legitimacy of foreign interventions and the progression of Kurdish society in keeping with those imperatives (cf. James, “Ruptures, Rights and Repair”). This is elaborated in the remainder of the text.

16. The contempt with which “village” families are held, though commonplace among educated urbanites, was most profoundly demonstrated to me on one occasion when I asked a doctor to seek permission for me to observe a young girl’s treatment in the emergency room. He looked at me laughingly and replied “Why do you ask their permission? They are idiots!” Though dramatic, this is not unusual in reflecting the social category of “traditional” or “uneducated” in contrast to those educated urban elites, particularly those who work or have connections with foreigners (among both NGO workers and local practitioners). As a researcher and “Dr.,” I myself was always placed in the latter category, from which point it was assumed I would share such an assessment of social categories.

17. Veena Das, “Language and Body: Transactions in the Construction of Pain,” in *Social Suffering*, ed. Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, and Margaret M. Lock (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

18. James, “Ruptures, Rights and Repair,” 106.

19. Personal communication, June 2009, Erbil, Iraq.

20. Heartland Alliance, “Iraq: Community Mental Health Worker Program” (Chicago: Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights, 2010), <http://www.heartlandalliance.org/international/wherewework/project-pages/iraq-community-mental-health.html>, accessed January 21, 2011.

21. Farmer, *Pathologies of Power*, 154.

22. Stephen Hopgood, “Saying ‘No’ to Walmart? Money and Morality in Professional Humanitarianism,” in *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, ed. Michael N. Barnett and Thomas George Weiss (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 106.

23. James, “Ruptures, Rights and Repair,” 107.

24. For example, the “sanctity” of the female body, as both ideal and reality, takes on new significance in discourses of identity at the level of family and state politics, and can become a site for these ongoing and dissipated forms of residual violence to which I refer. The same can be said for the formation of ethnic identities.

25. Michael T. Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 132.

26. See Goetze in this volume.

27. This role for the Iraqi Kurds in the international arena stands in stark contrast to the portrayal of their co-ethnics in neighbouring Turkey, where the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) insurgency throughout the last thirty years, as well as the very ethnic identity of the Kurds, has been brutally suppressed by the Turkish state, with the aid of their Western allies. Within the wider “Good Kurds/Bad

Kurds” trope then, Iraqi Kurds are cast as the ideal, malleable benefactors of Western neo-liberal political and economic interventions, while engagement with Turkey’s Kurdish population has been couched in terms of securitization and the war on terror. See Gunter, *The Kurds Ascending*, 69.

28. Paris, “International Peacebuilding and the ‘Mission Civilisatrice.’”

29. Amnesty International, “Women in Post-conflict Situations: A Fact Sheet” (Amnesty International, London, 2005).

30. Ellen Moodie, “Critical Code-Switching in Postwar El Salvador,” in *Violence: Probing the Boundaries* (Salzburg, Austria: Inter-disciplinary.net, 9th Global Conference, March 2010).

31. Diehl, “Paths to Peacebuilding”; Heathershaw, “Unpacking the Liberal Peace.”

32. Bertram, “Reinventing Governments.”

33. Veena Das and Arthur Kleinman, “Introduction,” in *Violence and Subjectivity*, ed. Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Mamphela Ramphele, and Pamela Reynolds (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 17.

34. Alex Argenti-Pillen, *Masking Terror: How Women Contain Violence in Southern Sri Lanka* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press, 2003).

35. Heathershaw, “Unpacking the Liberal Peace,” 603.

36. Micaela di Leonardo, *Exotics at Home: Anthropologies, Others, American Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Philippe Bourgois, “The Power of Violence in War and Peace: Post-Cold War Lessons from El Salvador,” *Ethnography* 2, no. 1 (2001): 5–34; Paris, “International Peacebuilding and the ‘Mission Civilisatrice’”; Heathershaw, “Unpacking the Liberal Peace.”

37. Andrea Kathryn Talentino, “Perceptions of Peacebuilding: The Dynamic of Imposer and Imposed Upon,” *International Studies Perspectives* 8, no. 2 (2007): 152–71; cf. Hopgood, “Saying ‘No’ to Walmart?”

38. Scott, *Seeing Like a State*; Gilsenan, “On Conflict and Violence.”

39. Jeffrey A. Sluka, “Losing Hearts and Minds in ‘The War on Terrorism,’” in *Iraq at a Distance: What Anthropologists Can Teach Us About the War*, ed. Antonius C. G. M. Robben (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

40. This approach recalls the introduction of the US Military’s Human Terrain System of “embedding” social scientists for campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. The issue sparked a lengthy debate in the pages of *Anthropology Today* in 2007, with David Kilcullen (David Kilcullen, “Ethics, Politics, and Non-state Warfare: A Response to González,” *Anthropology Today* 23, no. 3 (2007): 20), a counterinsurgency adviser to General David Petraeus in Iraq, advocating for “instances where ethnographic knowledge significantly ameliorated the effect of conflict on populations in Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa as well as Iraq,” while anthropologist Hugh Gusterson (2007), echoing the views of a great many within anthropology’s professional body, stated that “what is advocated here amounts to a social science inspired approach to Empire, using ‘information warfare,’ ‘ethnographic intelligence’ and culturally informed soldiers as a velvet glove around the brute fist of military might that Empire requires” (Hugh Gusterson, “Anthro-

pologists and war: A response to David Kilcullen," *Anthropology Today* 23, no. 4 (2007): 23.)

41. Bertram, "Reinventing Governments," 390.

42. Laura Edmondson, "Marketing Trauma and the Theatre of War in Northern Uganda," *Theatre Journal* 57, no. 3 (2005): 451-74.

43. L. Polman, *War Games: The Story of Aid and War in Modern Times* (London: Viking Press, 2010).

Polman (63) offers a highly cynical account of how these inter-subjectivities played out in the performance of suffering at a camp for war amputees in Sierra Leone, citing that victims "didn't want to return to a normal life" facilitated by medical/humanitarian initiatives, but would "rather stumble around dramatically without their prostheses." This seemingly determined victimology, popularised in hegemonic narratives of peacebuilding, is also present in historicised accounts of the Kurds in the Middle East, where the old adage of having "no friends but the mountains" is stringently asserted, even in the face of international interest, a booming economy, and recognition and support from the international community.

44. Caroline Hughes and Vanessa Pupavac, "Framing Post-Conflict Societies: International Pathologisation of Cambodia and the Post-Yugoslav States," *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 6 (2005): 873-89.

45. Stansfield, *Iraqi Kurdistan*, 45-49.

46. In the aftermath of the allied invasion of Iraq in 2003, when the now ruling KRG failed to deliver on the hopes for democracy and prosperity nurtured within the population as a whole, the local monument built to commemorate Halabja's victims was destroyed by angry protestors.

47. I frequently heard mixed Arab/Kurdish families relate to me that they now felt anxious and marginalized in both Erbil and Baghdad due to their mixed heritage, and subtle forms of discrimination and racism in this context were not uncommon. For example, I witnessed fights break out between young men in the main Erbil bazaar due to a customer's inability to address the shopkeeper in Kurdish.

48. Moodie, "Critical Code-Switching," 3.

49. Cf. James, "Ruptures, Rights and Repair."

50. Whether outdated or contemporary, both diagnoses function to limit the social dimensions of this suffering; indeed the preferred expression of female suffering in Kurdistan is that of widows of men killed in the *Al Anfal* (Tanyel Taysi, "The Post Anfal 'No-Woman's Land,'" in *Sixth International Conference on New Directions in the Humanities* (Istanbul: Fatih University, July 2008)), such a powerful designation that women often joked with me that they "wished their husbands were dead" so that they could benefit and gain attention (cf. Lucy Brown and David Romano, "Women in Post-Saddam Iraq: One Step Forward or Two Steps Back?," *National Women's Studies Association Journal* 18, no. 3 (2006): 51-70).

51. Derek Summerfield, "How Scientifically Valid Is the Knowledge Base of Global Mental Health?," *British Medical Journal* 336, no. 7651 (2008): 992-94.

52. Yolanda Gampel, "Reflections on the Prevalence of the Uncanny in Social Violence," in *Cultures Under Siege: Collective Violence and Trauma*, ed. Antonius C. G. M. Robben and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 48–69.

53. Personal interview, November 2008, Erbil, Iraq.

54. Antonius C. G. M. Robben, "The Assault on Basic Trust: Disappearance, Protest and Reburial in Argentina," in *Cultures Under Siege: Collective Violence and Trauma*, ed. Antonius C. G. M. Robben and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Antonius C. G. M. Robben, "How Traumatized Societies Remember: The Aftermath of Argentina's Dirty War," *Cultural Critique* 59, no. 1 (2005): 121–64; Bourgois, "The Power of Violence in War and Peace"; Mark Phelan, "Not So Innocent Landscapes: Remembrance, Representation and the Disappeared," in *Violence Performed: Local Roots and Global Routes of Conflict*, ed. Patrick Anderson and Jisha Menon (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

55. See, for example, Nazand Begikhani, "Honour-Based Violence Among the Kurds: The Case of Iraqi Kurdistan," in *'Honour': Crimes, Paradigms and Violence Against Women*, ed. Lynn Welshman and Sara Hossain (London: Zed, 2005); C. Hardi, *Killing in the Name of Honour: Patriarchal Community Power and Violence* (London: Honour Based Violence and Women's Rights in Iraq/Kurdistan, 2007).

56. Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others," *American Anthropologist* 104, no. 3 (2002): 783–90. Nadje Al-Ali, "The War on Terror and Women's Rights in Iraq," in *Iraq at a Distance: What Anthropologists Can Teach Us About the War*, ed. Antonius C. G. M. Robben (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

57. Argenti-Pillen, *Masking Terror*, 170.

58. Liisa Malkki, "Refugees and Exile: From 'Refugee Studies' to the National Order of Things," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24 (1995): 495–523.

59. Paul Stubbs, "Transforming Local and Global Discourses: Reassessing the PTSD Movement in Bosnia and Croatia," *Forced Migration and Mental Health: Rethinking the Care of Refugees and Displaced Persons* (2004): 53–66.

60. Hughes and Pupavac, "Framing Post-Conflict Societies," 875.

61. Moodie, "Critical Code Switching."

62. Farmer, *Pathologies of Power*; Nancy Scheper-Hughes, *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Hughes and Pupavac, "Framing Post-Conflict Societies."

63. Stevan M. Weine and Sae-Rom Chae, "Trauma, Disputed Knowledge, and Storying Resilience," in *Trauma, Development and Peacebuilding* (New Delhi: International Conflict Research Institute and International Development Research Centre, September 11, 2008), 7.

64. Hughes and Pupavac, "Framing Post-Conflict Societies," 883; cf. Weine and Chae, "Trauma, Disputed Knowledge, and Storying Resilience."

65. Michel Foucault, *Psychiatric Power: Lectures at the Collège De France 1973–1974*, ed. Jacques Lagrange, trans. Graham Burchell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Mac-

millan, 2006); Vaheed K. Ramazani, "The Mother of All Things: War, Reason, and the Gendering of Pain," *Cultural Critique* 54, no. 2 (2003): 26–66.

66. Foucault, *Psychiatric Power*.

67. Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, ed. and trans. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 56.

68. James Quesada, "Suffering Child: An Embodiment of War and Its Aftermath in Post-Sandinista Nicaragua," *Medical Anthropological Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1998): 51–73; Argenti-Pillen, *Masking Terror*; Weine and Chae, "Trauma, Disputed Knowledge, and Storying Resilience."

69. Sarah Keeler, "First Do No Harm: Female Hysteria, War Trauma and the (Bio)Logic of Violence in Iraq," *Medical Anthropology* 31, no. 2 (2012): 132–48; Thomas J. Csordas, *Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Linda Green, *Fear as a Way of Life: Mayan Widows in Rural Guatemala* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

70. Green, *Fear as a Way of Life*.

71. Green, *Fear as a Way of Life*, 112.

72. Keeler, "First Do No Harm."

73. Green, *Fear as a Way of Life*, 117.

74. Foucault, *Psychiatric Power*.

75. Cf. S. Mentzos, *Hysterie: Zur Psychodynamik Unbewusster Inszenierungen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980).

76. Foucault, *Psychiatric Power*, 77.

77. Argenti-Pillen, *Masking Terror*.

78. Didier Fassin and Richard Rechtman, *Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 242.

79. Kurdistan Regional Government, *Kurdistan: The Other Iraq* (2006), <http://www.theotheriraq.com/>.

80. Hughes and Pupavac, "Framing Post-Conflict Societies," 882.

81. *Ibid.*, 884.

82. Argenti-Pillen, *Masking Terror*. Weine and Chae, "Trauma, Disputed Knowledge, and Storying Resilience."

83. See Hourani in this volume.

84. Personal interview, May 2009, Erbil, Iraq.

85. Gilsean, "On Conflict and Violence," 107; cf. Scott, *Seeing Like a State*.

86. Robben, "The Assault on Basic Trust"; Weine and Chae, "Trauma, Disputed Knowledge, and Storying Resilience."

87. Robben, "The Assault on Basic Trust," 74.

88. *Ibid.*, 70.

89. Allen Feldman, "Violence and Vision: The Prosthetics and Aesthetics of Terror," in *Violence and Subjectivity*, ed. Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Mamphela Ramphele, and Pamela Reynolds (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

90. Personal interview, December 2007, Koysanjaq, Iraq.

91. This practice is indeed supported by official and vociferously defended dis-

courses arguing, in the interests of Kurdish security and integrity, that such violence perpetrated by Kurds against Kurds must *not* be openly discussed at this stage of nation building, for fear that it may be used by “the enemies” of the Kurds—i.e., occupying and neighbouring states—as ammunition in further projects of occupation.

92. Paris, “International Peacebuilding and the ‘Mission Civilisatrice,’” 639.

93. Chidi Anselm Odinkalu, “Why More Africans Don’t Use Human Rights Language,” *Human Rights Dialogue* (December 5, 1999), http://www.carnegiemercy.org/resources/publications/dialogue/2_01/index.html (accessed March 2011).

94. Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace*.

95. Jalal Talabani, “‘We Are Proud to Be Your Friends’: Iraq’s President Shares His Thoughts About the Old Regime and His Hopes for the Future,” *The Observer* (January 31, 2010), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/jan/31/iraq-prime-minister-jalal-talabani-chilcot-inquiry>, accessed March 2011, my emphasis.

96. M. F. Salihi, “The Future of Erbil is in Nishtiman Mall: The Construction Boom in Kurdistan,” *Kurdish Globe* (October 24, 2009).

97. Hughes and Pupavac, “Framing Post-Conflict Societies,” 879.

98. Phelan, “Not so innocent landscapes”; Feldman, “Violence and Vision.”

99. Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man*; Margaret Lock, “Cultivating the Body: Anthropology and Epistemologies of Bodily Practices and Knowledge,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 22 (1993): 133–55; Csordas, *Embodiment and Experience*; Edmondson, “Marketing Trauma.”

100. Scheper-Hughes, *Death Without Weeping*; Green, *Fear as a Way of Life*; Argenti-Pillen, *Masking Terror*; James, “Ruptures, Rights and Repair.”

101. Robben, “The Assault on Basic Trust,” 5.