

The 'truth'

The origins of an experienced 'truth' analyzed

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Acknowledgments

I thank my friends who populate the cult that formed my research field. They devote their lives to the improvement of living and working conditions for all people who are considered laborers. Irrespective of whether I agree with efforts to achieve their intended goals, I feel deep appreciation and respect for your heartfelt desire and genuine intention to improve the world. I know and understand that I have turned out to be a disappointment in your view.

If these very words are ever read by my friends in the field, I invite you to form an opinion on my argument. But not before you have put in a real effort to understand it. I have worked hard and with nothing but respect to appreciate your life world and contributed to it while I could. I would feel honored by your efforts to return the favor.

Introduction

This thesis is the written result of three months of ethnographic research into a cult which is termed 'group b'. Its participants together form a socialist commune that works to structurally improve the economic position of the super exploited laborer. I have collected the data presented here by taking part in and observing the process by which an individual's experience of an absolute 'truth' appears malleable. The question of whether the realization of socialism is the only worthy goal in life or not is not an issue here, because my argument does not center on the fairness of supposed economic systems. Like I explained before, the study centers on the process by which 'truth' is produced and reproduced. I argue that group b's success depends not on its ability to broaden understanding to an all encompassing 'truth', but in limiting the boundaries of confirming experience to fit group b's 'truth encompassing all'. The individual empirical experience of an absolute 'truth' of a participant in group b can seem to display an expansive insight of the working of the world, only because it is founded on limitations that are concealed from the individuals who experience it. I argue that the participant in group b becomes and remains subordinate to the 'truth' when she or he engages with the limited scope of perception that is the pre requisite to the existence of an absolute 'truth'. I apply the argument of group b to explain the origins of the 'truth' of any group of individuals in the discussion at the end of the thesis. I argue that we, as a community of anthropologists cannot escape a limited scope of perception as the pre requisite to our empirical experiences. Like the participants in group b, we are unaware of the limitations that underlie our observations, and mistakenly experience them as expansive insight. I strongly suggest that the anthropologist refrains from awarding a relevance to the anthropological analysis of field experiences that is larger than the analysis of the research subjects. Our experience of the world as ethnographers is, despite what may seem obvious appearances, no less pre determined and misleading than that participants in other communities.

I consciously refrain from stating the whereabouts of group b more specifically than in the San Francisco Bay Area, not only because it is their wish. I do it because, despite appearances, I can never be in a position to determine more accurately and

reasonably the legitimacy of their wish. By doing so, I apply my argument that our judgment as anthropologist can never be more relevant than that of our research subjects. What is my most relevant point here, is that it may appear a certainty to us that the exclusively materialist world view of group b's participants is incorrect to us anthropologists. And their wish to live in seclusion from a supposed collective of capitalist enemies that is unified through the materialist interests of its members could therefore be overruled. But I argue that we can never consider our judgment to be more relevant than that of group b's participants. I realize that this decision entails that the research cannot be repeated and the background cannot be critically reviewed by colleague anthropologists. I stand with my argument that such values define our community of anthropologists, which cannot be weighed in relation to the values that define group b. Because the two value systems are incompatible, a trade-off is inappropriate. Instead, we must do everything we can to honor only their values, also when it harms our ability to do research.

I realize the value of a sociography, for which I can give other specifics about group b. These specifics will not lead the capitalist enemy to the doorstep of group b, but they will provide a background. As I will explain later in this introduction, I divide group b's participants into newcomers, committed participants, dedicated and devoted participants. The four steps make up the four levels of participation in group b. The dedicated and devoted participants in group b are exclusively Caucasian, intelligent and educated people who come from other parts of the Bay Area and at times even further away. The gender divisions are fairly even with equal men and women. All dedicated and devoted participants are Americans who have lived a life of wealth. What seems to define them is a youthful taste for adventure and the collective pursuit and gradual attainment of justice. What also unites them is disappointment with society. The disappointment is part of the 'truth' that belongs to group b, but they all describe struggle and a search for structural answers and solutions as vital parts of their lives that they lead previous to their involvement with group b. The lingering newcomers and committed participants, in contrast, seem to be the predominantly African American and Mexican, and to a relatively small degree Caucasian, people who populate the neighborhood. The Mexican participants sometimes have an illegal status and they are protected and provided for by

group b. Here too, gender divisions are fairly equal. What typifies this group of followers is that they seem to be less witty and more docile than the dedicated and devoted participants. These people live a life of struggle and they are commonly happy to accept the material aid that group b can provide. These lingering newcomers and committed participants are happy to be told what to do on a daily basis. It seems that they are less eager to hear *why* our efforts serve a just cause than to hear *that* their efforts justify their access to the material resources that group b provides.

As a research method, I have relied on participant observation in all its shapes and forms. It seems somewhat synthetic now to classify the approach as a method, because it seems to detach the inquiries from the inquisitive person that I have allowed to take over freely. In my experience, I have only worked hard to understand group b's 'truth' as the participant that I myself became and I meticulously took notes. I suppose that I could now best classify this personal quest and its documentation as participant observation. The data that I collected follow in large part from informal conversations. I have tried to do formal interviews, but their purpose was reduced to the confirmation that its results do not exceed the quality of data from informal conversations. My dependency on a inconspicuous list of questions gave the formal interviews an official touch that would close the access to the shared exploration of our experiences in group b that have proven to be of enormous potency. I have also tried to rely on questionnaires to test the legitimacy of group b's 'truth' in the form of a hypothesis. I was going to hand out these questionnaires to people who populate the neighborhood. However, as I later describe in chapter three, the core of my questioning in the questionnaires reflected my inability to understand group b's 'truth' as an insider. After I had gained that insider understanding through unlimited participants observation in chapter three, I noticed from reflection on my experiments with the questionnaires that a hypothesis and its confirmation from questionnaires do pertain to the research subjects, although it may seem to do so. Instead, the value of both the questions and their denial or confirmation is limited to the life world of the researcher.

This study came about because I am personally interested in the origins of an absolute 'truth'. I have wondered why I am surrounded by what seems to be a reality that I share with others, while my anthropological background rejects a known absolute

'truth'. For the master's thesis research, I intended to experience the construction of an absolute 'truth' to explain its origins. Although I can clearly explain what I set out to do today, the research question was at the start not as explicit as I can portray it now. I could not formulate my interest to an explicit question before I left for the field, and therefore, I prepared a research project on gentrification. I soon came across an organization that was very adamant about sharing their absolute 'truth' in the first week. Their strong desire to convey their absolute 'truth' was a research opportunity to understand more of the process by which absolute 'truth' is constructed, which is why I decided to participate and observe by becoming part of the organization as much as possible in the three months of field research that remained.

Chapters one, two and three contain the description of the three phases that I have discerned in the process of 'truth' (re)production in b. There is a fourth phase and perhaps even more phases, but I have not participated in these phases and I therefore do not discuss them here. The illustration of the first three phases and their analysis span across the three chapters that make up the main body of the text. Each phase corresponds to a phase in van Gennep's description of rites de passage (1960). The chapters describe the phase of introduction, commitment and dedication respectively, whereby the titles of each phase describe the theme that I give to my relation to group b's absolute 'truth' that I was confronted with during my progression toward complete agreement. The first chapter describes my introduction to group b's 'truth'. The second, liminal, phase shows what I learned about group b's 'truth' and my resistance to the power of its implications over myself as a participant. The third chapter displays the most complete understanding of the process that I have gained by embracing group b's 'truth' as much as I could. I came to understand that the unquestioned quality of what are considered the 'given facts of life' contains the power of group b's 'truth' over my fellow participants and to some extent over myself. The conclusion is followed by a discussion and suggestions for further research that apply the argument that I make with the analysis of group b to our own community of academics. I argue that expansive insight in group b can seem only as such because limitations underlie it. In turn, I must acknowledge that my 'understanding' of the origins of 'truth' in group b can be no less a 'truth' that is the result of my won set of concealed limitations. And so I ask whether our valued scientific 'progress' and 'insight

gained' are terms that should tell us that we fool ourselves like group b's participants do in my analysis.

I address the central question of what brings about the personal experience of an absolute 'truth' by explaining its origin mainly in operational terms as a mechanism that is conceptualized by Geertz in his definition of religion. I will argue on the basis of the operational analysis that the perceived reality perpetually originates in the combination of a belief of the 'truth' and the engagement with the moral order that it dictates. The belief in the life world and the affective reward from engagement with it motivate the participant in group b to protect the limitations to their perception that enable that life world. On a more abstract level, the argument in this thesis contributes to arguments about agency in relation to structure. Agency refers to the free choice of individuals to act according to their own intentions. In this agency argument, action of the individual is not limited or otherwise determined by recurrent patterns in society. Structure, by contrast, refers to limits to the individual's freedom that recurrent arrangements in the social environment produce. Proponents of the structure argument ascribe all limitation and determination of individual action to the social environment. I argue on the basis of my research that the power of the agent to determine the social reality of social agents can only lie within the limits that are defined by the structure.

In what follows, at times words will appear in single quotation marks. I use these marks to differentiate between words used by people within group b from the analytical terms I use to explain what they say and do. Examples are 'truth', which is not an absolute 'truth' in anthropological terms although group b's participants experience it. Another example will be my referral to the role of 'religious' concepts, which group b's participants will definitely not perceive as 'religious' in function. I wish to stress that I use the concept 'religion' to describe an individual's devotion to a hegemonic 'truth' and not the worshiping of a God. Because the application of 'religion' in this study is so broad, while the term in its traditional sense is so narrow, I will write it between brackets to indicate its ubiquitous meaning. Cox remarks, in his written lecture on the function of 'religion' to a wide array of social studies, that 'religion' is increasingly commonly disconnected from a God, to "[sharply define] religion in social and institutional terms" (Cox 2003: 9). Yet another example is the use of the 'given facts of life' which are given

in the experience of group b's participants, but not in that life world on which my anthropological analysis is founded.

I will refer to the organization as 'group b'. It has been difficult to think of a name for what has become 'group b'. The most devoted participants live in a commune, but 'the commune' would sound more threatening than involvement in the commune has been. To call it 'the network' would sound too authoritative, by which I would implicitly suggest that the sphere of influence reaches beyond the commune, while I do not know to where the sphere of influence reaches. I have decided on 'the group', or 'group b'.

Group b can be rightfully called a cult, what the Oxford dictionary terms a "relatively small group of people having religious beliefs or practices regarded by others as strange or sinister" (Oxford dictionary). Although group b's participants do not perceive their outlook on the world as religious beliefs. Although it is not strictly speaking a religious cult, I will analyze group b's 'truth' to explain why its nature is no different from religious belief. In excerpts from the Encyclopedia of Anthropology (2006: 624) I recognize the following six attributes of group b that explain why it is a cult. First, belief in b depends on are a charismatic leader. First, the leader founded the organization on the Marxist principles some thirty years ago. She is now no longer alive, but her legacy of the struggle against and the victories over the capitalist enemies remains charismatic to current participants. Secondly, 'truth' in group b is a philosophy of 'us' versus 'them'. Third, group b upholds a hierarchy, in which "[...] leaders employ varying degrees of indoctrination and demands of strict obedience" (Encyclopedia of Anthropology 2006: 624). Fourth, members are subject to stress and fatigue. Fifth, isolation and peer pressure plays a large part in group b's achievement of 'success'. Sixth, fear and paranoia are the instruments for conveying the cultural enlightenment.

Theoretical Framework

I begin with a brief anecdote that shows that the experience the world for participants in group b originates from within the preexisting structure of the supposed absolute 'truth'. I use the anecdote to explain the operational mechanics that underlie the process of 'truth' reproduction in the life world of existing participants and production in the life world of newcomers. The last part of this theoretical framework relates the findings in this thesis to larger issues of power relations between individual agents and the structure of the collective. As background to the anecdote, I remark that group b is a cult that consists of a commune of participants who devote their lives to the objective of a socialist solution to suffering that according to them is a direct result of the inevitably failing capitalist economic system.

My fellow participant Jade and I are standing outside the supermarket. We are working hard to cultivate a cultural enlightenment that will bring forward the unavoidable socialist revolution. A lady comes up to me and explains that she was told to expect the revolution when she was a participant in the 1980's. Back then the revolution was said to come soon. "And where is it now?" she asks and walks on without expecting an answer. Jade heard the question and it seems to me that this remark must profoundly shake Jade's life's commitment to the cultivation of cultural enlightenment in the name of the socialist revolution. However, Jade explains that the encounter is no reason for discouragement. Instead, it is a confirmation of the potency of our efforts to improve the living and working conditions of laborers. It is empirical proof that the capitalist enemy has reason to work on a campaign to demoralize their only real threat. That threat is group b. The capitalist enemy is lashing out like a 'drowning rat'. It is proof of how close the revolution must be.

Jade's conviction is tenacious to a degree that it seems practically impossible for any situation to disprove the supposed 'truth'. I will first explain Geertz' definition of religion, which I then use in combination with the anecdote to explain my analysis of the origins of Jade's empirical confirmation of her 'truth's' legitimacy. Geertz' definition forms the theoretical foundation of the analysis of the origins of 'truth' in group b. This

foundation is expanded as I describe the relevant aspects of the work of other theorists.

In his definition of the operational mechanism that underlies religion, Geertz (2002) discerns world view on the one hand and ethos on the other as well as their mutually constituting relationship. He explains that world view is a model *of* the world. This world view is confirmed as believers collectively experience its unique 'truth' collectively in their everyday life. Geertz explains that ethos is the life style that is appropriate according to that world view. World view dictates that appropriate life style. Ethos is the result of world view. It is a model *for* the life style in the world as it is continuously experienced by its believers. The dictated life style entails that believers search and find further empirical confirmation of the 'truth'. And so, in turn, world view is the result of ethos. In other words, world view and ethos each depend on the other as each constitutes the other. Geertz states his definition and the relation of the two functions of religion as follows:

“In religious belief and practice a group's ethos is rendered intellectually reasonable by being shown to represent a way of life ideally adapted to the actual state of affairs the world view describes, while the world view is rendered emotionally convincing by being presented as an image of an actual state of affairs peculiarly well-arranged to accommodate such a way of life” (Geertz 2002: 62).

Ethos entails a daily engagement with the religious belief. This engagement is done in what Geertz calls rituals. Ethos and world view both originate in this engagement with rituals. The believer, however, empirically experiences world view and ethos as two distinct aspects of life. Geertz uses the following words:

“By inducing a set of moods and motivations [– an ethos-] and defining an image of cosmic order [– a world view –] by means of a single set of symbols, the performance makes the model for and model of aspects of religious belief mere transpositions of one another.” (Geertz 2002: 78).

The ritual as a single set of symbols has a dual function from which both the model *of* and the model *for* the world originate. The dual function, however, is concealed from the believer. The ritual's concealed dual function makes the resulting understanding of the world a limitation of the scope of perception to which the believer is oblivious:

“[Rituals] formulate a basic congruence between a particular style of life and a specific metaphysic, and in so doing sustain each with the borrowed authority of the other.” (Geertz 2002: 62).

The life world of the believer is limited, while she or he empirically experiences an expansive understanding.

I use Geertz' analysis to show that the pre requisite to a regularity is a collective oblivion to the limitation of the scope of perception of believing individuals. In other words, regularity in empirical experience depends on a limited scope of perception that is sustained and concealed by a continued self-deceit of the believing individuals. Each individual sustains the self-deceit by engaging in a life style that is appropriate according to what is mistakenly considered an expansive understanding. The empirically experienced confirmation of the 'truth' does not exist external to the collective of believers. It is through engagement with their 'truth', that the collective of believers (re)produce the confirmation from within. Geertz' definition shows that the experienced 'truth' is founded on the believer's continuous (re)production of world view and ethos, which do not exist external to the collective despite appearances. They are the result of the engagement with the model *of* and model *for* the world.

Now, to apply Geertz' definition to Jade's situation in the anecdote, I argue that the meaning that Jade assigns to the situation that was described in the anecdote is no result of the external world, despite appearances in her life world. It seems to Jade that her reflection on the lady's remark is a reflection on the empirically witnessed reality that is external to the collective that is group b. However, my application of Geertz' definition of religion explains that the meaning assigned to the lady's comments spawns from within

the pre existing structure within group b that simultaneously dictates the model *of* and the model *for* the world. The anecdote describes a 'ritual' in Geertz' terms, or what I call activity in terms of group b. The activity consisted of spreading group b's 'truth' to people at the supermarket. The activity serves a dual function. Jade lives a 'pious' life style by presenting her 'truth' to other 'laborers'. Group b's ethos dictates it. She engages with the model *for* the world. The engagement with that appropriate way of life puts her in a situation where she empirically experiences the confirmation of the model *of* the world. The world view that the capitalist enemy is stepping up the campaign to crush group b's efforts is empirically witnessed. Thereby, both the model *of* and the model *for* the world are strengthened. Jade's continued engagement and the empirical 'proof' that spawns from it perpetuate each other.

Montero (2002) allows me to explain how the structural limitation of Jade's scope of perception allows for a confirmed order in the world that forms the 'truth'. The limitation allows for a (de)selection of empirical impressions to only those impressions that confirm the 'truth' (Montero 2002: 577-578). Group b's focus on materiality allows for a clearly distinctive selection of impressions. We will see in more detail when I illustrate group b's life world that for b the 'truth' is at its core only concerned with the opposing material interests between the capitalist class of owners of the means of production and the laborers who suffer from their dependent position as non-owners. The limitation of empirical impressions to materialist empirical experience underlies what Montero calls "reduction to the tangible" (Montero 2002: 577- 578). Such reduction means that only that which is witnessed in empirical, material form is believed to be real and the world of ideas is distrusted and therefore completely disregarded. The exclusive trust in materialist interpretations deselects non-material impressions that could otherwise challenge the supposed 'truth'. Without acknowledgment of a non-materialist critique, the scope of perception is never broadened to include reason to doubt and critically reflect, by which experiences can serve to only confirm the legitimacy of the 'truth'. Jade's trusts only group b's 'scientific' study of material change. This biased faith in materiality is the reason for Jade to resist reasonable doubt that the lady could offer.

I have discussed the dual function of the ritual, or activity, as the mechanism that underlies the singular origin of both world view and ethos. In order for world view and ethos to inscribe their model *of* the world in the experience of the individual agent, they must be appropriated and affectively experienced by the believing individual, respectively. World view needs to be appropriated by the individual, before it can fulfill its part in the mutually constituting relationship that it can form with ethos. For the same reason, the ethos must be affectively experienced to play its part as a reward for compliance to the dictated norms and values.

In order to fully understand the operational mechanics behind the process of ‘truth’ (re)production in group b we have to understand its relation to notions of structure and agency.

The subordination of the agent to the structure is perpetuated because the agent mistakes a continued setting of the limited scope of perception for a supposed moral engagement with the given facts of life. The origin of the individual experience of an absolute ‘truth’ was previously explained as a religion-like mechanism that is reproduced by the engagement with the ‘truth’ itself through activities of its participants. I have argued that Jade (who is the individual agent), remains powerless in relation to the ‘truth’ (which is the structure) that she supports. Jade continues her own subordination to the structure, because she engages with what is ‘true’. Her continued engagement perpetuates her inability to perceive beyond the limited scope of perception. In turn, that limited scope of perception provides empirical ‘proof’ of group b’s ‘truth’ that withholds reason for Jade to search for answers beyond those provided from within the limited scope of perception.

The argument that the agent is subordinate to the structure is a question of power. I argue that the agent is powerless in relation to the power of the structure. Wolf (2002) defines power to argue that ultimate power is located with that entity that determines the settings for other entities. Wolf defines in his hierarchy of power ‘tactical power’ and structural power. Tactical power is relatively weak in relation to structural power, because the entity that wields structural power determines the settings to which the entity with

tactical power is limited. Jade is subject to the structural power of group b's 'truth' because her engagement with group b's 'truth' makes her limited scope of perception makes her power tactical. Jade's faith in group b's 'truth' sustains the structure's structural power. Jade's power is limited to what the Comaroffs term the *agentive power* of the hegemony (2002). The Comaroffs explain the agentive power of the hegemonic structure by its unnoticed shaping of reality. The Comaroffs constitute their agentive power of the hegemony in opposition to the non-*agentive* power of the ideology. My study is only concerned with the hegemony, but I will use a definition of ideology to place the concept hegemony in the perspective by which the Comaroffs define it. Ideology is "an articulated system of meanings, values, and beliefs of a kind that can be abstracted as [the] 'worldview' " (Williams 1977: 109). Non-agentive power of the ideology is weak in relation to the agentive power of the hegemonic 'truth', because ideology must gain legitimacy by stating its argument loudly in opposition to what is silently considered the common sense facts of life.

The power of the agentive power of the hegemony lies in its unnoticed form, and is therefore situated in the tradition of Bourdieu and Gramsci. The Comaroffs paraphrase Bourdieu's argument (1977) that hegemony is a power that goes without saying. They use Gramsci's assumed conception of hegemony in his prison notebooks (1971) to explain that the power of hegemony is manifest in all aspects of life. Although they agree with Lears (1985) that Gramsci never concretely defined the meaning of the term 'hegemony', according to the Comaroffs he has come close to defining the meaning in his prison notebooks (1971). He has termed it "a conception of the world that is implicitly manifest [...] in all manifestations of individual and collective life" (Gramsci 1971: 328). Agentive power is structural power, because what is considered 'true' by its naïve supporters determines the settings beyond which they do not consider possibilities. The limits are experienced as the given 'facts of life'.

In chapter three, I describe group b's 'truth' from an insider perspective to show how the 'truth' is perpetuated when facts of life are not questioned or critiqued. They determine the limits beyond which the existence of alternative possibilities need not be considered. The Comaroffs apply their conceptualization of agentive power at a scale of *the* system in which *the* hegemonic group is relatively powerful over ideologies. In my study, however,

the existence of agentive power does not depend on one single hegemony. Agentive power is present where any 'truth' is experienced as given facts of life. In other words, agentive power does not pertain to the single largest assumed 'truth'. This study is concerned with the effect of hegemony's agentive power at the level of the individual experience within group b. From this perspective, the entire system of 'truths' consists of as many hegemonies as there are 'truths'.

Methodology

The life world of group b's participants and its analysis from academic perspective is inevitably a clash of two life worlds. In this section I explain how I bring the two worlds together in this single document while doing justice to both. I write words like 'truth' between quotation marks throughout the thesis, so that I can refer to the absolute 'truth' that is a reality in the experience of group b's participant, while the brackets refer to the anthropological assumption that no absolute 'truth' can be known. The same clash presents itself in my representation of the context in front of which the life world of group b's participants and the anthropological analysis gain their meaning. There is a classic tension within any anthropological analysis of the life world of the anthropological other (Eriksen 2010). The classical tension manifests itself in my analysis by the academic terms that I use to analyze group b's life world, while they are demonstrably not part of the life world of group b's participants. Eriksen suggests that I employ a clear distinction between description and analysis of the argument (2010: 39). The absolute 'truth' is an experience of group b's participants. The illustration of that life world would be skewed if it were not from the perspective of the participant her or himself. For this reason, I decide to illustrate the life world from a first person perspective in what is perhaps an unconventional way. I will describe a selection of field examples from the first person perspective to make my argument from a perspective of group b throughout the main body of the text. The telling of the 'truth' from the first person perspective will convey the life world in its experienced form to demonstrate the consequences of the mutually constituting relationship of world view and ethos. I then analyze the first person experience and outlook in my role as anthropologist.

The style that I choose to convey my argument - as an experience - is in line with the tradition of the narrative style within anthropology. Gubrium and Holstein (2008) explain narrative ethnography as an emergent method, which came into its current after two narrative turns (2008: 242). The first turn was in the first half of the twentieth century, when Propp specified how the function of actors and actions constitute the internal shape of the folk tale. In the second turn, the value of telling the story and its occasions was equated to the value of what is communicated (2008: 249). Gubrium and Holstein (2008) conclude that narrative ethnography is a concept that makes two advantages available to

the writer and reader of the text. First, the concept is “theoretical” as it allows the conveyance of the argument itself. Secondly, it is “procedural” as its narrative style conveys the contextual complexity (2008: 261). The narrative ethnography allows me to include in my presentation of data what Gurbium and Holstein call 'the meaning-making activity' (2008: 261). I write narratives in *italics* to offset the narrative against the analysis and to communicate to the reader that the very words that are read in italic print are to be understood as the undeniable and uniquely ‘true’ reality with which the individual experiences it.

Group b's context

I choose to leave out an illustration of the specific geographical context because I feel ethically obliged to keep specific information about group b to myself. It is the wish of group b's participants to live secluded from what is in their view the power of the capitalist enemy. I am ethically obligated to respect that wish. Group b's participants live their lives in a commune in which they separate themselves from capitalist society whenever possible. I can only respect that wish. Another reason why a sociography is of little value is because the thesis is more concerned with the construction of 'truth' in the life worlds of participants in b rather than the geographical location of the people. The ethnographic field site is therefore not found in the geographical location of group b's office, but it is the life world that is the more valuable background to the argument. According to the explanation of group b's participants of group b's history, group b was founded in 1970 by the now deceased leader in a time when other social movements failed to realize their objectives for structural improvements because they could not withstand compromises that the capitalist enemy has suggested. These compromises have decayed the objectives and the capitalist enemy ultimately won. Group b withstood the tendency to choose quick progress that would follow from such compromise and it has been growing slowly but steadily since then. There are today 24 offices across the United States where people who have been disappointed by the capitalist system find their way to group b.

I will now first present the terms and roles that I have assigned to the process by which I explain the process in the main chapters. I will then illustrate my understanding of the context that explains group b's 'truth' from the first person perspective.

I have ascribed terms and roles to the different parts that I discerned in the process by which the absolute 'truth' was constructed. In my description of the process of 'truth' construction in group b, I refer to the development of individuals along a line on which I inscribe a somewhat fixed set of roles that all individuals negotiate as they proceed in the process. Equally important to my argument is the relation of the role of one individual to that of another.

To refer to any person, indiscriminate of a position either in- or outside of group b's influence, indiscriminate of their knowledge of their position and indiscriminate of phase, the term 'an individual' is used by group b. Before the very first contact, all individuals are outsiders. Any person who is not an outsider to group b is called a 'participant'. To be non-outsider, a participant must take part in one of the four phases. During the first phase, a participant is referred to as a newcomer. A participants' role evolves to a committed participant with a commitment to group b's efforts, which brings them to the second phase. In the third phase, the individual becomes a dedicated participant by full time participation. The fourth and last phase, which is not addressed in this thesis, is that of the devoted participant, of whom it is publicly known that she or he has devoted her or his life to the efforts of the organization. I have decided not to include what I have heard about the contents of phase four in this thesis, because I have not experienced the phase as an insider. Access to this phase requires a public statement that one devotes her or his life to group b's efforts. I could not make such a public statement without lying. Because I did not take part in this phase personally, I cannot explain it from a viewpoint of personal experience. I believe that my understanding can only be incomplete without such personal experience.

The roles in group b exist in relation to one another on the scale of internalization of group b's 'truth'. I refer to a relative position by the terms 'following' participant and 'leading' participant. I have termed a participant a following participant if she or he is in a relatively early stage of the process, which stands in relation to the leading participant, who has come relatively far in the process. Following mostly entails learning what is 'true' according to group b's 'truth', while leading mostly entails sharing what one has learned before as a follower. Participants get confused as their function in the organization changes from a role as a following participant to that of a leading participant. The two roles can be easily and publicly exchanged, as a follower becomes a leader, and a leader becomes a follower, in relation to other participants. The roles can also be combined as a participant can follow by leading and vice versa. Such is the case if a follower is learning organizing skills by leading participants who are followers relative to her or him.

I will now illustrate the life world of the participants of group b. My understanding of group b's 'truth' is inevitably incomplete. My understanding of group b's 'truth' is the bundled version of the information that I could gather during my stay among group b's participants. This illustration of group b's life world is a mix of my own perspective, in combination with Marx' communist manifesto, Leninism and practical wisdom that has been collected in thirty years of group b's scientific practical experience. It would be an illusion to think that I could distinguish between the multitude of sources. The description serves as an illustration of my understanding of the world as a participants. It is my own personal understanding that is unique to myself. I illustrate that understanding of the world from the first person perspective to convey how considerations are informed by the world as participants in group b understand it. The first person perspective is used to convey a context to the experiences that will make the process of 'truth' production possible in the main body of the text. The context is one of frustration about the selfish capitalist who has no material interest and certainly no empathy for the poor people who suffer at the mercy of the bourgeois merchant. I mean to convey the certainty that is felt when history, the present and the future are discussed as an undeniable blueprint for moral action. I mean to explain the outlook on suffering of fellow 'laborers' as the perceived destiny by group b's participants. I realize that the length of the narrative is unconventional, but it serves its vital purpose as a background to the supposed undeniable responsibility to structurally improve the economic position of the 'laborer'.

What follows is the understanding of the world as I was expected to come to know it as a dedicated participant in group b. When I write 'I', I mean myself in my role as a dedicated participant in group b. When I write 'we', I mean us as a collective of participants in group b. The text must convey a reflection on the world as I would have done if I were a believing participant. It must show the certainty with which group b's 'truth' enables such reflection on the world and the life style that the understanding of the world indubitably dictates.

History must be exclusively understood in terms of production and trade as the basis of

life, which is called a materialist perspective. This stands in contrast to all other possible perspectives of history, which are tools that mislead in service of the materialist interests of the opposing forces. The opposing forces in our society are made up of the members of the class of owners, who oppose our own material interest. We are the class of non-owners. The complete evolution of human society is known to consist of six stages of evolution, each of which is typified by the different economic systems. A transition of one stage to the next is called a revolution, which is a process of slow economic change, which informs changes in the social realm. The six stages are 'primitive communism', 'state slavery', 'feudalism', 'capitalism', 'socialism' and 'communism'. Inherent to each of the different systems is an internal contradiction from which material discomfort and suffering drives the buildup of revolutionary power, which naturally propels human society from the beginning of history to the stage of communism at its end.

At the end of the feudal stage, the class of owners used the economic power to reward politicians for using their political power in favor of the owners of the means of production. Political power came in the service of the economic power of the capitalist bourgeoisie. Politicians upheld the laws if it helped the capitalist defend their material interests then, as they do today. The serfs of feudal times were stripped of their means of survival in the countryside because capitalist competition had squeezed them out of the ability to survive alongside one another. Crime for survival was made impossible by politicians who act in service of capital and the former serfs were forced to become the laborer in the cities' factories. The class of laborers is not limited to factory workers. Any member of society who does not own the means of production is laborer due to material interests that oppose those of the owners. This may include employers, who manage the capitalist means of production, but who do not own the means of production. Politicians too are no owners of means of production. These laborers may enjoy the wealth that they gain from their fortunate today, but that is only by the grace of the members of the owning class. When the French and Russian revolutions broke out, improvement was expected among the labor class. However, the capitalist stage in its most pure form too would prove to benefit the material interests of the class of owners

Looking at the internal contradiction that is at play in our predominantly

capitalist society of today in theoretical terms, we see that competition is the natural internal contradiction that forces an exploitation of laborers by capitalists. There are two forms of competition. They are competition among capitalists and competition among laborers. The two forms of competition work to move the access to material resources of the two classes in opposite directions, which is the foundation of the capitalist internal conflict. First, in order to keep from making a loss, a capitalist can exploit no less vigorously than his competitor does. A good capitalist will inevitably have a poor market position in relation to competing producers, because the costs of production of his good or service are higher, while market sales prices may remain constant. Without sufficient exploitation of laborers, a good capitalist will not secure enough return on investment for the investing bourgeoisie and be left without financial means and without the power to continue a position to continue business. Good capitalists will go bankrupt, especially in times of an economic panic, after which they lose their possessions on the market and they fall into the class of laborers. The means of production will not vanish. Instead, they are absorbed in the capital of a winning capitalist, to whom the bankruptcy of another is an opportunity. Means of production are accumulated and thereby concentrated among ever fewer capitalists. The amount of capitalists will diminish, while the labor class will continue to grow as it does today at increasing rates. The second form of competition is among laborers. In order to have access to resources, a laborer must accept increasing exploitation to ensure that what little work there is does not go to the next man in line. Revolution toward the socialist stage is inevitable because it is a natural consequence of the capitalist stage to move the exploited labor class to action by material discomfort. If enough revolutionary strength has gathered among the laborers to choose a strike, production will stop. If production is stopped, laborers will seize to provide members of the capitalist class with the economic power over members of the labor class. Therefore, competition is the internal contradiction of our times, which will inevitably bring enough economic decline and material discomfort to inspire another revolution.

The capitalist internal contradiction in practical terms started to show itself in concrete terms when misery spread and grew since 1935. Members of the bourgeois capitalist class depend for their sustained position of power on their control over the political power of what we misunderstand as a democratic political system. In the good

years of our capitalist times, the material interests of the labor class and those of the capital class were in good balance. This changed with government action in 1935. A series of revolutions among which the San Francisco General Strike in 1933 and 1934 had threatened the capitalist ability to produce and therefore their position of power. Capitalists used their power over the law to enforce a power inequality between labor and capitalists by dividing the labor force in legal definitions. The law that provides disproportionate capitalist power over labor power is the Wagner Act, or the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), which was passed by Congress in 1935. With the NLRA, employees are granted the right to bargain collectively by the formation of unions. The division of the labor force came in the form of the NLRA's definition. The definition does not include employees who do not work for a clearly defined employer. These workers are 'unprotected workers'. Unprotected workers suffer a poor bargaining position in comparison to their fellow 'protected' workers and it serves capitalist interests because their poverty will make them undercut the next laborer in line to survive. The divide spurs the competition among workers, which benefits the capitalist. Those laborers who were protected by the NLRA enjoyed their legal protection. In 1947, however, new economic dissatisfaction among the workers sparked new labor action and in response, capital got government to forbid striking in the amendment to the NLRA – the Taft Hartley Act. Since then, protected workers kept their right to bargain collectively, but it was termed illegal to lay down production. As result, state troops have forced production with coercion. With this amendment, labor demands are reduced to pleads, because it is impossible to threaten with a strike if it is a crime against which state coercion is justified in the Taft Hartley amendment. The unprotected workers, however, were not defined as part of the NLRA in 1935, and they are not defined in its Taft Hartley amendment in 1947. Their legally undefined status was a tool to spur competition for the benefit of the capitalist before 1947, but they have become a tool to structural improvement in the hands of a labor organization for two reasons. First, it is not illegal to strike, because the law does not include them in its definition. Secondly, these are the most exploited members of society. This continues to work to the benefit of the capitalist as a tool to increase competition, but their mobilization is also key to cultural enlightenment. Systemic failure of capitalism is making these workers grow fast in numbers, quickly increasing the

opportunities to cultivate revolutionary strength among the numerous unprotected workers. If we can provide alternatives to what little resources these unprotected workers would earn from working for the capitalist, we can withhold their participation in the production process. But other laborers would be happy to take their place, and so solidarity is required among all laborers. Those laborers who do not yet suffer from the downfall of capitalism must take part in the structural solution to the poverty issues of unprotected workers, or else poverty is the future for all laborers.

The continuous confirmation of the inevitable coming of the socialist revolution is found in the study of change. In the study of change, we empirically witness how the capitalist tries to use economic power over the government and laborers to prolong the systemic failure of capitalism. However, the capitalist can do no more than postpone capitalist failure. Examples are the financial crisis and the way California's energy market works. First, the financial crisis shows that the government approved and executed bailouts of the largest banks. The consequence of the financial risks that have been taken by the capitalist class was thereby made into the burden of the taxpaying public of laborers. Members of the bourgeois class of today gain a prolonged ability to demand their average of a 10% return on investments. Secondly, on the energy market, California's Public Utilities Commission, or CPUC for short, is a government body that supposedly balances the economic super power of Pacific Gas and Electric, or PG&E for short. Over the last 100 years, PG&E has gained a monopoly position in California. The monopoly position suits the interests of the bourgeois holders of capital. It is clear that the people who make up the California government are puppets who support PG&E's monopoly in exchange for personal gains. The 'democratic' decisions are presented to the members of the public as governance for public interests in terms of efficiency in delivery of goods and services to the public. Judicial, executive and legislative powers are ideally in balance to ensure that none of the three powers would gain more control than the other two. President Roosevelt's New Deal solution to the great depression of the 1930's consisted of the installment of government bodies that were designed to be more resolute in their actions and an unbalanced division of powers was granted in the name of economic recovery after the economic panics. CPUC is a government body from the times of the New Deal that was erected with the best of

intentions. However, its power imbalance has become an opportunity for capitalists over the years. CPUC is an example of a powerful tool in the hands of the capitalist bourgeois, because it cheats the ideal mold of the balance of powers. PG&E's shareholders, as bourgeois holders of capital power, can demand 10% returns on investment, because CPUC has become the government tool in capital's hands. The power of the bourgeois capitalist class over government places CPUC in service of ongoing private profits, while the public continues to live in the misunderstanding that government can be trusted to represent their public interests. CPUC allows PG&E to increase the charges for its supply of gas and electricity. Revolutionary strength will grow there, where unprotected workers, and the rest of the growing group of laborers, cannot afford to purchase energy. Activities demonstrate beyond a doubt the truth that it is capitalist failure that puts children and elderly people without heat or lighting and without a prospect of a solution if not for us. One such activity is advocacy with PG&E. PG&E's annual financial reports show that PG&E's return on investments can easily cover the expenses for utilities for families who are now denied access to energy. The battle against CPUC is a valuable means to demonstrate systemic failure, because it is the frontier that lays bare the public and private material interests to anybody who is involved. Therefore, all participants struggle in this energy market to gain understanding of the truth. Struggling is done in advocating on behalf of the poorest of laborers, and by speaking out at the CPUC public hearing. The struggle is not done with the idea that CPUC or PG&E will give in, because they simply cannot afford to become good capitalists. The reason for the struggle is to cultivate the awareness among all workers that no help is to be expected from government and that only through revolution and solidarity among workers will the bourgeois capitalist class be forced to give up their privileged position. Solidarity requires that we share our resources in our fight for cultural enlightenment. If cultural enlightenment has spread among enough people, the revolution can begin with a strike that will force bourgeois owners of capital to their knees.

We must work to bring the revolution forward. The revolution will come if laborers are ready to stop production. Production requires tools and raw materials, as well as labor. If labor is no longer supplied, one of the three pillars is removed. Without

control over the production of resources, the capitalist is in no position to deny access to resources to the laborer who does not compete in the capitalists' best interest. There is a need for participation so that all laborers can learn that the supply of labor must be stopped. In order to pull forward the revolution, we need to raise awareness among all members of the labor class that material discomfort will inevitably get much worse. We must enlighten all members of the non-owning class.

Cultural enlightenment is achieved by demonstrating the systemic failure that is empirically noticeable if one participates. We do not have to go out and convince every laborer of this 'truth'. Instead, the scientific study of change empirically shows that capitalism is failing more and more people and that material discomfort will naturally bring more participants to participate, from which understanding of what must be done will follow. The structural solution is found in challenging the capitalist system in a selection of battles that are fit to demonstrate the systematic failure of capitalism to both leading participants and following participants.

To cultivate cultural enlightenment, we must focus our efforts on a maximization of the number of participants and to maximize their participation. To start, I myself will devote every waking hour of every day to the cultural enlightenment. I do not necessarily devote my life to the cultural enlightenment out of pity for the unprotected workers. Even if I still enjoy material comfort today, the deterioration of capitalist stage will eventually impoverish me or my children. It is exactly because I am a laborer in a strong position that I can contribute to the cultural enlightenment. Or rather, I must contribute for my own well-being, for the well being of my loved ones and the generations to come. In order to cultivate such participation, it is justified in the name of the revolution to be slightly dishonest to naïve laborers who have not yet seen the truth. We can withhold information that jeopardizes the new participant's willingness to participate. We will be completely honest as soon as possible, but not before we bring her or him past the naïve resistance with which the capitalist enemy has indoctrinated her or him. I will do my part in the cultural enlightenment because it serves three objectives. Firstly, it is only through participation in activities that the systematic failure can be demonstrated. Secondly, more participation will enable more material alleviation of conditions of poverty, which will free up hands to take part in the revolution. And thirdly, we can break down the artificial

divide between workers by having more people participate in activities. The many forms of divide among laborers is a vital tool in the hands of the capitalist. We must enlighten both protected and unprotected workers who are found in our own neighborhood. We will go to supermarkets and universities across the nation to speak to protected workers. The empirical study of change shows beyond doubt that ever more unprotected workers will find their way to us through material assistance, such as legal help, medical help, food, clothing or any other assistance. Also, protected workers will find their way to the office to volunteer with their growing sympathy for the poor and suffering. Through working together in participation, workers will unite in a common goal to improve living and working conditions not just for others, but for all of mankind now and in the future.

The illustration of the life world in group b was described in the form of a reflection on the world from the perspective of myself as a dedicated participant. I have used the reflection to convey to the reader my understanding of the life world in group b. Like in Geertz' definition of religion, the life world in group b exists within the boundaries that consists of world view and an ethos. The world view consists of an undeniable history that follows into the present and follows its way into a certain future. The ethos that is based on the world view is one of activities that will bring the current era of suffering to an end to bring the future forward. It is this engagement in the activities that provides the empirical confirmation of group b's 'truth'. The life world as a whole exists within the boundaries of the limited scope of perception. We will see in the following chapters that the limited scope of perception does not allow for consideration of my critique on group b's 'truth' because empirical experience can only serve to confirm the 'truth'.

Chapter One: Introduction to group b

Expansive understanding is an experience that depends on the growing limitation of the scope of perception. The system sustains itself by the mutually limiting function of world view and ethos. The individual agent - who has reason to appropriate the world view of the structure and to experience its moral code affectively - engages in a life style that perpetuates the experience of a unique expansive 'truth'. This perpetuation is a result of the dual function of the activities by which the individual engages what are considered 'given facts of life', which serve as a model *of* and a model *for* the world, simultaneously. This chapter will show that in the first steps toward subordination to the 'truth', group b depends on the willingness to consider the argument and to live it as a reality as an expansive understanding of the world. If that initial step has been successful, the engagement with the moral code of what is considered 'true' provides an extraordinary opportunity for the participant to do what is termed 'good' in the dictated moral code. The opportunity to do good motivates the individual to further appropriate group b's 'truth' and so the cycle toward complete appropriation begins and leads us on toward the next stage of 'commitment'. This chapter explores the value of the initial attraction as the pivotal point in the process' success, followed by an illustration of my own appropriation of group b's 'truth' and the power of its affectively experienced consequences.

Initial Attraction

Sunday, day 1

It is winter of 2011 in a part of the San Francisco Bay Area with a reputation for poverty. I cycle along the train tracks to see a store front that displays a poster that shows an image of a proud African American woman and information about food and clothing distributions, every Tuesday and Thursday. The poster promotes an organization that is successful in demanding an end to corporate and government oppression of 'us poor people of the Bay Area'. I decide that contact may help me with contact with members of the community for my ethnographic research and that I will come back here for the next hand out of food and clothing on Tuesday at 1 PM. Eager to know more, I look online and find harsh warning critiques. It is said to be a cult, where mental and physical oppression limit people's personal freedom. I decide to explore for myself.

Group b attracts new participants by fostering and recognizing opportunities. The success of group b's 'truth' depends on the suffering from conditions of poverty and the public's engagement with those conditions of poverty. Group b works to draw into their sphere of influence anybody from what they define as the labor class. To this end, poor people are given material aid and people who want to volunteer their efforts to alleviate poverty are given an extraordinary opportunity to do so. In my case, it has been the neighborhood's symbolic reputation for poverty that interested me to appropriate group b's 'truth'. I expected to find valuable ethnographic data precisely because of the reputation for poverty in this neighborhood. It seems that even long before I had seen their poster, group b had already successfully positioned itself for people like me to wander into their sphere of influence. It must be said that this viewpoint does not represent group b's participants' perspective on the value of their presence in the neighborhood. From their perspective, the best place to reach a large amount of people with their message is by positioning themselves within the site of the problem, which is the poor neighborhood where the unprotected worker suffers.

Origins of the 'truth': appropriation and affect

This thesis lays bare the limitations that were seen to form the prerequisite to the experience of the expansive illusion of group b's 'truth'. Geertz' dual function of the ritual (2002) can be found in the dual function of activities in group b, which involve on the one hand the demonstration of their world view, and on the other hand, simultaneously shaping that world view by dictating an ethos that determines what is a moral way of life. I will first analyze the process I underwent to appropriate group b's world view and will then provide an analysis of the experienced affects of the ethos that is instilled in the appropriated world view, followed by analysis of the combination of the two.

Let me remark here that I am aware of the artificial quality to which my description is unavoidably limited. Because the two concepts world view and ethos continually constitute each other's limitation, there is no beginning or an ending to the process. For analytical purposes, however, I must dissect the process and present each of its two functions in a sequence of one after the other.

Appropriation

Appropriation is the process through which a newcomer grows an increasing sense of ownership over group b's world view, then goes on to become a 'following' participant and eventually a 'leading' participant. I borrow the term appropriation from Susan Harding (2002), who uses it to explain that she had arrived in her field site of her ethnographic study of the fundamentalist Christian language after her initial appreciation for and use of that language. Harding appropriated the Christian language in her research among Jerry Falwell's group of fundamentalists in the 1980's (2000: 33-34). During her research, Harding surprised herself when she interpreted a near accident as a message from God. She did not usually interpret her life in the form of acts of God. This striking change in her instinctive explanation came just after a father Lowry had preached his witnessing of fundamentalist language to her. Her personal interpretation of life's circumstances by the thought of God's presence, demonstrated to her that she had internalized the fundamentalist language of her research subjects. She knew that she had

arrived in her ethnographic field site.

During these first few days of my field research, the similarities between our experiences struck me. Like Harding, I too took an ethnographic interest in group b's 'truth' for reasons of ethnographic inquiry. My appropriation of group b's 'truth' depended on my motivation to find access to potential research subjects with whom I hoped to find opportunities for research. I intended to appreciate group b's 'truth', no matter how different from my own life world, and I would let serendipity take it from there. Serendipity is the factor chance, which brings the ethnographer in participant observation to observe aspects of the research subjects' life worlds that she or he could not have inquired into, because they are unknown to him (Lawley and Tompkins 2008). In order to cultivate opportunities from serendipity, I could not judge any life world according to any frame of reference. In search of such serendipity, I was motivated to consider confirmation of group b's 'truth' as real. Serendipity is the part of participant observation in which the researcher observes the life world of the subjects under study without judgment. Lawley and Tompkins (2008) distinguish classic serendipity from 'pseudo' serendipity: classic serendipity is the finding of results unexpectedly and 'pseudo' serendipity means to "look for X and find X by unexpected means (2008: 2)." The X that I was searching for was access to the people who populate my neighborhood. I had started my study by recognizing and fostering potential within the community itself. I appropriated group b's world view, because I was willing to accept the world view as reasonable, irrespective of a common sense. I did not know it at the time when I first appreciated group b's 'truth', but I had arrived in what was soon to become my ethnographic field site from the moment that I personally appreciated the confirming value as confirmation of group b's 'truth'. In hindsight, the appreciative position that I chose appears to have been key in my ability to understand motivations of group b's participants.

Tuesday, day 3

It is Tuesday after one PM. I am waiting in front of the store where I had seen the poster. I intend to speak to somebody who will run the food distribution. The store remains closed, and nor are there customers waiting,. I make my way to another address on the

poster. The door is open and I walk into what seems to be an office. I am welcomed by an enthusiastic lady, whose name is Jade. "Have lunch with us", she suggests. I accept her invitation and make my way past the little gate and past an office space into the kitchen, where about five other people are clearly delighted to see me. The room is filled with friendly enthusiasm. I meet Gary, who is an elderly Caucasian gentleman. Gary explains that he will go to San Francisco on Thursday, to speak out against some committee of the California government, which is about to allow the costs of energy to be increased by PG&E. He goes on to tell me that PG&E stands for Pacific Gas and Electric. It is the company that supplies energy to just about all the inhabitants of most of California. Gary explains California's politicians point to efficiency to justify their approval that PG&E expands its market share to where it is currently practically the monopoly supplier of energy utilities in California. The response to PG&E's grotesque monopoly power over its customers that the government apparently sees fit has been to install a government body in which a committee represents the interests of the members of the public. Gary tells me that the power of these committee members does in practice not work to limit PG&E's power over customers. He explains that the only interests that the CPUC serves are the personal interests of PG&E and the committee members. The CPUC is presided over by a mister Peevey, whose position is slap in the face of PG&E customers, because his recent honoring as energy man of the year makes his position one that is blatantly informed by a conflict of interests. Group b rallies up its members to speak out against PG&E's request with CPUC. Gary explains that every dollar paid makes a world of difference for the poor people who make up group b's membership. Gary is aware that no group of protesting and pleading civilians will actually be impact state politics, but group b and its members will exercise their right to speak up by creating the opportunity to do so. I also meet mister Hani, a 90 year old African American gentleman. He shares his complaints about PG&E and his appreciation for group b. He has had to live in a dark and cold house for five months, because he could not pay his energy bills. He was very appreciative that group b had managed to restore his access to energy and the humane living conditions that an elderly gentleman, who is a reverend and a veteran of the Second World War, deserves. It seems that group b does manage to do what I had read on the poster two days earlier. Group b is a vibrant environment in which opposition to

exploitation is a success. I wonder if I should ask to come along to the hearing in San Francisco. I may be too well off. I ask and I am surprised to find that I am more than welcome to join them.

My appropriation is recognized in the anecdote as the appreciation for b's success. Group b must depend on the newcomer's willingness to see the confirming function of shared witnessed experiences in order to convey its 'truth'. Without such willingness, empirical experience cannot function as a confirmation of group b's 'truth'. At this stage, people may or may not consider group b's world view and many do not return to the office after their first contact and introduction. Some, however, take a more profound interest and find reason to consider the agreement, like I have. Such a profound initial interest is vital for the following success of group b's 'truth' and the rest of the process. Group b's participants refer to the large amount of initial contacts that are needed to gain new participants as 'a numbers game'.

My appropriation followed from my objectives as ethnographer. I have learned that there are many reasons why somebody would take an interest in group b. In an informal interview with Jade, I inquired about her history. Jade is the leader of the office and I have worked most closely with her. She told me that she had read a book when she was young. She did not specify what the book was and I did not ask, because what is relevant is not the contents of the book, but Jade's remark that her appropriation of group b's 'truth' originates not from group b itself. Instead, it was an experience earlier in her life that she can later relate to her appropriation of group b's 'truth'. Her teacher had explained that social problems are many and their solutions are commonly sought after in Africa. She had been inspired when he had said that the origin of social problem in any place in the world is to be found in the United States. Later, when she had started medical school to become a doctor to help people, she saw the consequences of economic inequalities in society in the field of medicine. Around that time, her uncle had lost his job and the survival of her parents' business was growing increasingly precarious. She saw worry and disappointment from economic decline in the lives of her loved ones and recognized the economy of the United States as the root of the global poverty problem. She was twenty one when she went looking for something to do during the summer and

she came across participants in group b. She was given the opportunity to participate for a summer. In the nine years of full time participation since then, Jade has seen no reason to pursue anything else in life but participation in group b's cultural enlightenment. She added that group b had not needed to force its 'truth' on her. Instead, group b had provided the structural answer to the question how to contribute to the structural solution to global poverty at a time when she had gone out looking for those answers, herself.

Jareth is another dedicated participant who is eager to learn what he can. He had told me that his father was a man who had devoted his life to the church. For Jareth, the decision to devote one's life to the cause that she or he believes in may seem less absurd than it would for me or the people with whom I share my understanding that 'normal' entails eight hour working days. What is more, Jareth is a nervous man, who gains confidence from participation in group b. I imagine that, like Jade's search for answers to structural global poverty, Jareth's search for confidence existed long before group b could provide it. These are two examples of reasons why people would consider and come to appreciate group b's 'truth'.

Affect

After the initial appropriation of group b's 'truth', I experienced its confirmation in affective terms. The morality that is imbued in the appropriated world view in group b informs the ethos. To act morally according to group b's world view is rewarding to the participant by **affect**. Affects are "non conscious and embodied emotional states" (Ross 2006: 197). Slovic et al (2007) describe affect as "the specific quality of "goodness" or "badness" (i) experienced as a feeling state (with or without consequences) and (ii) demarcating a positive or a negative quality of a stimulus" (Slovic et al 2007: 329). Goodness according to group b's world view is a progression toward devotion of one's life to group b's activities, which is considered worthy of pride and praise. Badness is all that does not further group b's objectives of cultural enlightenment, which is to be rejected. Affects are the product of social collectives, as Ross explains: "Affects infuse our beliefs and judgments in ways that regularly escape our attention, but nevertheless connect us to collective agencies" (2006: 214).

Thursday, day 5

Today, we go to the CPUC hearing. We enter the lofty room inside the California State Building, I see attendants whose look ranges from scruffy to adamantly professional. We are instructed by Jade and Jareth to sit down in the front, in the first two rows in front of the stage on which the CPUC committee members will be sat. I see mister Peevey's name tag in the middle. Mister Peevey comes in, sits down, and opens the public hearing of the CPUC by requesting that we work together on preserving a respectful tone of conversation. Mister Peevey explains that a bell will sound after a three minutes of speaking, so that there is time for everybody to have their say. The first speaker harshly points toward CPUC's responsibility in representing members of the public in ensuring that a recent accident with a gas line explosion should have been prevented. Mister Peevey ensures that committee members have the public's interests at heart and complains that the tone of conversation is not respectful, as he had requested just before. I disagree with mister Peevey, and find myself in support of the speaker. The discussion is cut short when Mister Peevey selfishly claims his right to speak the last words as the president of CPUC and makes the speaker leave the microphone. A few other speakers state their opinions and the committee members seem to listen not because they represent our interests, but because they must listen to the public, which they seem to consider a burden rather than an opportunity. They seem to have little interest in hiding their boredom, as apathy speaks from mister Peevey's resting of his head on his hand and an expression on his face of merely tolerating the public's complaints. I believe that I would have appreciated the trouble they had gone through to travel long distances. Our speakers start to speak out their testimonies. Lanzo speaks out his testimony about the crime of poverty. He and I have worked on it together, last night. I am glad to see that our testimony makes an impression, as a CPUC employee asks for a copy. Mister Hani is escorted to the stand and reads out loud what I have written into a testimony for him, last night. He speaks about how he is a WWII veteran and a reverend and that he had to spend five months without energy because he could not pay his bills. The other members of the public are impressed with the 90 year old man's effort of coming to San Francisco to share our problems with the committee and the people in the room. All the speakers

continue to speak after two minutes of speaking have passed. Mister Peevey continues to interrupt their testimonies by repeating 'thank you' until the speaker steps down. Mister Peevey does not seem to respect our effort to make our way to the public hearing and he does not seem interested to hear about our problems.

The public hearing is over and we make our way to the State Building's restaurant, where we meet participants of other organizations to which group b is intimately related. I am told that we work together to bundle our efforts and we fight for the same cause. It is explained to all participants, by a leader of another organization and Jade together, that we have come to exercise our right to stand up against injustice and that we have created the opportunities to do so, ourselves. Participants are invited to give their view of what had just happened. The discussion leaders conclude that the CPUC and mister Peevey are not interested in our well being and that we have exposed that today.

At the hearing, I could witness the testimonies of the speakers at the CPUC hearing as speakers of 'our' message and representatives of 'our' position. This position of 'we' is constituted as an opposition to 'they', who I had been given good reason to oppose. In opposition to 'us', 'they' became symbolically embodied by the institution CPUC and more specifically, mister Peevey became the face to which we collectively inscribed the sneaky activities of politics in favor of the evil capitalist.

My ethnographic objectives had motivated me to appreciate group b's 'truth' and I experienced the results in affective terms. After the appropriation followed my affective experience of 'right' and 'wrong' ways of life. With appropriation of group b's 'truth', the moral value that group b placed on the appropriate way of life of structural alleviation of poverty for all, by participation in group b's activities, is also appropriated. The appropriated moral value can give feelings of pride for contributing to the structural solution. I felt pride, because I had contributed to the testimonies that were delivered at the CPUC hearing by Lanzo and Mister Hani. I appreciated the feeling of homely circumstances. Furthermore, I enjoyed sharing the positive vibe of being welcome and to belong to group b that turned out to provide a secure feeling in a community that seems intimately bonded by their empirically witnessed structural success in resistance to the

oppressing forces. The pride that I felt rewarded me for my contribution through participation and I recognized affect as my personal reason to do more 'good' by participating more.

Appropriation and Affect as a model for the world

After the world view is appropriated and the dictated ethos is affectively experienced, both functions of participation support each other to keep the participant's scope of perception limited to the confirmation of the 'truth' and the appropriate life style that results from it. I will now illustrate affectively experienced ethos by group b's leading participants as they used Goffman's Team performance to overpower me (Goffman 1990). Team performance is an activity that shows how the world view and affect come together to sustain the dominance of the structure of the collective of agents. Goffman's analysis of team performance explains how a team of insiders can overpower the naïve newcomer by presenting a seemingly unanimous perspective that fits their purpose. The appropriated world view dictates that the cultural enlightenment is the highest purpose in life while affect rewards the engagement with that purpose. I did not realize it at the time, but I would later learn that part of the pious lifestyle is one where newcomers are tricked into appropriating group b's 'truth' by team performance as Goffman describes it (1990). Team performance in this phase is illustrated from my perspective as a newcomer when I am unknowingly subject to the team performance. The value to the leading participant will become more clear when I personally am the leading participant who tricks another newcomer in chapter three. For now, the shoe is on the other foot as I am convinced to appropriate group b's 'truth' by an image of group b's 'truth' that is unanimously enacted to motivate my participation. I would later learn that it is common practice in group b to let the newcomer speak, as a means to inquire into the position of the newcomer. The collected information lets team members determine how a coordinated performance will motivate a continued involvement. Jade coordinates the team performance. From my naïve perception at the time, there was a seemingly convenient interest in my research when I described my intentions to do research among people in the neighborhood. Jade 'conveniently' set up conversations with people in the neighborhood who were happy to explain the value of group b at the dinner table. I was promised support in my research efforts from Gary and other leading participants. The

support never made it beyond that promise, and Gary never intended it to. Furthermore, I was told a team performed image of group b's 'truth'. Group b's leading participants have learned that it is a shock to newcomers to hear that Jade devotes her life in support of an endeavor that entails the devotion of the newcomer over time to dubious concepts such as 'Marxism' or even worse, 'communism' in the very first few weeks. Instead, the term 'laborer' is expressed as 'worker' and 'capitalist' is termed the 'employer'. Such use of mild terms and a mild expression of group b's goals and objectives comes naturally to any of the leading participants for they do it in the name of the ultimate objective, which is cultural revolution.

There are no bad intentions at play here. Instead, group b's leading participants have fully appropriated group b's world view, including the affectively experienced responsibility to spread group b's 'truth'. In their eyes, I am a laborer who will remain oppressed by the ruthless capitalist enemy unless I am forcefully convinced of group b's 'truth'. Group b's leading participants do not deceive. They overpower newcomers because the 'truth' must be forced on the oppressed laborer if she or he is to escape the naivety that the capitalist enemy works to sustain.

Appropriation and Affect as a model of the world

From the initial appropriation of the world view, followed the appropriation of the moral judgments of group b's ethos. From my participation in group b, I gained satisfaction and pride on the basis of my engagement with this moral judgment. The opportunity for extraordinary satisfaction and pride could draw me closer to the world view, from which the cycle of appropriation and affective experience continues. From the subsequent collection of cycles that gradually limit the scope of perception, follows an increasing empirical experience of the legitimacy of group b's 'truth'.

Monday, day 9

Monday evening, 7 PM. I arrive at group b's office for the meeting to which Jareth, a leading participant, invited me a few days ago. We will speak about what I can expect from group b and what they can expect from me. Gary, Jareth, Jade and Neil welcome me into the office, where I share my satisfaction with our community contact on Saturday. We have gone into the neighborhood and we have spoken to people in the community. Jareth continues our conversation in a more serious direction when I remark that I have seen a clip that explains the cause of the global financial crisis on youtube. He asks what I think is the reason behind economic suffering and I explain in all honesty that an infinitely complex concept such as 'global economy' or 'poverty' cannot be grasped and portrayed as one complete 'truth'. Jade steps in on our conversation and argues that the conditions of poverty of the people who I have met in the last few days are very real. She argues that poverty is more than just words in a paper in an academic article or a video on a screen. Poverty is what I have seen with my own eyes over the last few days. I cannot deny that the experiences have been real, including my own appreciation for group b's solutions that seem to work. I find myself repeating my argument that a concept as complex as all of poverty is too complex to be understood as a whole, although I am uncertain if its legitimacy exceeds that of Jade's. I am confused. Jareth repeats Jade's argument in somewhat different words. Jade stops the conversation to suggest that I spend more time with group b, so I can see more of group b's point. I suggest that Jade uses her understanding of the community to bring me into contact with its members for my

research, but Jade points to the disappointment that the people of the neighborhood have had with research. She does not believe in an actual contribution through research. Academics are just privileged people in power who write documents about poverty in a fancy institution, but who are ill equipped to actually contribute. She suggests that I participate in the community contact and the meeting, every Saturday to contribute to group b 's solution to poverty, but also to understand more of it. I agree, mostly because I want to meet the people of the community, but also because I am curious to find out more about why I see group b's 'truth' confirmed with my own eyes, while my anthropological background does not allow me to believe that it can be real.

I was confused: I could see why Jade would empirically experience that her argument for the all encompassing 'truth' was real. However, my anthropological background entails that I could not acknowledge that such empirical confirmation of an all encompassing 'truth' could really exist. And yet such empirical evidence clearly existed for Jade. I did not know how to lay bare the core of our disagreement.

Research continued

Although my anthropological background inspired a natural weariness of the all encompassing character of what group b's participants presented to me as their 'truth', I could not deny its consistency with the confirming experiences that I received from empirical experience. Although I was not convinced that group b's perceptions were as conclusively 'true' as Jade argued, I would not find the argument that would argue conclusively against Jade's argument during my entire period of my field research. I decided to investigate further, in large part to continue my effort to cultivate opportunities for research from serendipity.

Chapter Two: Commitment to group b

This phase of commitment has clear attributes of the liminal phase that van Gennep describes in his analysis of the rites de passage (1960). The second phase may be clearly recognized as the liminal phase, which is the transitional phase in the *rite de passage* that van Geffen described (1960). Turner describes the liminal phase as: [...] the state of the ritual subject [...] becomes ambiguous, neither here nor there, betwixt and between all fixed points of classification (Turner 2002: 96). In this second phase of commitment, the mutually limiting function of the world view and ethos increases as one participates in group b's efforts. In correspondence with van Gennep's definition of the liminal phase, this liminal phase in group b is a phase of confusion. My research in this phase has focused on my search for the empirical 'proof' of the world as the model of the world as Jade sees it. The confusion with which I ended the previous phase was the starting point of this phase and I have worked hard to see in empirical terms what Jade sees so clearly. My focus on the empirical evidence has made the focus of the chapter less on the life style that would result from a problem free appropriation as model for the world. I denied the ethos that would follow from the appropriated world view for as long as I did not recognize empirically what Jade presented to me. The next chapter will be more concerned with the model for function of the activities, for I will consciously decide to end my search for empirical agreement and trust the affective experience of ethos for continued progress in the research. My structural denial of the all encompassing character of group b's formed the mooring from which I could reflect on the 'truth' in group b's leading participants. But I came to consider that that mooring is no less artificial than group b's 'truth' itself. I came to learn that the understanding that I could gain from the reflection on group b's 'truth' from the outside came to an end and the structural denial brought my ability to understand to a halt. I proceeded to the third and final phase only when I consciously decided to deny that critique. This will be described in the third chapter. During the liminal phase that I describe in this second chapter, my anthropological background continued to inform a structural critique on the possibility of an absolute 'truth' like that of group b, while participation made legitimacy of anthropological assumptions increasingly questionable.

In group b, this tumultuous liminal phase is negotiated as questions to existential answers are posed and found. Like in any liminal phase, the confusion about the newly experienced 'truth' raises questions. I argue in correspondence to Geertz' definition of religion that I explained in the introduction, that both the questions and their answers originate within the tightening structure that increasingly envelops the life world of the participant in group b. It seems to the participant who is betwixt and between, however, that questions inquire into the reality that exists as the 'facts of life' that are external to group b. The answers seem to provide gained insight into that external reality. The following participants' 'progress' is supervised by leading participants who themselves do not see beyond the limited scope of perception to which the following participant's scope of perception is increasingly confined. Both following and leading participants may think that the answers that are found to existential questions are the result of a thorough shaking of group b's ideological foundations, whereby the illusion of expansive insight into an all encompassing 'truth' becomes a shared illusion of which neither is aware. I argue that the thoroughness of the questioning was already limited to the possibilities that the structure allows, because the questions as well as the answers spawn from within the concealed boundaries of that structure. Those boundaries tighten around the life world of the following participant as world view becomes increasingly appropriated and ethos becomes increasingly affectively experienced.

I will continue to recount my experiences through the use of anecdotes, which are then analyzed in their function as either an appropriation of the world view or as affective experience of the ethos. Again, the anecdotes are elaborate, but they convey more than just the illustration of group b's 'truth'. They serve to convey the reason why a person would consider the legitimacy of group b's 'truth' as the absolute 'truth' about the participant's undeniable responsibility to spread the cultural enlightenment in service of the linear history of mankind.

Appropriation of world view

I will present the following anecdote to show how the world view that is presented in class is 'proven' by the use of experiences that were shared among all group b's participants. I will show in a later anecdote that the meaning assigned to shared experiences is in turn based on the world view that was presented in class. I show that meaning and experience are the two aspects of a closed system to show that the meaning that is assigned to circumstances that seem external to group b's life world both really originate from a participants' participation in group b's efforts.

Our experiences at the CPUC public hearing were assigned their meaning in a class. Classes are given by group b's leading participants, who explain how the world works for which they use the application of theory to experiences that the following participants who take part in the class have shared with all other attendants. The theory is written in large binders and their contents will cover group b's 'truth' in its more pure form as Jade expects a following participant to be ready to appropriate it. There are about twenty classes, each of which take about five hours to work on and to discuss.

Tuesday day 17

It is morning. Neil teaches a class in which the world is explained to consist of two classes. There is the class of employers and the class of workers. Explanations are given and questions are asked and answered by referral to earlier experiences that some of us have shared at the CPUC hearing. We spoke of mister Peevey. All the class attendants who attended the CPUC hearing agree that mister Peevey decides in the advantage of the capitalist class. It is explained to class attendants who did not join us in San Francisco that mister Peevey's personal interests place him, and government representatives like him, in a position in which they must systematically choose to allocate resources in favor of the material interests of the class of employers, whereby their position is automatically in opposition to our material interests as workers. We have all seen mister Peevey's attitude and we all agree that he has sold his power and our fate to the private capital of PG&E. Class attendants express their agreement and share their frustrations. But Neil points out that there is hope, because we know that group b has the fundamental solution.

We must cultivate solidarity among the workers to stop providing labor to the production process. The capitalist enemy will be forced to their knees by our perseverance. We agreed that we can only count on ourselves to watch over the material interests that bind us as laborers. We must work together to improve our living and working conditions. There is a sense of responsibility and a sense of accomplishment that is gained from discussion of the structural provision in that responsibility.

The worldview was dictated and following participants seemed to appropriate it in class. I could not agree that Peevey's demeanor would empirically prove the all encompassing character personally. However, I could understand why somebody would see empirical 'proof' of the 'truth' who does not structurally reject the possibility of an absolute 'truth' like I did as an anthropologist. The anecdote shows that group b's world view is appropriated by following participants because the emotions of frustration that mister Peevey's disinterest were collectively witnessed and now shared. All participants of the class agreed that Peevey's face and demeanor are unsympathetic. I later realized that this class for beginners is too early in the process to allow for Neil to posit the opinion of group b's leading participants that Peevey is the symbol of heartless greed that is the rotten core of capitalism. Instead, the team performed light version of group b's 'truth' just speaks of the unwillingness of a man like Peevey to economically represent the material interests of 'us laborers'.

Affective experience of ethos

The relatively abstract explanation of the world was supported by our experience of group b's 'truth' in affective form, that same afternoon:

Tuesday, day 17

It is afternoon and I will take part in my first aid activity. I will be working to find solutions for people who struggle with poverty. I sit down to help Sharon, who explains that she has a 600 dollar bill to pay. She has broken previous payment plans and she does not recall when the last payment was. Neil invited me to do the call to PG&E and to work toward a payment plan. Neil explains that PG&E is not allowed to shut of utilities because Sharon has two small children. I notice that group b's views confront me with myself. On the one hand, it seems only natural to me that somebody does not receive continued energy utilities if they cannot afford to pay for it. On the other hand, I have seen PG&E's exorbitant annual profits and it seems nonsense to think that PG&E claims that utilities cannot be continued to members of the public, because there is no money. I am intimidated by my impending request to PG&E to provide service to somebody who does perhaps not entirely earn the right to receive it. I call PG&E anyway. I speak with a young-sounding woman, who says that the payment plan has been broken four times already. A fifth time is just impossible. I feel the need to agree with her, but that is not a solution. Instead, I ask for a superior, like I had heard Neil do earlier. That is no problem, the girl replies. The next in command sounds older. She explains that expectations had been grim in December, and still PG&E had been forgiving enough to allow a fourth payment plan. I tried to match her argument with my argument that there can simply be no reason why Sharon and her two children would deserve to be left in the cold and in the dark. Her reply is that PG&E must stay true to its policy which dictates that services cannot be provided if no money is to be expected in return. After repeating my argument a few more times, like I had seen Neil do earlier today, I hand the phone over to Neil. He starts the same yes/no 'discussion' with the next in command for another hour. He argues that PG&E will not receive any money at all, unless they accept a reasonable payment plan. Eventually PG&E gives in. Sharon is allowed to pay 230 dollars on the second of February, which is two weeks away. I have seen her income

statements before I got on the phone with PG&E and I notice that that will be almost all of her 283 dollars that she receives in government support for the month of February. She accepts, though. The remaining money owed is spread out over nine months, leading to forty seven dollars every month, which will be added to her regular bill. She expresses her appreciation for Neil and she calls both Neil and me miracle workers. We explain to Sharon that she is now expected to contribute an equal amount of work to group b's efforts, so that she can learn to help others like we have. Sharon is happy to agree and we schedule a day when she comes back to the office to start to learn the organizing skills. I congratulate Neil with his success. I feel pride and appreciation for both Neil and myself. I am proud to have stepped up against PG&E, who clearly have the funds to pay millions to share holders, while they are clearly willing to accept little responsibility for the living conditions of the people who depend on their services in basic utilities. We have prevailed against PG&E, but more importantly, we have gained another volunteer who can do the same for others. We can make the structural solution work indeed. I notice personally the good that participation does.

This experience was intended to communicate to me clearly through my own personal experience that not the government, but solidarity among ourselves as workers is indeed the only key to an end to oppression. Apart from more confirmation of group b's 'truth', I felt the emotional value of the extraordinary opportunities to do good in group b's activities. I argue that the meaning that is assigned to the experience existed before I experienced it. We had talked about it in class that very morning. However, the participants in group b do not recognize the single origin of the meaning that is assigned to the experience and the empirical value of the experience. I argue that both model for and model of the world originate in the participation in the activity. The activity can be class and it can be the aid activity. Like the dual function that Geertz' assigns to the ritual in the introduction, I ascribe such dual function to participation in the activity. From such participation follows the limited scope of perception from which there is no escape.

Appropriation of the world view

The experience with Sharon in the aid activity is used by Jade to argue for the all encompassing character of of group b's absolute 'truth':

I ask Jade where she gets her confirmation that group b's 'truth' is exclusively 'true'. She responds by saying that history has shown what has worked in labor organizing and what has not. She provides a number of examples that support the argument that our organizing efforts are indeed working. She has many examples, such as histories of socialist countries. Another example is US veterans who in theory have programs to support their return from duty. However, the newspapers show that there is simply no federal money available to provide that support. I point out that that does not prove to me that structural improvement will inevitably follow from my dedication of my life to group b's efforts. Jade responds to say that it is typical for an academic to deny the 'truth'. She argues that the academic does not intend to change conditions of poverty, because an academic depends on it for a living. She continues to say that the academic community produces papers and opinions, but never structural solutions. Jade suggests that I need to take time and participation. Not the rational consideration of an academic, but the participation of an activist will show why group b's activities bring the structural solution. She says that I can-not come to understand what Jade clearly witnesses if I do not participate more in group b. To give an example, Jade refers to the experience that I personally had with the phone call with PG&E at the aid activity. I have been able to help Sharon by participating..

I have been able to agree with much of group b's 'truth'. But I cannot agree that it is the only 'truth'. It seems to me that Jade works to employ the confirmation that was gained from the aid activity with Sharon as empirical 'proof' for group b's 'truth' in all its grand tendency to mistake assumptions for realities. My anthropological background denies the existence of such an absolute 'truth'. However, the affective experience that rocks the foundations of structural critique are experienced in Sirius' house:

Early afternoon. Gary and I are teamed up for the community contact, in which we go

door to door to explain what we can do for the people and invite them for material help in return for their participation. We meet Percy on the street, who tells us about the shut off of utilities in his father-in-law's house. I arrange to meet him in one hour time, so he can clean up the house a bit and he gives us the address. I tell Aaron, who is a befriended participant, about the poor living conditions that Percy had told me about. Aaron jumps at the opportunity to contribute. When we get to the house, we find Percy and his girlfriend smoking on the couch. His girlfriend's name is Dana and the house belongs to her step father, Sirius. The house is damp, cold and dark. It has little furniture. A radio is playing in the room where Sirius is eating in his wheelchair. He does not look up to greet us. I am impressed by the harsh circumstances in which this elderly gentleman and Dana must live. Aaron is practically homeless himself, and does not seem to be as impressed as I am. Aaron starts to listen to Percy's explanation that Sirius has Alzheimer's and misses his television, but the main problem is that he cannot get from his wheelchair into his bed, because he has no power to work the machine that would transport him. I see that in this house, like in most other houses I have seen in the neighborhood, heating of the house is done by burning stoves in the kitchen. By the time I have taken in the deeply depressing environment in which Sirius must scuffle around in his wheelchair, Aaron has found out that the energy bill is in the name of Sirius' son, who shows up unannounced once every three months or so. He did not pay the bills. Dana will be happy to take over the account in her name, because she lives in the house. Aaron gets on the phone to sort things out, confident that he can persuade PG&E that, first and foremost, utilities must be resumed immediately because they are needed for medical reasons. Secondly, the account must be transferred to Dana's name. There are problems with consent in relocating the account, however, and I feel my spirit drain as we spend three hours in the depressing, dark, damp house. Eventually, Aaron manages to solve the problems and we all congratulate him and I feel happiness for Sirius and pride for Aaron and to some degree for myself. We leave the house and I feel reborn as we walk through the fresh air at the end of a grey day. I have been deeply impressed by the depressing poverty. I am more profoundly struck by the fact that I have always had a strong desire, and ample opportunity, to look away in my life of privilege. I am painfully aware of my privileged position in which I always have the freedom to distance myself from poverty if it becomes

threatening in any way. Poverty had thus far been a shopping cart of a homeless garbage collector in the street, or a low figure of income on a PG&E notice in an aid activity. But I had never experienced it personally as the desperate situation like I did today. I realize that my sense of desperation came from my inability to leave it for three hours. I feel that Jade may just be correct in her argument that members of the academic community, of which I am part, share the unconscious tendency to hide from poverty behind academic articles. I would then structurally critique the possibility of an absolute 'truth' because I am in the privileged position to escape the threatening implications by denying their legitimacy. If the academic argument that group b's 'truth' is just another one of many possible perspectives is really a convenient escape for the elite, my depressed feelings after participating in a piece of Sirius' life puts me right in the middle of the escaping elite. My immersion today has forced reflection on myself as an academic, and the foundations and it has struck me.

I had thus far structurally denied the possibility of a known holistic understanding of anything, on the basis of my trust in the scientific community to know that it cannot be known. The experience in Sirius' house made me doubt it. I could now see why Jade would be correct to argue that like every other aspect of group b's 'truth', its appropriation will confirm its legitimacy through participation. Participation in Sirius' house has spawned the answer to my question about the legitimacy of structural critique of group b's absolute 'truth'. As she had done in the conversation when I had agreed to become a committed participant on day nine, Jade continued to discredit my academic argument that a 'truth' cannot be all encompassing. She argued that my critique's origin is found in what she could term the self-righteous nonsense that the privileged academics produce amongst each other. The depressing poverty that I witnessed that day could confirm to me that I as an academic indeed fool myself by talking, reading and writing about poverty, but never understanding it from a real position of poverty. I could understand why I would have always used my privileged position to remove myself from the real thing, and I could appreciate why group b would be the hands-on authority to understand poverty better than academics who spend their lives removing themselves from poverty if the personal confrontation becomes too much. On the basis of the affective experience in

Sirus' house, I wondered if I fool myself too, when I resist group b's all encompassing 'truth' because I just happen to respect the arguments of the anthropological academic community. It would seem that if anything or anybody is in a position to speak about the subject poverty, it is group b, because it is the only authority that can speak from experience.

My denial of model of the world

The mutually limiting working of the appropriated world view and affectively experienced ethos explained through these anecdotes and their analyses. The rejection of the possibility of the absolute 'truth' moored my reflection on group b in the field. In a desperate attempt to understand Jade's outlook on empirical 'proof' of absolute 'truth' from a distance, I have tried to research group b's 'truth' by doing a survey in the neighborhood. I tried to find out to what extent the members of the public would indeed come to learn group b's 'truth' if material discomfort would indeed increase as capitalism further fails. But I stopped the survey because my faith in its success ended when Jade labeled the assumptions on which it was based as group b's 'truth' in "a Matthijs way". I understood her rejection of my understanding of group b's 'truth' that I could not come to understand more of group b's world view through a survey exactly *because* I did not share the empirical experience. It seemed that I had not grasped the elements of Jade's life world that made the 'truth' her reality. I had not shared with her the same meaning of our shared empirical experiences. In other words, I was confronted with group b's model of the world by my participation in group b's engagement with its 'truth', but I rejected the empirical 'proof' of its all encompassing character. I denied the possibility of an absolute 'truth', whereby I did not let my participation inform the model *for* the world. My faith in anthropological assumptions moored my world view to anthropological 'truth' that stands in competition to group b's 'truth'. I would not learn Jade's life world as long as I denied my willingness to appropriate its absolute legitimacy beyond my rational agreement and disagreement from anthropological foundations. To know more of group b's life world, I had to accept Jade's invitation to become a full-time participant, which was a decision that was complemented by my denial of my structural critique. I would divert my efforts from the structural critique that had characterized this liminal phase and I would focus my efforts on my ability to share the empirical 'proof' like any other participant would after full acceptance of group b's 'truth'. The following chapter describes my conscious denial of my structural critique on the absolute quality of group b's absolute 'truth', which informed my successful dedication to group b's 'truth'.

This chapter has been what van Gennep terms the liminal phase. I recognize its attributes as the participant is confused, or “[...] betwixt and between all fixed points of classification” as Turner puts it (2002: 96). The following participant experiences the confusion in the form of existential questions asked and their answers found. Both questions and answers seem to question and test the meaning of reality that seems to exist external to group b. I argue, as I explain in the introduction, however, that the liminal phase in group b is the core of the process of agreement in which both the questions and their answers spawn from what is already appropriated and affectively experienced. As a result, the reality that group b suggests seems thoroughly tested and the confirming answers make the ‘facts of life’ seem like given facts. I will illustrate in the following chapter that the self sustaining power of the ‘truth’ really kicks in after the illusion that the ‘truth’ is thoroughly tested in the liminal phase that was just discussed. Without the structural critique that had moored my life world to the anthropological inability to accept an all encompassing ‘truth’, the all encompassing ‘truth’ became undeniable when empirical ‘proof’ is considered.

Chapter Three: Dedication to group B

My continued progression in the progress further depended on my approval that my scope of perception became increasingly limited as participation tightened the boundaries of my world view and ethos. With the denial of my structural critique on group b's all encompassing 'truth' that had characterized the phase of commitment, I indeed managed to allow the (de)selection of impressions to leave only the confirmation of the 'truth'. In this phase, I have sought after an uncritical appreciation of group b's 'truth', rather than its structural critique. The conscious decision to leave behind the liminal phase resolved the insecurities of the tumultuous liminal state and replaced it with clear definitions of what is morally 'right' and what is 'wrong'. The clarity that comes from certainty comes with an increasing subordination to the 'truth' as the legitimacy of its empirical 'confirmation' becomes unquestioned. It was true for me that empirical confirmation could only come if I avoid critical questioning of empirical 'proof'. We will see in this chapter that the preservation of Jade's 'faith' too must depend on her avoiding of a critical questioning. My position as a research differs from that of Jade, however, where Jade's denial of critical consideration of reasonable doubt originates within her 'faith' itself. My reason to deny it, in contrast, was for the sake of my research. I was still moored in the anthropological structural denial of the possibility of an all encompassing 'truth'.

What remained of this mooring toward the end of the field work consisted almost only of the date that I would return to the Netherlands. I was surprised to find that my decision to do so had enables me to witness empirical confirmation of the all encompassing character of group b's 'truth'. I was surprised again to find that empirical experience continued to 'confirm' group b's 'truth' to me even after my return home. However, I regained my faith in the 'truth' that is appropriated and affectively experienced at home and wrote this thesis from that academic perspective. I do realize, however, that my academic denial of group b's all encompassing 'truth' and group b's all encompassing 'truth' can be transposed. A position and critique on the opposite position seems a matter of choice. This reduces the academic position from which we take pride in the reflection on the anthropological 'other' to a mere perspective. I will process this

finding in the discussion that follows the conclusion in the final part of the thesis.

This chapter consists of two parts. First, the embraced 'truth' is demonstrated as the opportunity to do 'good' in an example of my participation in group b and its analysis as Goffman's team performance (1990) as it was discussed in the introduction and chapter one. This time, however, unlike in chapter one, I now performed the role of a leading participant. The second example and its analysis are concerned with a discussion that followed from my full-time participation. Along with my participation as a leading participant came my involvement with the more abstract notions that underlie group b's 'truth'. The discussion that I present has been an opportunity to discuss the differences between our perspectives on a more abstract level than I had done before. I had not heard the abstract foundations stated as clearly as I did in this class on Marx' applied Communist Manifesto.

As the Comaroffs' description in the introduction shows (2002), the power of the hegemony lies in the silent assumption of the 'reality' that it dictates. I came to learn in a class that what Jade considers the 'given facts of life' remain unquestioned because she supposes their given, unquestionable reality. It is seen that the structure dominates over the individual agent in the form of a hegemony if she or he appreciates it for the 'given facts of life'. Together, the two examples allow me to argue that agents in a structure depend on the structure for affective reward. I argue that they will protect their relation of dependency by keeping the boundaries that define their limited scope of perception intact. They protect their own limitations because it is intertwined with their access to affective reward.

To give an impression of the circumstances of this phase, I will describe here briefly what full-time participation entails. I was now part of the commune as a fully leading participant, for which I stayed overnight four nights out of the week. Three days after my decision to start ignoring my structural critique, I surprised myself with my ability to experience the clarity of agreement with group b's 'truth' and the affective reward of self-sacrifice that it enables. I have convinced people with all I could and we have celebrated my successes with other leading participants. I have taught class to following participants. And my own classes toward a devoted participant, which is the final stage,

continued. I set up my own administrative project and had a crew of eight following participants work the typing machines in the name of the revolution. I have argued with critics of group b and lost friendship over it.

All in all, I could enjoy the affective reward of 'progress' that I could allow myself to experience. We continued to spend our days explaining what we considered our unique wisdom to others at the supermarket and to other people in the neighborhood. The success worked to confirm that our responsibility served a purpose. Like the anecdote in the introduction shows, I could share from the large amount of failures Jade's experience that capitalism is indeed the single strongest opponent to take on. I joined my second participation at the CPUC public hearing, where I spoke out against the CPUC committee members in front of an audience of a hundred people and it felt good. We went to the hearing to be a what Jade had called a 'hegemonic force' and we later counted that we and our sister offices had delivered 30 out of 47 speakers. All in all, I understood from experience why participation in group b would drown out what had been familiar before. I never doubted my return to the Netherlands, but I could stay and be happy with the endless supply of affective reward and 'progress'. I have surprised myself again about my agreement with group b's 'truth' after my return.

‘Progress’ in cultural enlightenment affectively experienced

The following anecdote illustrates team performance, by which I argue that the engagement of the ‘pious’ lifestyle by agents is the foundation of the perpetuation of the structure over generations of naïve followers. ‘Team performance’ overpowers the naïve newcomer by presenting a seemingly unanimous perception of the world to achieve the purpose of the performers (see Goffman: 1990). The agentive power of the hegemonic structure over the collective of agents is perpetuated by the subordination of newcomers. The subordination follows from the team performed white lies that are told by the leading participants. Any leading participant who has fully appropriated group b’s ‘truth’, engages in the life style that it dictates as ‘pious’. The dictated life style is the following anecdote concerns the enactment of a team performed version of the ‘truth’ that fits the requirements that the gained understanding of the newcomer’s background sets for its initial appropriation.

The following anecdote shows the affective reward that followed from our collective success in fulfilling our ‘responsibility’ of inspiring others with a collectively enacted version of the cultural enlightenment. The appropriated ‘truth’ culminates in the assumed responsibility to cultivate cultural enlightenment increasing the amount of participants and their dedication to group b’s efforts. With its appropriation of that ideal comes the integral consequence that that is the highest purpose in the leading participants’ life.

Saturday, day 70

We head out for our community contact on Saturdays. I learn that Jade has met a Korean girl at the supermarket when I was speaking to somebody else, last night. Her name is Nan and she will join us today. She arrives at the office and I find that she is shy. Nan explains that she participates in group b, because she wants to get to know more about the United States. She is invited to participate in most of the preparations for the community contact when I am secretly taken aside by Jade. She instructs me to take Nan under my wing. I understand that today is our opportunity to convince Nan of the softened version of the ‘truth’ through her participation. What our efforts to inspire cultural enlightenment needs mostly is more participants, so we need Nan’s agreement

today so that she can be inspired more when she continues and she will expand her participation. It goes unsaid that the softened version and its empirical confirmation must seem naturally given, and not facilitated by our efforts that Jade is coordinating behind the scenes. Nan cannot notice that the version of group b's 'truth' is tailor made to fit what specifics she gives us of her background, nor can she notice that today revolves around her. Jade makes sure that Jareth, Neil, Gary and I are all aware that we must work hard today to present our activity to Nan as work like any other ordinary day. During the activity, I speak to the people in the street and she listens, still shy. After our return to the office, she says that she enjoyed it. I am instructed to keep a close eye on Nan in the afternoon and Jade suggests that I explain group b's introduction. I sit down to explain to her the basics when both Jade and Jareth sit in with us. Jareth suggests that he and Nan go eat in the kitchen, when Jade calls me to her and she secretly explains that Jareth is getting ready to do what is called a participant meeting, I understand that Jareth will inquire in more detail into Nan's intentions and then use that information to seemingly casually close the deal by suggesting that Nan commit to group b. Later that day, we are in a meeting. Nan introduces herself. She announces that she has agreed to assign a few days out of every week to take part and see more of group b. She has become a committed participant. We have done well. After all following participants have left, Jareth, Neil, Jade, Gary and I congratulate each other with today's accomplishment. We are the leading participants and we have earned the pride that follows from the success of the day. We have done our part in the cultural enlightenment well.

This anecdote demonstrates the engagement in the 'pious' life style and the reward for its successful execution. When put in larger perspective, the anecdote shows that the engagement of leading participants with their 'truth' and the affective reward that follows from it, perpetuates the structure over generations of participants. Following participants are given good reason to engage with group b's 'truth'. Nan was promised the insight into the United States that she said she was searching for, like I was given the opportunity to do my research like I had said that I was searching for. I argue that the execution of the 'pious' lifestyle by agents is the foundation of the perpetuation of the structure.

The tenacity of group b's model of the world displayed

The following anecdote displays that Jade's empirical 'proof' of group b's 'truth' originates within the 'truth' itself, although Jade herself describes her 'given facts of life'. This makes my main argument that the individual agent is Jade, who is subordinate to the structure that is group b's 'truth' because she perpetuates her confusion of group b's 'truth' for the 'given facts of life'. Jade does not consider any alternative to group b's world view even as I present it without pressure, as a trusted participant and under ideal conditions. I present a discussion of her world view and my suggestion of the anthropological alternative.

Wednesday, day 67

Evening. Jareth is teaches a class, while Jade is teaching another leading participant upstairs. She comes by every now and then to explain in more detail and with more enthusiasm what Jareth just explained. Usually, I can hardly keep my mind with what I am told in class, probably because I have to listen after I have been working for twelve hours. However, this class is especially interesting. It explains the history of class struggle along the lines of Marx' communist manifesto and Jade spices it up with animated explanations. It is concerned with the abstract theoretical explanation of the current capitalist phase that lies on the historic progression of mankind's development from primitive communism, past capitalism, on to communism as the final stage. I am somewhat enthusiastic about this opportunity to discuss my critique on group b's all-encompassing character, although I am not sure if it will benefit my research if I challenge group b's 'truth' openly by expressing my critique, again. That approach has brought me further from an inside understanding in my time as committed participant than what I have achieved thus far as a dedicated participant. When Jareth and I are alone, I tell him that I expect to find in my studies after the field that world views that other academic founding fathers wrote may turn out to be equally likely or unlikely to describe the complete 'truth' as this Marxist explanation does. He takes a long time to understand what I said and to respond. By the time he does respond, Jade is with us in the kitchen and asks if I can repeat my question that seems to occupy Jareth's mind. I

explain my main point to Jade. I continue to say that group b does indeed seem to apply a description of life to everyday confirmations, but that does not necessarily mean that no alternative exists to group b's description of life. I suggest that it seems like one of many potential models, all of which are no more nor less likely than the other. I stress again that I do not disagree with group b's explanation. Instead, I am merely saying that seeing daily confirmation of the legitimacy of Marxist description cannot exclude other descriptions from potentially equal legitimacy. I ask her how we could ever choose one describer of life's realities over the other if neither can be proven correct or incorrect.

Jade responds by turning to the class that I was just taught. She refers to Marx' superstructure, which was explained earlier in class as a set of factors that remain a constant influence on life's circumstances across the changing economic stages. The factors in the superstructure remain constant over the centuries of the economic evolution of mankind. Examples are entertainment, sports, media, religion, government, state, education and military/police. Jade now adds the factor 'culture' to the drawing that she had made before, and explains that she would expect me to think that group b's 'truth' is not entirely true, because I am trained in a capitalist university that is subject to the powers of the 'opposing forces'.

Jareth contributes that it is well known that universities today are designed in such a way to block assembly of students, in service of the capitalist material interests. Jade suggests that I was unknowingly trained to resist group b's 'truth'. The superstructure 'culture' at the university, then, Jade continues, has been the power of the capitalist enemy over me. I make clear that I disagree but I admit that I would not know it if I were indeed living a capitalist illusion, because an illusion cannot be known by she or he who lives it. I tell Jade and Jareth that I am an anthropologist who questions whenever possible and that I do so because my interest goes out to questions and not to answers. Jade speaks that she does not understand why I would search for answers, if the answers are already given. I repeat that I am not necessarily disagreeing with group b but that I will not accept anything for 'true' if no further critique is legitimate. I point out that she has just founded her defense of Marxist theory on Marxist theory itself. I explain that legitimate argumentation cannot come from assumptions within the argument that it is supposed to support. We continue our argument, but I realize that the central theme

that separates our life worlds was touched upon when Jade and I discussed our focus on either questions or answers. I bring the discussion to a satisfactory end return to my role without critique.

Although we tried, we could not meet in the middle, as I could not agree that it was indubitably proven that group b's 'truth' is indeed all encompassing, whereas Jade could not accept that her world view may not be uniquely true. It became clear to me that Jade protects her life world and the life worlds of those with whom she constitutes group b. The central theme that we have discussed is that it seems unnatural to her that I would question answers. In fact, it seems to her that the capitalist power raises the critique in my mind through the intuition where I was obtaining my education at the time. It seems that she preserves the 'given facts of life' by deflecting threats to it.

Jade is the leading participant in the highest position in group b. Other leading participants are confirmed in their participation by her skillful reassurance. The ultimate origin of group b's 'truth' is found where Jade assures her own life world by deflecting the critique on the boundaries of the reality that she perpetuates that I suggested. The origin of the structure ultimately lies in the agent's interests in the preservation of the supposed 'given facts of life'.

Conclusion

The first example and its analysis has shown the model *for* the world in the form of a 'pious' lifestyle through engagement with team performance. What results from such engagement is the affective reward for doing what is termed 'right' as well as attraction of new generations of participants for group b's efforts. My denial of structural critique that characterizes this phase meant that I could participate in the affective reward that followed from doing what I had now appropriated as the unique 'right' objective in life. I have learned that the dedicated engagement with group b's efforts entails an extraordinary access to good conscience for the engaging participants, including myself. I now learned that I had not been able to see the empirical confirmation of group b's 'truth' like Jade did, because mere participation in group b's efforts when I was a committed participant was not enough to affectively experience the engagement with the 'truth'.

The second example shows that the certainty that the existing world view provides is preserved by deflecting reasonable doubt. The model of the world is ultimately perpetuated because alternatives are simply not considered. The two examples and their analyses bring together the two aspects that together constitute the life world of the leading participant as the application of Geertz' argument showed in the introduction. There is the model *of* the world and the model *for* the world that are enabled by the dual function of the activity. I argue, therefore, that the participants in group b in part deny the reasonable doubt on their life world in order to preserve their access to good conscience.

Conclusion

This study is concerned with the power of the structure over the agent and the role of truth in reproducing this power. I have shown through the use of examples and their analysis in a narrative style that the agent is subordinate to the structure because she or he does not perceive the structure as such. The agent experiences the limitations that are set by the structure as the given facts of life. In other words, the subordination of the individual agent to the structure depends on the agent's inability to recognize the structure as the limit to agency that it is. The agent perpetuates the structure by appreciating it as the only correct model of the world, which entails engaging with the moral code that is dictated in the model for the world. I argue that what motivates the agent to comply to the supposed 'given facts of life' is the opportunity to gain affective reward for engaging with the 'right' moral as it is dictated in the supposed given facts of life. In other words, I argue that the subordination of the agent to the structure is perpetuated as the agent works to do what is 'right'. I have stated my argument in the introduction briefly as "group b's success depends not on its ability to broaden understanding to an 'all encompassing truth', but on its ability to limit the boundaries of participants' confirming experiences to fit b's 'truth encompassing all". I have used Geertz' definition of religion to argue that this empirically lived 'truth' is suspended between the two boundaries that are set and maintained by the mutually limiting relationship of world view on the one hand and ethos on the other. World view underlies ethos that is a clear path of action that leads to the naïve individual's good conscience. The good conscience that results from doing the 'right' thing further inspires appropriation of the world view. I have argued that through the mutually constituting relationship of the two functions of a 'pious' life style sustain each other. A participant whose lifestyle is involved with the engaged with group b's objectives, and thereby with its world view and ethos, will result in an increasing limitation of the scope of perception. The tightening of the boundaries can be recognized as they increasingly form a source of a witnessed empirical confirmation of the legitimacy of the existing world view and ethos. The result of the increasing limitation will be experienced by the participant as an increasing experience of an expansive insight into the unique 'truth'. I use my analysis of

group b to argue that a participant's experience of expansive insight into what is considered the unique 'truth' is inevitably the result of a limitation that remains concealed to her or him.

In order for world view and ethos to inform the participant's empirical experiences, they must be appropriated and affectively experienced, respectively. Appropriation means that the participant must take ownership of the world view and affective experience means that the distinction of 'right' and 'wrong' must have their effect on emotions of the participant. The affective experience implies the role of affects, which I can explain as the emotional experience of actions taken. I have illustrated team performance (Goffman 1990) as a source of affective reward for the participant who engages in it. Team performance is a source of power that a collective of team players can produce by unanimous enactment of an argument. I have shown that the newcomer, if she or he is willing to appropriate the 'truth', can be overpowered by the team performance of group b's leading participants.

I have described in the introduction that my argument in this thesis entails that I prioritize group b's values in the trade-off between my anthropological value to explain all that I can about group b on the one hand and group b's value to remain secluded from the capitalist enemy who will end their ability to structurally improve material conditions for all non-capitalist members of society on the other. I prioritize group b's values over those of the anthropological community that I am part of because, in correspondence to my argument about group b, my ability to reflect on group b's values from a position among the anthropological community is no less based on a hidden limited scope of perception than that of group b's participants. In other words, although my views seem to be more relevant than those of group b's participants, I clearly see that my views could not exist if it were not for the limitations that define the anthropological community that underlies the views. The honoring of group b's values stands in contrast the interests of the anthropologist, who intends to make background information available for colleague anthropologists. Sadly now, this information must end with me. Although the results can not be checked or critically reviewed and the research cannot be repeated, I celebrate that the participants of group b have no reason to consider me, as the representative of the anthropologist, a traitor. I value that my decision to honor their requests instills in their

experience the trust that foregoes the access of the anthropologist to weary communities such as group b. Let me state clearly in this conclusion that this respect for group b's values to remain secluded goes beyond questions of ethics. The origins of my decision to do so is to be found in the practical application of my argument that the anthropologist is unable to know circumstances 'better' than the subject under study, because the anthropologist her- and himself must rely on empirical observations and therefore, inevitably, on the limited scope of perception that orders the whole of empirical impressions.

As I have explained briefly in the introduction and referred to along the way in the main body of the text, the research method that has been most valuable may be termed informal conversations in the method participant observation. I inquired into developments that I could allow to happen in my own experience and that I could discuss with my fellow adventurers and I meticulously took notes to explain to myself the progress in 'finding' answers within my own experience and that of others. From this most valuable form of research I can reflect on my experiments with formal conversations and questionnaires. My experiments with formal conversations seemed to naturally banish the circumstances that are pre requisite to a sense of shared experience that was a valuable part of informal conversations. The roles of the interviewer and interviewee simply made a conversation as equals impossible and the inquiries turned from shared experiences to those of the other. My ability to reflect on questionnaires in hindsight has revealed questionnaires as a means to self deceit of the researcher in a way that typifies all understanding of 'the world', including doing research in my main argument of the thesis. The questionnaire could easily provide satisfactory results, but my understanding of group b from an inside perspective proved that potential 'value' deceptive. I conclude that my understanding of group b's 'truth' through informal conversations proves the results from the questionnaires deceptive like the questionnaires themselves could not have done. The reflection cannot end there. The questionnaires would have continued the ability to perceive their results as an external phenomenon like I argue that my whole research did. I argue that what seems to be my expansive 'true' understanding from participant observation is the result of my own self-deceit that only exists because it hides the limited scope of perception without which it could not exist.

Discussion

Although it may seem different, the origins of the anthropological analysis cannot escape what is found about the origins of group b's 'truth'. It may only seem different because the members of the anthropological world preserve the world view.

In the illustration of my experiences in the field, I have included at least two instances when the mooring of my research in self-evident anthropological approaches seem 'given facts of life' of the anthropological community itself. I refer to the instance when I have spent three hours in Sirius' house during the liminal phase, in which I at least temporarily lost my faith in the self-evident anthropological 'given fact of life' that no 'truth' can exist. The second instance, and tied in with what I just remarked about the first instance, is when Jade suggests that I am living the illusion of the capitalist enemy in our discussion in the final example of the third chapter. I do not believe that the capitalist enemy uses her or his power over the university to shape my reality. But I would not know it if I were living that illusion. The two instances are both concerned with the unknowing agent in the structure and they have made me think. I can employ anthropological analysis to explain the origin of the 'truth' of others. But let it be clear that any explanation of group b's 'truth' is an anthropological 'truth' in itself. Therefore, perhaps the anthropologist cannot escape the limitations that apply to group b's participants. In fact, there would be no ethnographic result without the empirical findings from the field. As I have shown, there can be no empirical findings without limitations. Therefore, I ask myself if the anthropological reality that has formed the mooring in this research is a competing set of limitations for myself as an agent who is subordinate to the my own structure – that of the anthropologist. I have chosen to term the organization under study 'group b', because I wish to stress here that the findings pertain to any group of individuals. I use it to refer to a group of people in any form, which includes the collective of naive supporters of any academic 'truth'. I suggest discussion in the direction of the anthropologist's tendency to perceive anthropological analysis as different or distant from the subject under study, while its inevitable empirical foundations can never escape that subject itself.

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