



The Moral Imagination

The Art and Soul of Building Peace

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I

On Stating the Problem and Thesis

Akmal Mizshakarol painted the image found on the cover of this book following the tragic events unleashed in New York and Washington D.C., on September 11, 2001. Its title is that date. Tajik by birth, his studio is located in his house at the end of a street several blocks off Rudaki Avenue, the main thoroughfare in Dushanbe. On my regular visits to Tajikistan, where I have been helping to develop a national curriculum on conflict resolution with seven universities, I sought out contemporary artists and happened upon his studio. Over the course of time and visits, we became friends.

In the spring of 2002 I found Akmal completing the first of his pieces on the tragedy that hit the United States in the fall of 2001. A year later, he completed the one you find here. For Tajiks, a visitor in anyone's home always involves a process of attending well to the guest, announced or not. At Akmal's we often first visited his studio and looked at his latest paintings, then, sooner or later, we ended up in the courtyard veranda. Caged guinea hens cackled above our heads. Roses and apple and apricot trees blessed us with their aroma and shade. Even for a short visit the table was filled with nuts, raisins, breads, and juices. Conversation ranged from daughters (advice about how to marry well) to art (the loneliness and intensity of studio work), from local to international politics. His daughters, wonderfully polite and interested, hovered, listened, and occasionally helped with translation through their nearly perfect English. They are members of the rising new generation of Tajiks, more conversant with the outside world beyond Central Asia than their parents.

Akmal was trained at the Surikov Moscow Art Institute, one of the best Russian art academies. Near the end of his studies he wandered from the norms of his Russian mentors, exploring roots in himself and in his native Tajikistan. Speaking of his now growing internationally recognized style, he once commented, “It took some time, but I found my voice. At some point, even though it is totally uncertain, you have to take the risk of following your own intuition, your own voice.” All direct quotations from my friends and colleagues have been reconstructed to the best of my ability from my notes, journals, and recollections.

We talked about the painting he titled *September 11*. From first sight, I was mesmerized by the combination of the painting itself, the context in which it was made, the color choices, the faces, and the implications of such an effort. A Tajik Muslim painter sitting just north of Afghanistan had reflected through his hands a response to the events that had taken place half a world away, yet that were close to home. When I inquired about what he was thinking when he painted the canvas, Akmal, in the fine fashion of most artists responded:

I can’t comment too much. The painting is the comment. But I remember that day. We watched with disbelief as the planes crashed. It was like we were all standing and looking at the sky. Wondering where it came from and what was falling into our lives. I used to have dreams of being on a plane, you know, one of those dreams where a plane is falling and you wake up just before it crashes. It was like this was too close to that dream.

He added: “This was the same feeling we had in our civil war. Every day, we would look toward the sky and wonder what was coming next. And hoping that we could find something better, something to stop it, something to end the bad dream.”

I stood in Akmal’s studio, looking at the painting. In it, five people circle in a courtyard, three women and two men looking upward, watching for what might be coming. One is obviously perplexed. Some are filled with wonder, and, it seems to me, with a sense of looking for something beyond what is befalling them. Clearly they express concern, even anxiety. Yet the painting as a whole, maybe because of the colors chosen, engenders a hope. It is this kind of hope that links people half a world away and suggests the possibility of change, a concern not only for the tragedy that fell on some and the fear of what may befall us all, but also a concern for what we will create from and for this humanity we share. In the painting, I find a quality of transcendence, something that wishes to touch a stream of shared humanity beyond the violence. From the canvas and its creator’s surrounding context I found a simple offer of mutuality and healing. I told Akmal that I wanted to use his *September 11* painting on the cover of a book I was writing because it captured so many elements of my work’s title and thesis.

The academic community, unlike the artistic community, often begins its interaction with and journey into the world by stating a problem that defines both the journey and the interaction. The artistic community, it seems to me, starts with experience in the world and then creates a journey toward expressing something that captures the wholeness of that feeling in a succinct moment. The two communities share this in common: Ultimately, at some moment in time, they both rely on intuition.

While I have never been a big fan of problem stating, I have come to appreciate the art of posing a good question. The question this book poses is simple and endlessly complex: *How do we transcend the cycles of violence that bewitch our human community while still living in them?* I could call this the statement of the problem. I could suggest that it emerges from twenty-five years of experiences working in settings of protracted conflict and as such this question is the canvas of the human condition in too many parts of our globe. I have come to believe that this is *the* question that, at every step of the way, peacebuilding, this noble endeavor to break beyond the shackles of violence, must forcibly face.

Through this book I propose a thesis that I feel may be a start at answering that question: Transcending violence is forged by the capacity to generate, mobilize, and build the moral imagination. The kind of imagination to which I refer is mobilized when four disciplines and capacities are held together and practiced by those who find their way to rise above violence. Stated simply, the moral imagination requires the capacity to imagine ourselves in a web of relationships that includes our enemies; the ability to sustain a paradoxical curiosity that embraces complexity without reliance on dualistic polarity; the fundamental belief in and pursuit of the creative act; and the acceptance of the inherent risk of stepping into the mystery of the unknown that lies beyond the far too familiar landscape of violence.

The thesis that a certain kind of imagination is within reach and necessary to transcend violence requires that we explore these four disciplines in two broad directions. First, we must understand and feel the landscape of protracted violence and why it poses such deep-rooted challenges to constructive change. In other words, we must set our feet deeply into the geographies and realities of what destructive relationships produce, what legacies they leave, and what breaking their violent patterns will require. Second, we must explore the creative process itself, not as a tangential inquiry, but as the wellspring that feeds the building of peace. In other words, we must venture into the mostly uncharted territory of the artist's way as applied to social change, the canvases and poetics of human relationships, imagination and discovery, and ultimately the mystery of vocation for those who take up such a journey.

We stand before the inquiry of what makes possible movement beyond ingrained patterns of protracted, destructive conflict. Our thesis requires us to explore the survival of the artist's genius and gift in the lands of violence.

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On Touching the Moral Imagination

Four Stories

A Story from Ghana: “I Call You Father Because I Do Not Wish to Disrespect You”

During the 1990s, northern Ghana faced the rising escalation of ethnic conflict mixed with the ever-present tense undertones of Muslim-Christian relationships. In the broader West African region, Liberia had collapsed into chaotic, violent internal warfare, spilling refugees into neighboring countries. The chaos seemed simultaneously endemic and contagious. Within a short period of time, Sierra Leone descended into cycles of bloodletting and cruelty that were unprecedented for the subregion. Nigeria, the largest and most powerful regional country, walked a fine line that barely seemed to avoid the wildfires of full-blown civil war. In such a context, the rise of intercommunal violence, and even sporadic massacres had all the signs of a parallel disaster in the northern communities of Ghana.

These were not historically isolated cycles of violence. The roots of the conflicts between several of the groups, particularly the Konkombas and Dagombas, could be easily traced back into the era of slavery.¹ The Dagombas, a group with a sustained and powerful tradition of chieftaincy, have a social and leadership structure that loaned itself to negotiation with European slave traders. They were the most powerful and dominant group in the north of the country; their allies to the south were the people of the equally strong Ashanti Empire. *Chiefly groups* retained royalty, culminating in the paramount chief, whereas groups in Ghana referred to as *nonchiefly* no longer had or were not accorded a chiefly political structure.

The Konkombas, on the other hand, were more dispersed. Principally agriculturalists, “yam growers,” as they at times were denigrated and stereotyped the Konkombas did not organize around the same social and royal features. They were a nonchiefly tribe, not necessarily by their choice. High chieftaincy in this part of the world brought benefits and a comparative sense of importance that translated into superiority. For example, the chiefly groups gained advantage from collaboration with the slave trade; the nonchiefly were fated to live the great travesty of dehumanization and exploitation incarnated in this trafficking of men, women, and children. Following the period of the slave trade, the chiefly groups again benefited during the period of colonization. They received recognition and their traditional power and sense of superiority were further ingrained. The seeds of division sown during the period of slavery flourished in the period of colonial rule.

In subsequent centuries their conflicts were played out over control of land and resources. The arrival of religiously based missionary movements added more layers of division to their relationships. While some groups remained animists, the Konkombas followed Christianity, and most Dagombas, including the powerful royal houses and paramount chieftancy, became Muslim. One unexpected result was that the Christian missions, with their emphasis on education, provided schools that gave access and entry to rising social status for the Konkombas. This would eventually have an impact on the communities and politics.

As Ghana gained independence, the country moved toward democracy based on elections. Politicians with aspirations for votes understood the existing divisions and fears and often exacerbated them in order to get the support of their respective communities during election campaigns. Electoral periods became regular cycles of repeated and ever-greater violence. Even little events, like a dispute between two people in a market over a purchase, could spark an escalation into violence, as was the case with the Guinea Fowl War.

In 1995 the cycle threatened to explode again. A dispute over land claimed by both groups in a small town in the north suddenly exploded into overt violence during the electoral campaign. The killing sprees spread rapidly, spilled well beyond the locale of the original dispute, and threatened the stability of the whole northern region. The images of recent chaotic collapse in Sierra Leone and Liberia were fresh in the minds of many people. This cycle of intercommunal violence in Ghana appeared on the verge of creating yet another destructive full-blown civil war. In response, a consortium of nongovernmental organizations working in the northern region of Ghana began to push for a peacebuilding effort. A small team of African mediators, led initially by Hizkias Assefa and Emmanuel Bombande, began the process of creating space for dialogue between the representatives of the two ethnic groups. Eventually this process would find a way to avoid the escalation of violence to civil war and would even create an infrastructure for dealing with the common

recurrence of crises that in the past had translated into deadly fighting. But it was not a smooth road.

In one of their early encounters those involved in the mediation observed a story that created a transformation in the process and in the relationship between these two groups and therefore changed the fundamental direction of the conflict. In the first face-to-face meeting of the two groups, the Dagomba paramount chief arrived in full regalia and with his entourage. There were designated persons who carried his staff and sat at his feet. In the opening moments of the meeting he assumed a sharp attitude of superiority. Taking the role of the paramount, he wasted no time in denigrating and verbally attacking the Konkombas. Given the traditions and rights afforded the highest chiefs, little could be done except to let the chief speak.

"Look at them," he said, addressing himself more to the mediators than to the Konkombas. "Who are they even that I should be in this room with them? They do not even have a chief. Who am I to talk to? They are a people with nothing who have just come from the fields and now attack us in our own villages. They could have at least brought an old man. But look! They are just boys born yesterday."

The atmosphere was devastating. Making matters worse, the mediators felt in a very difficult bind. Culturally, when facing a chief, there was nothing they could do to control the process. You simply cannot tell a chief to watch his mouth or follow ground rules, particularly in the presence of his entourage and his enemies. It appeared as if the whole endeavor may have been misconceived and was reaching a breaking point.

The Konkomba spokesman asked to respond. Fearing the worst, the mediators provided him space to speak. The young man turned and addressed himself to the chief of the enemy tribe:

You are perfectly right, Father, we do not have a chief. We have not had one for years. You will not even recognize the man we have chosen to be our chief. And this has been our problem. The reason we react, the reason our people go on rampages and fights resulting in all these killings and destruction arises from this fact. We do not have what you have. It really is not about the town, or the land, or that market guinea fowl. I beg you, listen to my words, Father. I am calling you Father because we do not wish to disrespect you. You are a great chief. But what is left to us? Do we have no other means but this violence to receive in return the one thing we seek, to be respected and to establish our own chief who could indeed speak with you, rather than having a young boy do it on our behalf?

The attitude, tone of voice, and use of the word *Father* spoken by the young Konkomba man apparently so affected the chief that he sat for a moment

without response. When finally he spoke, he did so with a changed voice, addressing himself directly to the young man rather than to the mediators:

I had come to put your people in your place. But now I feel only shame. Though I insulted your people, you still called me Father. It is you who speaks with wisdom, and me who has not seen the truth. What you have said is true. We who are chiefly have always looked down on you because you have no chief, but we have not understood the denigration you suffered. I beg you, my son, to forgive me.

At this point the younger Konkomba man stood, walked to the chief, then knelt and gripped his lower leg, a sign of deep respect. He vocalized a single and audible “Na-a,” a word of affirmation and acceptance.

Those attending the session reported that the room was electrified, charged with high feeling and emotion. It was by no means the end of the problems or disagreements, but something happened in that moment that created an impact on everything that followed. The possibility of change away from century-long cycles of violence began and perhaps the seeds that avoided what could have been a full-blown Ghanaian civil war were planted in that moment.

This possibility of change continues. In March 2002, the king of the Dagombas, Ya Na Yakubu Andani II, was killed in an internal feud between the two clans of the Dagombas, the Abudu and Andani families. As long-time adversaries of the Dagombas, the Konkombas could have been expected to take advantage of the internal strife among the Dagombas. On the contrary, they met at a grand Durban of all their youths and elders and issued an official declaration on Ghana television. First they expressed solidarity with the Dagombas in the time of their grief and loss. Then they pleaded with the Dagombas to work together in finding a long-term solution to their internal chieftaincy dispute. They declared that Konkombas would not allow any of their tribesmen to undermine the Dagombas because of the internal difficulty they were experiencing. They concluded by suggesting that Konkombas who took advantage of the internal strife within the Dagombas to create a situation that may lead to violence would be isolated and handed over to the police.

A Story from Wajir: How a Few Women Stopped a War

The women of Wajir did not set out to stop a war.² They just wanted to make sure they could get food for their families. The initial idea was simple enough: Make sure that the market is safe for anyone to buy and sell.

Wajir district is located in the northeastern part of Kenya, near the Somali and Ethiopian borders. The district is made up mostly of Somali clans. Like those in other parts of the Horn of Africa, the people of Wajir have suffered

the impact of numerous internal wars in neighboring Somalia and Ethiopia. With the collapse of the Somali government in 1989, increased fighting inside the country created countless refugees, who spilled over the border into Kenya. Wajir soon found itself caught up in interclan fighting, with a flow of weapons, fighting groups, and refugees who made life increasingly difficult. By 1992 the Kenya government declared Wajir to be in a state of emergency.

The 1990s were not the first time Wajir had experienced clan-based war, but it soon became one of the worst cycles of violence. Dekha, one of the key women leaders in Wajir, recalls that one night in mid-1993 shooting erupted once again near her house. She ran for her first-born child and hid for several hours under the bed while bullets crisscrossed her room. In the morning, discussing the events of the night before, her mother recalled days in 1966 when Dekha was a child and her mother held her under the bed. They were reflecting that morning and feeling sad that the violence had not come to an end. As mothers, they were tired of the violence. Dekha was so affected by her mother's statement that she determined to find a way to make Wajir a place where her daughter would enjoy a violence-free life. She found other women with similar stories. Fatuma tells how at a wedding the women worried about how they would get home and had to leave early. They lamented the rising violence, the thievery along the highways, the guns that were everywhere carried by their young boys, and the fear of abuse and rape with which young girls lived even in their home villages.

So the women quietly gathered, fewer than a dozen of them at first. "We just wanted to put our heads together," they said, "to see what we knew and could do. We decided the place to start was the market." They agreed on a basic idea. The market should be safe for any woman of any clan background to come, to sell, and to buy. Women were looking out for their children. Access and safety to the market was an immediate right that had to be assured. Since women mostly ran the market, they spread the word. They established monitors who would watch every day what was happening at the market. They would report any infractions, any abuse of someone because of her clan or geographic origin. Whenever issues emerged, a small committee of women would move quickly to resolve them. Within a short period of time, the women had created a zone of peace in the market. Their meetings and initiatives resulted in the creation of the Wajir Women's Association for Peace.

While they were working hard on the market, they soon discovered that the broader fighting still affected their lives. Sitting again, they decided to pursue direct conversations with the elders of all of the clans. Though they had access to their elders, this was not an easy thing to do. "Who are women to advise and push us?" was the response they feared they might get. So they sat and thought through their understanding of the elder system, the actual key elders, and the makeup of the Somali clans in Wajir. Using their personal connections within their own groups, they worked with concerned men and

succeeded in bringing together a meeting of the elders of all the groups. They aligned themselves carefully to not push or take over the meetings. Instead they found one of the elderly men, quite respected, but who came from the smallest and therefore the least threatening of the local clans. In the meeting he became their spokesperson, talking directly to the other elders and appealing to their responsibility. "Why, really," he asked, "are we fighting? Who benefits from this? Our families are being destroyed." His words provoked long discussions. The elders, even some of those who had been promoting revenge killings, agreed to face the issues and stop the fighting. They formed the Council of Elders for Peace, which included a regular meeting group and subcommissions. They began the process of engaging the fighters in the bush and dealing with clan clashes.

The women, recognizing that this effort could be very important for Wajir, decided to take up contact with government officials from the district and eventually the national representatives in Parliament. Accompanied by some elders, they transparently described their initiative and process. They agreed to keep the officials informed and invited them to various meetings, but they asked that in return the officials not disrupt the process that was in motion. They received the blessing of the government.

Soon the question became how to engage the youth, particularly the young men who were hidden and fighting in the bush. The women and elders met with key youth in the district and formed what became known as the Youth for Peace. Together they not only went to the bush and met with fighters, they began to travel the district, giving public talks to mothers and youth. They soon discovered that a key concern was employment. Guns, fighting, and rustling had significant economic benefit. If the youth were to leave the fighting, their guns, and the bush, they would need something to occupy their time and provide income. The business community was then engaged. Initiatives for rebuilding and local jobs were offered. Together, the women from the market, the elders commissions, the Youth for Peace, the businesspeople, and local religious leaders formed the Wajir Peace and Development Committee.

Through the work of the elders, ceasefires came into place. Commissions were created to verify and help the process of disarming the clan-based factions. A process of turning over guns to local authorities was coordinated with these commissions and the district police. Emergency response teams were formed made up of elders from different clans who would travel on a moment's notice to deal with renewed fighting, rustling, or thievery.

Solidifying the rising peace, the Wajir Peace and Development Committee brought together all of the groups and held regular meetings with district and national leaders. They could not control the continued fighting in neighboring Somalia nor the influx of problems that came from outside their borders, but increasingly they found ways to protect their villages and stop the local fighting before it spiraled out of control. Key to their success was the ability to take

quick action and stop the potential moments of escalation by directly engaging the people involved. Former fighters now disarmed and, back in the community, became allies of the movement. They helped to constructively engage other fighting groups, increasing the process of disarmament. When crimes were committed, their own group brought those responsible forward, and restitution was sought rather than blind protection and cycles of revenge.

Ten years later, Wajir district still faces serious problems, and the Wajir Peace and Development Committee still actively works for peace and has continued to expand. New programs include police training and work in local schools. More than twenty schools are participating and have formed the Peace Education Network, which involves peer mediation and teacher training in conflict resolution.

Poverty and unemployment remain significant challenges in Wajir. Guns still cross borders in this region. Fighting has not stopped in Somalia, and it spills into Wajir. Religious issues and the global implications emerging since September 11, 2001, with the presence of U.S. marines and the antiterrorism campaigns, have become new issues. But those involved in the Wajir Peace and Development Committee continue their strong work. The elders meet on a regular basis. There is greater cooperation among the local villages, clans, and the district officials.

And the women who stopped a war monitor a now much safer market.

A Story from Colombia: We Have Decided to Think for Ourselves

Josué, Manuel, Hector, Llanero, Simón, Oswaldo, Rosita, Excelino, Juan Roy, Miguel Angel, Sylvia, and Alejandro shared several things that forever bound them together.³ They lived along the Carare River in an area called La India, in the jungles of Magdalena Medio in the country of Colombia. They were *campesinos*, peasants. They considered themselves ordinary folk. And they faced an extraordinary challenge: how to survive the wicked violence of numerous armed groups that traversed their lands and demanded their allegiance.

The Rio Carare is located in the heart of Magdalena Medio. It is a territory that brings together a stream of influence and people. Water flows through this thick jungle territory, and it brought *campesinos* in search of land from other parts of Colombia around the middle of the twentieth century. They came seeking refuge from the more conflicted zones of Colombia in the middle of the fifty-year-old war, the longest in the Western Hemisphere. It was at best a frontier territory with many natural dangers, a lack of any basic civil protections or law, and requiring hard work. Petroleum was discovered and now flows in this region and out to the Atlantic coast for delivery to the international com-

munity. So does the river of drug traffickers. And, of course, as is the case in many rural parts of Colombia, the river of armed groups and guns flows too.

By the late 1960s the leftist-oriented guerrilla movement FARC (Armed Revolutionary Front of Colombia) entered the territories of Carare. Military response from the national government followed and escalated. Unable to affect or eliminate the influence of the guerrilla movements in the region, landowners privately financed and secretly arranged, often in conjunction with the military, the “paras,” armed groups of vigilantes from the Right, which soon gained a greater independence. Battles took place not just for the land where the early *campesinos* had made their homes and against informal war taxes but for their very allegiance. Whoever controlled the particular territory at the time controlled the laws: Whoever robs will be killed; anyone who kills someone will be killed; whoever informs anyone of our presence will be killed. As one statement put it: “[N]o one is obligated to follow our code; you always have the right to leave the territory.” The law of silence prevailed: “It is prohibited to talk about the death of any friend or family member, about those who killed them or the reasons why they were killed. If you open your mouth, the rest of your family will be killed.” Such were the realities faced by Josué, Hector, Manuel, and the other *campesinos* of the region.

In 1987 the situation reached its nadir. Increased fighting and larger scale massacres began to take over. In response to the guerrillas, a notoriously violent captain of the Colombian army convened more than 2,000 peasants from La India and offered them forgiveness in the form of an amnesty if they would accept his weapons and join the ranks of local militia to fight against the guerrillas. In the eyes of the captain, many of these peasants were guilty of supporting the guerrillas—if not directly participating. So the offer of forgiveness was considered an ultimatum about choosing sides in the conflict. He concluded with what he called the four choices before the *campesinos*: “You can arm yourselves and join us, you can join the guerrillas, you can leave your homes, or you can die.”

The crowd was stunned. In the midst of the silence, a middle-aged *campesino*, Josué, spoke from the crowd and from his heart. His speech that day was so memorable that up until today you will find peasants in La India who can recite his response to the captain word for word even though they were not there. Garcia (1996), who did a study of this movement, offered this version of Josué’s speech that day. Responding to the captain in the open meeting, he said:

You speak of forgiveness, but what do you have to forgive us? You are the ones who have violated. We have killed no one. You want to give us millions in weapons paid for by the state, yet you will not facilitate even the minimum credit for our farming needs. There are millions for war but nothing for peace. How many men in arms are

there in Colombia? By rough calculation I would say at least 100,000, plus the police, plus 20,000 guerrillas, not to mention the Paras, the drug lords and private armies. And what has all this served? What has it fixed? Nothing. In fact Colombia is in the worst violence ever. We have arrived at the conclusion that weapons have not solved a thing and that there is not one reason to arm ourselves. We need farm credits, tools, tractors, trucks to make this little agricultural effort we try [to] make produce better. You as members of the National Army, instead of inciting us to kill each other should do your job according to the national constitution, that is, you should defend the Colombian people. Look at all these people you brought here. We all know each other. And who are you? We know that some years ago you yourself were with [the] guerrilla[s] and now you are the head of the paramilitaries. You brought people into our houses to accuse us, you lied, and you switched sides. And now you, a side switcher, you want us to follow your violent example. Captain, with all due respect, we do not plan to join your side, their side or any side. And we are not leaving this place. We are going to find our own solution. (Garcia, 1996:189).

Later that week a group of twenty *campesino* leaders decided to play the ultimate card: They would pursue civilian resistance without weapons. As one of them put it, "We decided that day to speak for ourselves." In the weeks and months that followed they organized one of the most unique and spontaneous processes of transformation Colombia had seen in fifty years.

They formed the Association of Peasant Workers of Carare (ATCC). Their first act was to break the code of silence. They developed ways of organizing and participating. Participation was open to anyone. The quota for entry was a simple commitment: Your life, not your money. This was expressed in the phrase "We shall die before we kill." They developed a series of key principles to guide their every action:

1. Faced with individualization: solidarity.
2. Faced with the Law of Silence and Secrecy: Do everything publicly. Speak loud and never hide anything.
3. Faced with fear: Sincerity and disposition to dialogue. We shall understand those who do not understand us.
4. Faced with Violence: Talk and negotiate with everyone. We do not have enemies.
5. Faced with exclusion: Find support in others. Individually we are weak, but together we are strong.
6. Faced with the need for a strategy: Transparency. We will tell every armed group exactly what we have talked about with other armed groups. And we will tell it all to the community. (Garcia, 1996:200).

And these were not just ideas. The *campesinos* created a living laboratory of immediate impact and great risk. They solidified their group by finding a core they called the “key folks,” who were uniquely placed as individuals to link them with different geographic parts of La India and with the various groups. Within weeks after consultation with local villages they posted hand-made signs with the title “What the People from Here Say,” which included a declaration that no weapons would be allowed in their villages. They spontaneously declared their lands to be a territory of peace.

Delegations were sent to meet with the armed groups. Never conducted by a single individual and always public, each meeting with each different armed group required careful preparation and choice of who would speak. But the message remained the same: respect for the territory of peace and the *campesinos*. They approached each meeting seeking the connection with the person not the institution. The key, as several people reported it, was that they had to find a way to meet the human being, the real person. Informal and in some instances formal agreements and arrangements were reached. The association held to its promise of never giving in to weapons and never giving up on dialogue. In the public debriefing of any meeting, everyone was welcome, friend and foe alike. The doors were never shut. Transparency was carried to its fullest extent.

During the next years violence was greatly reduced, though Magdalena Medio remained and is yet today a hotbed of armed conflict. In 1990 the association won the Alternative Nobel Peace Prize for its innovative work. In 1992 the United Nations recognized the movement with the We Are the People Award. Nonetheless, the local campaign for respect and dignity came with its price. Josué and several other leaders were assassinated by unknown and yet undetermined *sicarios* (hired guns). Survivors believe the murders were due to local politicians, not the armed groups. Their legacy, however, lives on. Today in Colombia many speak of the potential of local groups to develop and build a capacity for civilian resistance as the key to building a permanent peace. As Alejandro Garcia, the history professor who extensively interviewed many of the early and subsequent participants in the association, aptly wrote: “Born in the nucleus of violence, the ATCC introduced into the logic of war a sense of uncertainty: it broke the conventional cycle of spiraling violence and developed through lived demonstration the basic idea that solutions without violence were possible” (Garcia, 1996:313).

A Story from Tajikistan: Talking Philosophy with the Warlord

The following information is based on notes from a trainer’s journal, February, 2002.

We are seated in a seminar room in Dushanbe with twenty-four professors from seven universities across Tajikistan. Two small electric heaters, their coils burning bright red, keep the late February cold at bay inside the Republican Healthy Lifestyle Centre. We have the appointed cream of the crop. One or two are deans and a few others are heads of their respective disciplinary departments. From the perspective of the organizers we count ourselves lucky to have five women and a strong showing of younger scholars, though seated each day in the corner, occasionally drifting in and out of late afternoon naps, is the kind and always enthusiastic seventy-year-old head of the Department of Scientific Communism, now re-titled Political Science.

The Intertajik War lies nearly six years in their past. Our seminar on conflict resolution and peacebuilding probes into the challenges and difficulties of responding to violence and building a nation in this newly independent Central Asian country. Following the events of September 11, 2001, the schedule for our three-year initiative, aimed at helping to build the civil society, was set back a few months, as the Tajik-Afghan border and the space above this mountainous region witnessed the anti-Taliban war effort unfold. Our subject matter now seems doubly interesting and urgent.

Our Tajik University colleagues completed their higher education through the Soviet system. Most have doctoral degrees. Travel, when it happened for academic reasons, was to Russia or Eastern Europe. Of the twenty-four, four speak English with any proficiency. Our English-Tajik translation is painstakingly slow. Some would prefer Russian. Under the encouragement and guidance of the minister of education we will produce a Tajik-language text that compiles approaches to peacebuilding from different parts of the world coupled with original Tajik research on conflict and peace in this setting.

The professors become considerably more animated when the topic of the Tajikistan civil war emerges. They have a variety of opinions about what difficulties were experienced and what made the achievement of a negotiated peace possible under the guidance of a UN mandate. One participant asks my co-trainer, Randa Slim, and me, the only two non-Tajiks in the room, why so few in the international community have given careful consideration to what the Tajiks achieved in ending the war. They may well have a point. Tajikistan, as journalist Ahmed Rashid convincingly argues, is the only country in the region or the world for that matter, to have ended a brutal civil war with the “creation of a coalition government that included Islamicists, neo-communists, and clan leaders.” He goes on to note: “Islamicists lost elections, but they were *represented* in the elections, and they accepted their loss” (Rashid, 2002:241). The professors want a straight answer: Why don’t people pay attention to what we have learned? Neither of us has a good answer.

During that afternoon’s chai break, I have tea with the only professor in our group who knows some of the inner details of how the Tajiks negotiated

while war raged and how they brought the Islamic movements into negotiation rather than isolating or trying to defeat them. He draws me to a corner with a translator to tell me the story.

"I was tasked by the government to approach and convince one of [the] warlords, a key Mullah-Commander located in the mountains, to enter negotiations," Professor Abdul begins. "This was difficult if not impossible, because this commander was considered a notorious criminal and he had killed one of my close friends." He stops while the translation conveys the personal side of this challenge.

When I first got to the encampment, the commander said I had arrived late and it was time for prayers. So we went together and prayed. When we had finished, he said to me, "How can a communist pray?"

"I am not a communist: my father was," I responded.

Then he asked what I taught in the university. We soon discovered we were both interested in philosophy and Sufism. Our meeting went from an agreed twenty minutes to two and a half hours. In this part of the world you have to circle into truth through stories.

In the hallway Abdul's gold-capped teeth sparkled with a smile as he finished his idea: "You see in Sufism there is an idea that discussion has no end."

His point well conveyed, the professor picked up the story again:

I kept going to visit him. We mostly talked poetry and philosophy. Little by little I asked him about ending the war. I wanted to persuade him to take the chance on putting down his weapons. After months of visits we finally had enough trust to speak truths and it all boiled down to one concern.

Abdul stopped and leaned over, taking the voice of the warlord. "The commander said to me, 'If I put down my weapons and go to Dushanbe with you, can you guarantee my safety and life?' " The Tajik storyteller paused with the full sense of the moment. "My difficulty was that I could not guarantee his safety."

Abdul waited for the translator to finish, making sure that I understood the weight of his peacemaking dilemma, and then concluded: "So I told my philosopher warlord friend the truth, 'I cannot guarantee your safety.' "

In the hallway Professor Abdul swung his arm under mine and came to stand fully by my side to emphasize the answer he then gave the commander: "But I can guarantee this. I will go with you, side by side. And if you die, I will die."

The hallway was totally quiet.

"That day the commander agreed to meet the government. Some weeks later we came down together from the mountains. When he first met with the

government commission he told them, 'I have not come because of your government. I have come for honor and respect of this professor.' "

The professor stopped. "You see, my young American friend," he tapped my arm lightly, "this is Tajik mediation."

We finished our chai and moved back to the classroom discussions on the theory of conflict and peacebuilding.

Years have passed since the end of the war. The weapons have been laid down. Things are not easy in Tajikistan, but from all accounts, the professor-mediator and the renegade warlord are alive and well, and occasionally they still talk poetry and philosophy.

The Moral of the Stories

What made these changes possible? Though working their hardest and very skilled in their trade, at the moment of the initial meetings it was not the techniques used by the mediators nor the nature and design of the process that created the shift in the Dagomba-Konkomba encounter. The inverse may be true: The process seemed to have gotten off to a bad start. It was not the technical expertise introduced by professional peacebuilders in Wajir or Magdalena Medio or by the professor-philosopher and his counterpart, the warlord. It was not the local or national political power, exigencies, the fears of a broader war, nor the influence and pressure from the international community that created the shift. It was not a particular religious tradition: the stories in fact cut across religions. It was not political, economic, or military power in any of the cases. What then, created a moment, a turning point, of such significance that it shifted whole aspects of a violent, protracted setting of conflict?

I believe it was the serendipitous appearance of the *moral imagination* in human affairs.

4

On Simplicity and Complexity

Finding the Essence of Peacebuilding

I would not give a fig for the simplicity this side of complexity,
But I would give my life for the simplicity on the other side of
complexity.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

Man is an over-complicated organism. If he is doomed to extinction
he will die for want of simplicity.

—Ezra Pound

Peacebuilding is a complex task. It is, beyond a shadow of a doubt, an overwhelming challenge. How, really, do we get whole societies wrapped in histories of violence that date back generations to move toward a newly defined horizon? It may seem odd that something this complex begins with a discussion about simplicity. However I want to talk about the surprise of simplicity here precisely because the framing of the moral imagination emerged for me out of a conversation walking in the Rocky Mountains with a colleague, Wendell Jones. As was so well put by Margaret Wheatley (2002), most social change initiates or is shaped by a single traceable conversation. So let me tell the story of a mountain conversation that affected this book.

Wendell was supposedly my mentee. In early 2002 a mutual friend and conflict resolution professional, Bernie Mayer, contacted me. Bernie is a founder-partner in CDR Associates and they, in conjunction with Antioch College's master's program in conflict resolution, were launching a new advanced mediator mentorship initiative.

The idea was to match an experienced mediator with a mentor who was doing related work that these mediators would have interest in exploring. The mentor would be available for phone calls, occasional meetings, and grappling with the questions the mentee might have. So it was that Bernie, the matchmaker, put Wendell and me together.

Wendell has worked for the past ten years as an ombudsman at the Sandia Institute in New Mexico in the arena of disputes around the rights to intellectual knowledge as property. This is indeed a relatively new and complex field of application for conflict resolution. Wendell comes from a background in physics; at earlier stages in his professional life he directed research teams delving into cutting-edge theory in the field of applied physics. But his passion lay equally in the ebb and flow of human relationships, in personal and spiritual development. So I found myself in conversation via e-mail, phone, and then face to face during a walk in the mountains with a colleague who was my elder, had conducted “hard science” research in complexity theory, and was mediating disputes in the contested field of who owns knowledge. Our titles of mentor and mentee were, at best, an oxymoron.

We set out one morning toward the trailhead for Arapahoe Pass in the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains. On our trek we talked about life, learning, and books we were reading and writing. I told Wendell about the beginnings of this book and that I had in mind writing chapters on simplicity and complexity. He noted in response that for some time “new science” approaches were exploring and finding linkages between complexity and simplicity. As we moved toward higher altitudes on the hike he launched into a story of one research endeavor, an early contributor to complexity theory and application. Essentially, scientists had posed the challenge of whether a computer could emulate a complex natural system. The story caught my attention to such a degree that it recreated the framework for this whole chapter.

Wendell gave examples of the types of challenges people took up. For example, they inquired whether a computer could find a way to imitate the action and the flow of a flock of birds or a school of fish. I immediately related to the bird image. In the fall of each year around the farms on the rolling hills of the Shenandoah Valley I had often watched these sky-painting flocks. Thousands of blackbirds would move together, merging then extending, dropping then rising. The patterns they created in the sky made you stop in your tracks to watch. Simultaneously, without a commander in chief, individual birds moved with a whole flock in a way that was coordinated yet unpredictable. You never knew what the next movement would be, what shape the flock would take, or what any individual bird might do. It was mesmerizing, moving beauty. Could a computer capture this? If yes, what would it take?

The answer was not complexity. It was what poet Oliver Wendell Holmes might have meant by “simplicity on the other side of complexity.” The programmers needed to understand the essence, the core rules, that set in

motion the resulting visual beauty. What they created, starting back in the late 1980s, were generic simulated flocking creatures emerging from the zeros and ones of numeric computer language in a program they called BOIDS. The program was based on discovering a few simple rules that could be written into a computer program to guide complex group behavior. For example, in nontechnical vernacular, they created rules like these: Steer to avoid crowding. Steer toward the average heading of local flockmates.

When these rules were put into numeric commands a dynamic rendition of flocking was emulated on the computer screen. From simplicity came the complexity of beauty. No pattern was predictable, but patterns emerged. You can never predict exactly what a flock of birds will do when a telephone pole appears in their way: Will they split, rise, go left, go right? The beauty lay in the creative act, the unpredictable, unexpected response created anew during each flight and moment. Permanently dynamic, permanently adaptive, they flow as a flock in response to the stimuli that emerge. All this complexity of movement and artful pattern boiled down to a few basic, simple rules. At the base of complexity was simplicity.

I remember coming down that mountain trail listening to this story and at one point I commented to Wendell: "You know what I have not done. I have never asked: What are the three to four most basic elements that comprise peacebuilding? I wonder what the BOIDS of peacebuilding would be?"

What I had clear was this. Peacebuilding is an enormously complex endeavor in unbelievably complex, dynamic, and more often than not destructive settings of violence. I had often thought about and suggested that a peacebuilder must embrace complexity, not ignore or run from it. "Complexify before you simplify," I would often say in class. To simplify, as I saw it, was the second tier of activity. Once the full complexity is understood, you can then make a choice about what particular thing to do in a given setting. You then recognize that this one activity and process is in a complex system that has multiple actors pushing processes at multiple levels at the same time.

This was in fact my working definition of complexity: multiple actors, pursuing a multiplicity of actions and initiatives, at numerous levels of social relationships in an interdependent setting at the same time. Complexity emerges from multiplicity, interdependency, and simultaneity. In many regards this is *the* great challenge of peacebuilding: how to build creative responses to patterns of self-perpetuating violence in a complex system made up of multiple actors, with activities that are happening at the same time. What I had not fully contemplated was the idea that rather than focus directly on the complexity, it would be useful to locate a core set of patterns and dynamics that generate the complexity. In other words, simplicity precedes complexity. This required me to think about simplicity as a source of energy rather than as the choice of reductionism. It was, as I will describe in a later chapter, a lesson in the haiku attitude.

The thought provided a reorientation as I was writing this book. I posed for myself a slightly different question than the one posed by the technical approach of BOIDS on the computer. Rather than seek the “rules” of simplicity, I became curious about what constitutes the core “essences” of peacebuilding. These I came to see as a small set of disciplines, or practices, out of which the complexity of peacebuilding emerges in all of its beauty. Put in a slightly different way, I asked myself about essence in this way: What disciplines, *if they were not present*, would make peacebuilding impossible? On exploration I discovered that when held together and practiced, these disciplines form the moral imagination that make peacebuilding possible. The essence is found in four disciplines, each of which requires imagination. They are relationship, paradoxical curiosity, creativity, and risk.

The Centrality of Relationships

At the cutting edge of fields from nuclear physics and biology to systems theory and organizational development, relationships are seen as the central organizing concept of theory and practice. According to science, as Margaret Wheatley has noted time and again, “nothing in the universe exists as an isolated or independent entity. Everything takes the form of relationships, be it subatomic particles sharing energy or ecosystems sharing food. In the web of life, nothing living lives alone” (Wheatley, 2002:89). In reference to our inquiry, the centrality of relationship accrues special meaning, for it is both the context in which cycles of violence happen and the generative energy from which transcendence of those same cycles bursts forth. Time and again, where in small or large ways the shackles of violence are broken, we find a singular tap root that gives life to the moral imagination: the capacity of individuals and communities to imagine themselves in a web of relationship even with their enemies.

This kind of imagination is accompanied by and produces several key disciplines. First and foremost, where cycles of violence are overcome, people demonstrate a capacity to envision and give birth to that which already exists, a wider set of interdependent relationships. This is akin to the aesthetic and artistic process. Art is what the human hand touches, shapes, and creates and in turn what touches our deeper sense of being, our experience. The artistic process has this dialectic nature: It arises from human experience and then shapes, gives expression and meaning to, that experience. Peacebuilding has this same artistic quality. It must experience, envision, and give birth to the web of relationships. Literally, people in settings of violence experience and see the web of patterns and connections in which they are embroiled. They see that individuals, communities, and networks, along with their activities and actions, are linked and contribute to patterns that may give rise to destructive

or constructive actions. Faced with the experience of violence, the choice of response that gives rise to the moral imagination requires the acknowledgment of interdependency. The perpetration of violence, more than anything else, requires a deep, implicit belief that desired change can be achieved independently of the web of relationships. Breaking violence requires that people embrace a more fundamental truth: Who we have been, are, and will be emerges and shapes itself in a context of relational interdependency. As will be discussed later, the essence of peacebuilding requires us to explore in much greater detail the inner makeup of creativity as embedded in understanding the dynamics and potentials of networking—the arts of web making and web watching.

A second and equally important discipline that emerges from the centrality of relationship is found in an act of simple humility and self-recognition. People don't just take notice of the web. They situate and recognize themselves as part of the pattern. Patterns of violence are never superseded without acts that have a confessional quality at their base. Spontaneous or intentionally planned, these acts emerge from a voice that says in the simplest of terms: "I am part of this pattern. My choices and behaviors affect it." While the justification of violent response has many tributaries, the moral imagination that rises beyond violence has but two: taking personal responsibility and acknowledging relational mutuality.

Peacebuilding requires a vision of relationship. Stated bluntly, if there is no capacity to imagine the canvas of mutual relationships and situate oneself as part of that historic and ever-evolving web, peacebuilding collapses. The centrality of relationship provides the context and potential for breaking violence, for it brings people into the pregnant moments of the moral imagination: the space of recognition that ultimately the quality of our life is dependent on the quality of life of others. It recognizes that the well-being of our grandchildren is directly tied to the well-being of our enemy's grandchildren.

The Practice of Paradoxical Curiosity

Cycles of violence are often driven by tenacious requirements to reduce complex history into dualistic polarities that attempt to both describe and contain social reality in artificial ways. People, communities, and most specifically choices about ways they will respond to situations and express views of the conflict are forced into either-or categories: We are right. They are wrong. We were violated. They are the violators. We are liberators. They are oppressors. Our intentions are good. Theirs are bad. History and the truth of history is most fully comprehended by our view. Their view of history is biased, incomplete, maliciously untruthful, and ideologically driven. You are with us or against us.

People who display a moral imagination that rises above the cycles of

violence in which they live also rise above dualistic polarities. That is, the moral imagination is built on a quality of interaction with reality that respects complexity and refuses to fall into forced containers of dualism and either-or categories. As such, this kind of imagination is infused with a paradoxical curiosity.

Paradox is a word that has long been appropriated in philosophy, theology, and the social sciences. With its origins in Greek (*paradoxos*), paradox combines the words *para* and *doxa* and is generally taken to mean “contrary to common belief.” There is however a nuance that accompanies the root etymology that suggests that *para* refers to something that is outside or beyond common belief as opposed to something that is an outright contradiction of what is perceived to be true. The concept of a paradox suggests that truth lies in but also beyond what is initially perceived. The gift of paradox provides an intriguing capacity: It holds together seemingly contradictory truths in order to locate a greater truth.

Curiosity suggests attentiveness and continuous inquiry about things and their meaning. Etymologically, it rises from the Latin *curiosus* which is formed on the word *cura*, literally meaning “to take care of” and having to do with both “cure” and “care,” as in spiritual and physical healing. From this we get terms like *caregiver* and *curator*. In its negative form, curiosity pushes toward exaggerated inquisitiveness best seen perhaps in the snooping detectives or overly interested neighbors who poke around too much in the affairs of others. In its most constructive and positive expression, however, curiosity builds a quality of careful inquiry that reaches beyond accepted meaning. It wishes to go deeper and in fact is excited by those things that are not immediately understood.

When the two terms are combined, we have *paradoxical curiosity*, which approaches social realities with an abiding respect for complexity, a refusal to fall prey to the pressures of forced dualistic categories of truth, and an inquisitiveness about what may hold together seemingly contradictory social energies in a greater whole. This is not primarily a thrust toward finding the common ground based on a narrowly shared denominator. Paradoxical curiosity seeks something beyond what is visible, something that holds apparently contradictory and even violently opposed social energies together. By its very nature therefore this quality of perspective, this stance vis-à-vis others, even enemies, is built fundamentally on a capacity to mobilize the imagination.

Rather than moving to immediate conclusions, paradoxical curiosity suspends judgment in favor of exploring presented contradictions, at face and at heart value, for the possibility that there exists a value beyond what is currently known that supersedes the contradiction. *Face value* is the simple and direct way that things appear and are presented. In settings of violence, it is the context as it is in all of its ugliness and difficulties. It is the way people say things are, with all of the contradictions that arise as one listens to different

sides of suffering humanity. Paradoxical curiosity starts with a commitment to accept people at face value. *Heart value* goes beyond the presentation of appearance and ventures into the way these things are perceived and interpreted by people. It explores where meaning is rooted. It seeks to find the home of meaning in the experience of people. Face value and heart value suppose a paradox. Inherent in what is and how it is presented are found the resources that make possible things and understandings that do not yet exist. This is the paradox of accepting at face value what exists and taking up the journey toward heart value of where it came from and where it might lead.

To suspend judgment and explore face and heart value in settings of conflict require a capacity to develop and live with a high degree of ambiguity. On the one hand, we must accept the realness of appearance, the way things appear to be. We must on the other hand explore the realness of lived experience, how perceptions and meanings have emerged and how they might point to realities of both what is now apparent and the invisible that lies beyond what is presented as conclusive. To suspend judgment is not to relinquish opinion or the capacity to assess. It is fundamentally a force to mobilize the imagination and lift the relationships and understandings of relationships in a violent context to a new level. Suspending judgment refuses to force complex social histories and constructed realities into artificial dualistic categories in favor of the seeking of understanding that breaks the hold of social polarization. Far from being paralyzed by complexity, paradoxical curiosity as a quality of the moral imagination relies on complexity as a friend not an enemy, for from complexity emerges untold new angles, opportunities, and unexpected potentialities that surpass, replace, and break the shackles of historic and current relational patterns of repeated violence.

Serendipitous as they may be, the four guiding stories of this book suggest paradoxical curiosity. A young man treated his elder, the enemy chief, as a father, thereby creating a wiser and inherently more fatherly response. Women mobilized the patriarchy to give rise to a safe market where men were incited to be men and make peace and women were truth keepers and peace preservers. A group of peasants appealed to the truth of the rhetoric of violent actors to move them beyond violence. A professor-poet offered only his own vulnerability to provide security to a poet-warlord.

Paradoxical curiosity stimulates and provokes the moral imagination. It is a discipline that, in settings of deep-rooted violence filled with social polarization, views complexity as a friend and refuses to fall into the historic traps of dualistic divisions, which drive the cycles of violence. Paradoxical curiosity sustains a permanent inquisitiveness that vigilantly explores the world of possibilities beyond the immediate arguments and narrow definitions of reality, whose shores are only attainable by taking the arguments seriously while refusing to be bound by their visions. In this regard, paradoxical curiosity is indeed the *cura* that attends to and takes care of the health of greater humanity.

Provide Space for the Creative Act

The moral imagination takes form and expression through an act. While we might initially think of the space where *moral* and *imagination* meet as a conceptual exercise, in reality we cannot know this kind of imagination outside of concrete human action. Theologically this notion is found in the Word that becomes flesh, the moment when potentiality moves from the realm of possibility to the world of the tangible. In other words, the moral imagination finds its clearest expression in the appearance of the creative act.

In his subtitle, Matthew Fox (2002) calls *creativity* the place “where the divine and the human meet.” There is, once again, inherent to our exploration, a quality of paradox that accompanies the process, for the creative act simultaneously has an element of the transcendent and the mundane. In other words, creativity moves beyond what exists toward something new and unexpected while rising from and speaking to the everyday. This is in fact the role of the artist and why it is that imagination and art are at the edge of society. Artists tend to be, as we shall explore in subsequent chapters, people who live on the thresholds of the communities they inhabit, from whence the pulse of their lifework emerges and to which they speak. However, by being on the edge they also pose a threat for they push the edges of what is thought to be real and possible. As Brueggemann suggests, “[E]very totalitarian regime is frightened of the artist. It is the vocation of the prophet to keep alive the ministry of imagination, to keep on conjuring and proposing futures alternative to the single one the king wants to urge as the only thinkable one” (2001:40).

Therefore, another key discipline that gives rise to the moral imagination is the provision of space for the creative act to emerge. Providing space requires a predisposition, a kind of attitude and perspective that opens up, even invokes, the spirit and belief that creativity is humanly possible. Fundamentally, this requires a belief that the creative act and response are permanently within reach and, most important, are always accessible, even in settings where violence dominates and through its oppressive swath creates its greatest lie: that the lands it inhabits are barren. Artists shatter this lie, for they live in barrenness as if new life, birth, is always possible. Though not foretold or initially clear, people who display a deep quality of moral imagination in these settings of violence demonstrate a capacity to live in a personal and social space that gives birth to the unexpected. Having much in common, the survival of both creativity and imagination require this quality of living. They embrace the possibility that there exist untold possibilities capable at any moment to move beyond the narrow parameters of what is commonly accepted and perceived as the narrow and rigidly defined range of choices.

In this book I will explore this quality of providing for and expecting the unexpected. It is a quality better known in the world of art and artists than in

the worlds of social technique and management expertise, though our task is not to pit these worlds against each other. What I wish to explore here is not the question of whether technicians or artists are better or more needed, but to understand the epistemological and ontological qualities that differentiate and connect technique and imagination. Creativity and imagination, the artist giving birth to something new, propose to us avenues of inquiry and ideas about change that require us to think about how we know the world, how we are in the world, and most important, what in the world is possible. What we will find time and again in those turning points and moments where something moves beyond the grip of violence is the vision and belief that the future is not the slave of the past and the birth of something new is possible.

The Willingness to Risk

The final discipline at the essence of the moral imagination can be described simply but requires heart and soul and defies prescription: the willingness to take a risk. *To risk* is to step into the unknown without any guarantee of success or even safety. Risk by its very nature is mysterious. It is mystery lived, for it ventures into lands that are not controlled or charted. People living in settings of deep-rooted conflict are faced with an extraordinary irony. Violence is known; peace is the mystery. By its very nature, therefore, peacebuilding requires a journey guided by the imagination of risk.

To fully understand the moral imagination we will need to explore the geographies of violence that are known and the nature of risk and vocation, which permits the rise of an imagination that carries people toward a new, though mysterious, and often unexpected shore. This means in concrete terms that we must understand both the deeper implications of risk and the longer-term sustenance of vocation. Vocation, as we shall see, requires us to explore the promptings of the inner voice and provides a center for this most difficult journey to break out from the historic grasp of violence.

Conclusion

Combined, these simple disciplines form the conditions that make the moral imagination and peacebuilding possible. The guiding stories in chapter 2 from Ghana, Wajir, Colombia, and Tajikistan provide windows into moments when this imagination was sparked. In each and every story the four elements were present. Though invoked by what may seem to be the time and space of serendipity, each context tells the story of a journey, people seeking a way to respond at a given moment to historic patterns of animosity and violence. In each story the journey involved a turning point, the movement toward a new

horizon in order to redefine both the moment and the relationship. Time and again the process was defined by the capacity of the actors to imagine themselves in relationship, a willingness to embrace complexity and not frame their challenge as a dualistic polarity, acts of enormous creativity, and a willingness to risk. The results were complex initiatives of building peace defined by moments that created and then sustained constructive change.

We turn our attention next to the context in which this journey must be initiated, the hard realities of living in settings of violence and the lessons we can learn—ironically—from pessimism and from those who survive without losing sight of what poet Seamus Heaney calls the “farther shore.”

The moral of the story seemed clear: When you give a promise, you had best keep your word.

Four decades later, when I read the story again, this was not the moral that caught my attention. What I saw was the power of a flutist to move a town, address an evil, and bring the powerful to accountability. Without any visible power or even prestige, much less a violent weapon, a flutist transformed a whole community. I was struck with the nonviolent power of music and the creative act. The moral of the story now seemed to be: Watch out for the flutist and his creative music for, like the invisible wind, they touch and move all that they encounter in their path.

Artful Change

In 1996 I found myself sitting in the Killyhevlin Hotel in Fermanagh, Northern Ireland. I was a keynote speaker at a conference titled “Remember and Change,” a phrase that had been pulled from a talk I had given in Belfast a year earlier (Lederach, 1995). In 1994, at the time of the ceasefire declarations by both republican and loyalist paramilitary groups, people engaged in conflict transformation and peacebuilding work had requested some reflections on what might beset them as they entered a postaccord phase of violent conflict. In that talk I suggested that reconciliation was not “forgive and forget.” It was “remember and change.” A year later I was in Enniskillen to address a conference. Delegates attended from peace and reconciliation partnerships across Northern Ireland, representing all sides of the conflict and a wide range of community, economic, and political interests, now trying to move toward a new horizon.

The Killyhevlin Hotel was the chosen site. It is located on the shore of Lough Erne, near Enniskillen. The venue was not without symbol and purpose. On a number of occasions, bombs had all but destroyed it. The conference was for the most part a series of talking heads like myself giving speeches and exchanging insights and ideas that were to translate into programs. The one exception was just following the lunch. The planners had decided to take a risk on what was considered a delicate addition. They had commissioned a troupe of dancers made up of young local Catholic and Protestant women to choreograph an expressive dance to music. The song chosen was Irish folk artist Paul Brady’s “The Island.” Behind the stage, there was a large screen. While the young women performed their dance, slides—pictures everyone knew and that captured the scenes of the thirty-two-year-old Troubles—would appear without comment.

The artistic process was not without its risks. Brady’s song had first emerged a decade earlier, during the heat of the worst cycles of violence in the Irish conflict. “The Island” raised a question about the reasons for and logic

of the violence and those who justified it on one side or another. Performed by a solo voice accompanied by a piano, the lyrics are profound, suggesting that violence is trying to “carve tomorrow from a tombstone” and is wasting our children’s future “for the worn-out dreams of yesterday” (Brady, 1992).

When first played publicly, the song generated immediate controversy. Perceived as written by a well-known artist from one community criticizing people engaged in the violence, threats went out from the paramilitaries against the artist, radio stations that would play the music, and stores that would sell it. For years “The Island” was not played or circulated publicly.

In the early afternoon of the conference, I found myself seated between one of the highest standing officials of the police force in Northern Ireland and the mayor of the town, both fine and dedicated men, from different sides of the conflict, and both pleasant but also rather formal in demeanor, toughened, you might say, by the years of their experience and the nature of their positions. The song began and the dance troupe’s graceful first steps brought hundreds in the audience to complete silence. The color slides of Belfast’s troubled murals, children running from fire bombs, funeral processions, and parades riveted the eyes and captured the haunting feel of the music and lyrics juxtaposed against the ballet-like movements of these young women dancing together though from different sides of the violent divide. The whole of the Irish conflict was held in a public space, captured in a moment that lasted fewer than five minutes.

Near the end of the performance I suddenly noticed that the two men on either side of me were discreetly pulling handkerchiefs from pockets and wiping tears. Behind me I could hear and feel the same thing happening. One of the men leaned over and apologized to me, as if somehow it were a lack of professional etiquette to have displayed such emotion in public. The seminar proceeded. Speeches were given. Program initiatives were proposed and evaluated. It was a day in the process of a long, slow transformation. Looking back now, nearly a decade later, it would be interesting to know what people remember of that day. Without locating the specific documents I know that I cannot remember a single speech, proposal, or formal panel response. I do however remember, vividly, the image and feeling of those five minutes of combined music, lyrics, choreography, and photos. It created an echo in my head that has not gone away. It moved me.

In the larger picture of politics and social change many would say, “And so what? What difference does something like this artistic five minutes actually make?” I am not sure I can answer that question. On the other side of the coin I would ask a different but parallel question: How, when, and why did politics and developing responses to needed social change come to be seen as something separate from the whole of human experience? The artistic five minutes, I have found rather consistently, when it is given space and acknowledged as something far beyond entertainment, accomplishes what most of politics has

been unable to attain: It helps us return to our humanity, a transcendent journey that, like the moral imagination, can build a sense that we *are*, after all, a human community.

In the Old Testament there was a time when the prophet Elisha was summoned by two kings, Jehoram and Jehoshaphat. The two were surrounded by enemy forces, were facing a drought, and were nearing the end of all their resources. The prophet was to advise kings, which of course put him in a rather tough position. Needing to sort through what response should be given, Elisha cried, “Bring me a musician.” A musician? This is the rough equivalent of President Bush and Prime Minister Blair contemplating a world war and calling on the great religious leaders of our day for guidance, and their response would be, “Bring us a musician.” What does music have to do with the *real* world? The biblical text records that while the musician played, the power of the Lord came on the prophet. It also records that a great deal of bloodshed took place the following day. Music, it seems, has the power to push things either in the direction of greater violence or toward reconciliation. Is this yet another isolated incident? Perhaps. I have anecdotal, not scientific evidence.² But consider the anecdotes for a moment, from history remote and close.

Exhibit A. Through the research of Patricia Burdette (2003) I came across a text written by Chief Leon Shenandoah in 1946. He describes how the process of creating the Great League of Nations—sometimes called the Iroquois Confederacy—overcame one obstacle. The various chiefs of the nations had agreed to the peace with one important exception: Onondaga chief Tadodaho would not be persuaded. Led by an extraordinary woman, Jikonhsaseh, a delegation was formed to go and meet the resistant chief. Shenandoah (1946:12–13) writes:

They discovered him in a swamp—rough, dirty place. His appearance, they said, was very frightening. Snakes were woven in his hair, and his body appeared crooked and misshapen, and everything about him was unpleasant to behold. The expression on his face let the people know he was unbearably cruel. They were singing a song, which was provided especially for this meeting. When he heard that song, Tadodaho at first felt threatened. But it was that song that turned him; and he melted when [he] heard that song. He agreed to listen to them. He had long been the worst human being in the world, so terrible that people had said, “The mind in that body is not the mind of a human being.” And he was the last to reform, but they were able to comb the snakes from his hair and to transform his mind using songs and words to bring him health and peace. Jikonhsaseh had told them to use songs and words to transform his mind, and that he would be the leader—like the facilitator—of the Grand Council. That is the story of the remarkable leader of

the Haudenosaunee—the Six Nations. His title has been handed down from generation to generation, like the title of the Dalai Lama or Pope. I am Tadodaho today.

This can of course be taken as a quaint folk story passed down through the generations. Or it could be taken for what it is: the capacity of the oral tradition to remember and keep alive the identity of peoplehood and how it came to be. A brief reminder is in order not to lose our sense of historical context. The crafting of the Great Peace, the formation of the six-nation confederacy led by Chief Tadodaho, was a forerunner to and inspired the writing of the U.S. Constitution (Brown Childs, 2003). At a given moment in time the Indian people of the six nations called on the Pied Pipers of their day, who had the moral imagination to transcend the challenge of their patterns while addressing the concrete challenges of their enemy through “song and words” to become “sane human beings.” One could argue that a song changed a person and transformed our globe.

Exhibit B. In the 1980s, 200 years later, the countries of Burkina Faso and Mali exploded into war over border issues. International mediation efforts failed on numerous occasions to stop the fighting. Then the president of neighboring Guinea, Ahmed Sekou Toure, persuaded his fellow presidents Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso and Moussa Traore of Mali to attend a meeting at his palace. Samuel Doe and Emmanuel Bombande recount the unexpected events that followed:

In front of the Presidential Palace in Conakry, one of West Africa’s celebrated griots (praise singers), Kanja Kouyate, put on a spectacular performance before the host and visiting presidents.

The performance took on the form of entertainment, but Kanja Kouyate was calling on the two presidents at war to make peace. He did this by evoking their ancestors and appealing to their inherent human goodness as leaders to lead their people out of conflict. Through poetry, song, and dance he brought out qualities that were a hallmark of a true African leader and challenged the two presidents to look to their ancestors and bring back dignity instead of shame and suffering to their peoples. So emotional was the performance that the two presidents not only shed tears and embraced publicly, but took a solemn oath before the public and witnessed by their ancestors not to return to war. (Doe and Bombande, 2002:164)

The story does not end there. In the next months, pushed by the presidents, a peace agreement was signed. It has not been violated since. It would seem that the peoples of Burkina Faso and Mali serendipitously received a visit from the Pied Piper.

Exhibit C. On May 27, 1992, in the center of Sarajevo, a bread shop opened

for a few short hours. A long queue snaked from the door out into the streets as people waited, anxious though patient, for the staple that had become a scarce resource during the horrific siege of the city. On a hill miles away, snipers locked their sights down on the bread line. A shell exploded at the feet of the people waiting. As people scrambled to help the injured, the snipers began to shoot emergency workers and anyone who ventured near the explosion. Twenty-two people died. The bread store was in the neighborhood of Vedran Smailovic, an internationally renowned cellist who had refused to leave Sarajevo during the war. He rushed to the square that afternoon and passed a frightful night of anguish watching more of his neighbors die senselessly. He recounted:

Filled with sorrow, I eventually fell asleep at dawn, and was awakened by new explosions and [the] shouts of my neighbors, who were carrying children and blankets to shelters. I went to the shelter myself and returned home after the shelling was over. I washed my face and hands, shaved, and without thinking, put on my white shirt, black evening suit and white bow tie, took my cello and left home.

Looking at the new ruins, I arrived at the place of the massacre. It was adorned with flowers, wreaths and peace messages; there were posters on local shops saying who had been killed. On a nearby table was a solemn book of condolences, which people were signing. I opened my cello case and sat down, not knowing what I would play. Full of sadness and grief, I lifted my bow and spontaneously made music. (Smailovic, 1998)

When his spontaneous playing was done, Smailovic discovered that people had gathered to listen near the square. Around coffee late that evening close friends told him how meaningful it was and begged him to play again, that they felt better when he played. "I understood then," he wrote, "that Albinoni's Adagio is healing music, that music heals, and that this was no longer a purely personal issue." He decided to return to the Bread Massacre Square and play every day for twenty-two days in a row, one day for each person killed in the massacre. Shelling never ceased during those days, but neither did his music. He became a symbol of civilian resistance against the tyranny of hatred and violence.

On one occasion, during a lull in the shelling, a TV news reporter approached the cellist seated in the square and asked, "Aren't you crazy for playing music while they are shelling Sarajevo?" Smailovic responded, "Playing music is not crazy. Why don't you go ask those people if they are not crazy, shelling Sarajevo while I sit here playing my cello." The moral imagination that gave hope and the strength to resist, a creative act that transcended the

madness of violence, was found in the hands of a cellist who sat fast in the midst of the geography of hate. Sarajevo, it seems, found the gift of the Pied Piper.

Exhibit D. The last major bomb that destroyed buildings and lives during the Troubles of Northern Ireland came several years after the ceasefire had been declared. On August 15, 1998, in the town of Omagh, the warnings about the bomb were misleading. As a result, instead of people being directed away from the threat, they were evacuated into the path of the bomb. The hidden device exploded. Twenty-nine people and two unborn children died. More than 400 were injured. The events in the community of Omagh sent waves of shock across the world. Many feared the Irish peace process would collapse. Return to the cycles of violence seemed imminent.

The public—local and well beyond—responded much as they had to the death of Princess Diana the previous year. Flowers and wreaths arrived by the hundreds, filling the bomb site, the surrounding streets, and the grounds of the local hospital. It was an extraordinary outpouring of grief and solidarity. Some weeks later, still reeling with the devastation, town officials felt a certain quandary that was expressed openly by the mayor in a radio interview. “What are we going to do with all the flowers?” The flowers were now wilting, yet they were like a sacred shrine that could not be removed. Traveling in her car, artist Carole Kane listened to that interview and had an immediate idea: Make paper. She called Frank Sweeney, head of the Department of Arts and Tourism of the Omagh district. Thus began the healing journey that came to be known as the Petals of Hope (Kane, 1999).

Men, women, and children from all walks of life and both sides of the identity divide in Omagh participated in a series of workshops that saved the flower petals and processed the raw material of the wreaths and arrangements. Over time, the organic mush became textured paper of different hues. Common everyday people seeking for a way to respond became the artists that crafted small and large pieces from the paper, incorporating the preserved petals. Carole Kane developed a number of pieces alongside them. As people worked with their hands, they talked about where they had been when the bomb went off, what they remembered about what they had experienced. Touching and making something while talking began the healing.

On March 10, 1999, a private viewing of the paper pieces produced was opened for the families who had lost members in the bombing. Those who had worked and created the art chose one piece to give to each family who had lost someone in the bombing. In a book of condolences sent to Omagh, Nobel poet Seamus Heaney had written three stanzas from “The Cure of Troy.” He gave permission for these lines to be used as titles of three pieces.

So hope for a great sea-change
On the far side of revenge.

Believe that a farther shore
Is reachable from here.

Believe in miracles
And cures and healing wells.

The exhibit was then opened to the public and has since traveled around Ireland and Europe. Kane (1999:32) recounts her experience watching the families see the pieces for the first time:

On the night of the private viewing there was a quietness about the exhibition space. It felt like a sanctuary. . . . families spoke quietly to each other. . . . This wasn't like an ordinary opening, where I'd be concerned about people liking the images and buying the work. None of the normal things mattered. . . . I spoke to Stanley McCombe about his picture as the lady who had made this piece had requested it would be given in memory of Stanley's wife. This was the picture of the dove, which was given from a Roman Catholic person to a Protestant person. This summed up what all my work was about and Stanley was touched by this gesture.

Belief in the creative act, as Heaney puts it, is belief in "cures and healing wells." How do we transcend the patterns that create such great pain and still attend to the difficult bogs where our feet seem mired? I have come to believe that it has something to do with the artistic endeavor more than the feat of engineering. It is a process that must breathe life, put wings on the pepper pod, and paint the canvas of what could be while not forgetting what has been. Omagh, too, found its Pied Piper.

Artful Application

What does all this mean for the world of conflict transformation and peacebuilding? There are two arenas I believe merit exploration. The first relates to our notion of process, change, and healing, particularly around the challenge of reconciliation. The second I will share through a personal journey, a look into what it might mean if we saw ourselves as artists.

The quality of my reflections on and interactions with art and peacebuilding was pushed forward through another of those serendipitous adventures—for the last place you really would expect to discover things about art and social change is by serving as a member of a Ph.D. dissertation committee. But such was the process of accident and sagacity with my close friend and professional colleague Herm Weaver, though both of us are still struggling to locate the sagacity.

Herm calls himself a husband, father, songwriter, roofer, and psychology professor, roughly in that order. He usually leaves off his informal resume that he was once a reverend. Some years back he decided to pursue his doctoral degree. He wanted to look into the psychological processes that underpin reconciliation and healing. As part of his research he began an inquiry into the nature of music and healing. Herm had peripheral vision so it was not long until the side interest came front and forward. He embarked on a journey to take his music as seriously as he took his intellectual studies and to focus more directly on music in the process of healing and reconciliation. In essence, he wrote songs and paid attention to how the creative process might be related to the process of healing.

There were of course many fascinating outcomes of this process, including the production of a musical CD, *Travellin' Home and Back*, and a full-blown thesis explaining it (Weaver, 1999a, 1999b). For me, however, one of the best elements of the entire process was the formation of a single question, which I would now frame as: What if reconciliation were more like a creative artistic process than a linear formula of cumulative activities aimed at producing a result? Sometimes, it takes a whole dissertation to formulate one good question.

Herm arrived at an intriguing summary of what came from the creative endeavor and empirical research. He concluded with the elements that he found guided the artistic process and then how these elements might explore pathways toward answering the question of the connection between art and reconciliation. The list was as follows, in his case, framed around the creation of music:

1. The music was to be guided by an *internal standard* rather than external.
2. The music was to be *honest*.
3. We valued *simplicity*.
4. We tried to make *space for the listener to participate*.
5. We aimed at creating music that *arose from the heart as much as from the head*.
6. We were committed to *having fun*. (Weaver, 1999b:105–106).

In relationship to reconciliation, this points us in a challenging direction. The artistic process is not linear; it moves around and pops out in all kinds of unexpected ways. Taking the relationship of art and reconciliation seriously would then suggest that reconciliation should not try to obligate people to think or act linearly, as in “if you do A and then B, you will get C.”

The artistic process has its own sense of time and it is not chronological. When the creative process is forced or obligated, less than desirable and artificial outcomes emerge. People working with reconciliation need to rethink

healing as a process paced by its own inner timing, which cannot be programmed or pushed to fit a project. People and communities have their own clocks.

The artistic process rises to its highest level when it finds expression that is simple and honest. Elegance and beauty are often captured when complexity is reflected in the simplest of lines, curves, textures, melodies, or rhythms. Reconciliation that is framed as an intellectually complex process will too often create so much noise and distraction that the essence is missed. The key is to find the essence. Honesty of experience, ahead of correctness of perception, Weaver argued, is the key to reconciliation. Art and reconciliation may share this guideline: Be honest early. Be honest often. In healing, there is no replacement for straight honesty, even when it hurts.

The artistic process cannot be understood as something that mostly deals with the head. Intellectual rationality is but one element of the human experience but it is the element that most wishes to control the others. The artistic process initially breaks beyond what can be rationally understood and then returns to a place of understanding that may analyze, think it through, and attach meaning to it. This is much like the process of reconciliation. Brokenness wanders all over our souls. Healing requires a similar journey of wandering. It is not possible to cognitively plan and control the healing. "Healing," W. H. Auden quoted his papa's advice, "is not a science, but the intuitive art of wooing nature" (quoted in Cameron, 2002:247).

The artistic process is fun. The greatest artists of all time had a knack for playfulness, for seeing the life inside of things. Too much seriousness creates art with a message but rarely creates great art. There is no scientific evidence that seriousness leads to greater growth, maturity, or insight into the human condition than playfulness. This is even truer of healing—an understanding I first gained from Edwin Friedman (1990). Reconciliation is dealing with the worst of the human condition, the effort to repair the brokenness of relationships and life itself. It appears as a very serious business. Ironically, the pathway to healing may not lie with becoming more serious. This may explain one reason that people of so many geographies of violence have developed such extraordinary senses of humor and playfulness.

A few years after writing his thesis and reflecting back on his list, Weaver added this thought to his initial work:

Reconciliation gets complicated and compounded when we try to address it purely on the intellectual level. Somewhere along the way we came to think of hurt as lodged in the cognitive memory. Hurt and brokenness are primarily found in the emotional memory. The reason I like the arts—music, drama, dance, whatever the form—is precisely because it has the capacity to build a bridge between the heart and the mind. (Weaver, 2003)

Without a doubt, there is something of a transcendent nature that takes place in both the artistic endeavor and authentic reconciliation. This transcendent nature is the challenge of the moral imagination: the art and soul of making room for and building the creative act, the birthing of the unexpected.

A second artful application comes in another simple question: What would it mean if peacebuilders saw themselves as artists? It would be an error if we thought only those who are artistically gifted in a particular discipline could pull this off. In her book *Walking in the World*, Julia Cameron called this the “scenario of leaving those we love and going somewhere lonely and perhaps exotic, where we will be Artists with a capital A” (Cameron, 2002:17). The goal of bridging art and peacebuilding is not that we endeavor to become something we are not. Nor is it the pursuit of the “Arts” in order to find a way to somehow become miraculously gifted in one of the forms, like music, poetry, or painting. Experimenting and working at those can create tremendous insight, inner strength, and sustenance. But I am not appealing for nor advocating that peacebuilders must be artists in the professional sense of the word in order to connect art and social change. The key is simpler than that: We must find a way to touch the sense of art that lies within us all. As an example, let me clarify the context from which my own sense of artful connection to the world emerges.

I am a Mennonite by family affiliation and adult choice. I grew up in rural communities in the West and I was lucky enough to know all of my grandparents and two of my great-grandmothers. My heritage was never far from the farm, so to say, from people who lived a relatively simple country life. In my living room corner sits a ceiling-high writing desk and cabinet that was made as a wedding present for my great-grandparents in 1888 by a Mennonite carpenter. In our kitchen is a cherry table my grandmother had commissioned from a local Amish man in eastern Pennsylvania. On our bed is a quilt my aunt bought as a gift for our wedding, sewn by Mennonite women and sold to raise money for humanitarian relief efforts overseas. On my wall a small fraktur hangs, hand printed by a Mennonite woman capturing the statement of one of our founders. Each of these pieces has a simple elegant beauty. Yet if you asked any one of the people who created them, “Are you an artist?” I doubt that any of them would say yes. Knowing my people, I would guess they might say, “No, I just enjoy working with my hands and taking care to do it well.” Art is a form of love. It is finding beauty and connection in what we do.

I remember as a little child watching my grandmother Nona and great-aunt Leona making apple pies on the Miller farm in northern Indiana. Two memories stick with me to this day: how good those pies tasted and how those women made crusts. There was a craft to rolling the dough flat then flopping it into the pie pan, but it did not stop there. I can still hear the knife blade hit the side of the pie pan rim as the excess dough was cut. Then the edge of the crust was pinched, thumb and fingers bouncing along the rim, but an awesome

symmetry followed their fingers and stayed perched on the pan. Apple filling, probably with too much sugar, was poured to the edges. Then, the last movement, the top of the pie was covered with crisscrossed strips. To be honest, when the pie came out of the oven, anyone with any sense of aesthetics would have hesitated to eat it. That was never our problem. Mennonites are a pragmatic bunch. It may look good but the purpose is to eat!

That is my context. I grew up with a whole community of artistic pragmatics. They saw what was and generally said it. They saw work to be done and generally did it. But somewhere along the line they nurtured a sense of beauty. From housewife to farmer, barn builder to quilt maker, no matter how mundane the task, it could be filled with the respect of simple beauty. If you don't believe me, take a drive to your local Amish country in about the month of June, before the corn is too high. Stop and look for a minute or two at how a garden is laid out, cared for, and nurtured. There you will find love and art.

The challenge of the artful connection is how to respect what we create, nurture love for what we do, and bring beauty to what we build, even in the simplest tasks. We have come to see our work for social change and peace-building too much in the line of an intellectual journey, the cognitive processes of getting the analysis right and developing the technique that facilitates the management of the change process. We have failed to nurture the artist. To nurture the artist however does not require becoming whom we are not. The opposite is true. It requires that we pay attention to what already lies within us, within our capacity.

Conclusion

I am not sure that I can answer the questions raised in this chapter about the connection of art to the pragmatics of political change in the world. I do know this: Art and finding our way back to our humanity are connected. Politics as usual has not shown itself particularly capable of generating authentic change for the good of the human community. We have to recognize that constructive social change, like art, comes in fits and starts. The greatest movements forward, when you look really closely, often germinated from something that collapsed, fell to the ground, and then sprouted something that moved beyond what was then known. Those seeds, like the artistic process itself, touched the moral imagination. To believe in healing is to believe in the creative act.