Sleepers' Secrets, Actors' Revelations

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The paper addresses three sets of questions: What is the semantic reach of the term "sleeper" and what ambiguities derive from the divergent contexts and genres within which the term has been used? What is the link between sleepers and secrecy, and how do terrorist sleepers interfere with the culturally accepted workings of secrecy in social and political life? What narratives are set lose when sleepers reveal themselves in unexpected action? The paper is guided by Georg Simmel's recognition of secrecy's role in social life and seeks to demonstrate the problematic encounter of multiple codes of secrecy in culturally heterogeneous societies.

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Introduction

There were many things to remark on after September 11, 2001, but in the confusion and horror after the World Trade Center catastrophe, I was particularly struck by the appearance of the term "sleeper". It was used to describe Al-Qaeda terrorists who had prepared, in the seemingly adjusted life style of students, for acts of tremendous destruction against the Western societies that hosted them.[1] The word appeared, briefly, in English, but was particularly evident in German mass media discourse, its use meant to invoke a link to secret agency and the broader evil lurking amongst us. Employing the term called attention to the ambiguity of "sleep" itself, as well as to the broad semantic connotation associated with the word "sleeper", and my intent here is to explore this semantic reach along with the potential and agency the term circumscribes within culturally heterogeneous societies.

At the heart of the notion of sleepers lies the knowledge, hope, and fear of secrecy. Georg Simmel described secrecy already in 1908 as a powerful invention and tool. Secrecy is not only central to religious and political power, it is also a cultural practice in everyday life by which groups and subgroups form, relationships achieve their specific contours, and through which we regulate communication (Simmel 1991:338–445).[2] Yet ethnography would only begin to pay heed to the theatricality of everyday interactions – which of necessity involved a hidden, secret, backstage domain – in the wake of a social interactionist theory in which to place them (Goffman 1959). So cultural analysts have only relatively recently turned to studying the modes of secret-keeping in action and discourse.

It is true that early anthropological work on native North Americans documented the existence and power of secret societies and noted the role of secrecy in various religious formations. Anthropologist Michael Taussig has offered a reading of Simmel's "secrecy magnifies reality" as well, in an effort to illuminate an array of cultural practices from private secrets (such as lying) to the public secrets encoded in ritual (1999: 49–97).[3] Though ritual scholarship has seldom emphasized the point[4], the liminality of ritual naturally allows for displays of what is normally held secret or hidden (and even forbidden), be this in behaviors or in the parading of a whole array of scary, wild or feared figures kept firmly locked away and "asleep" during the ordinary course of the year. Stratified and multicultural societies contain more complex

modes of secret-keeping, with different sub-groups developing mechanisms of hidden communication and identification. James Scott's *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (1990) is a widely cited work that examines discursive patterns that establish secret resources. Folklorists and social historians have documented vernacular evidence of the power of secrecy in African-American subcultures (Levine 1977, Abrahams 1992), for example. Finally, a substantial scholarship exists on secret societies, their cultural practices and their social role(s) in history.[5]

Secrets come in many forms and at many levels, from the smallest, interpersonal interaction to the largest social and political arenas. Inventorying or classifying secrecy forms and levels is not the point here; instead, the interest is to develop the semantic, social and political ties between sleepers and the cultural practices of secrecy. However, secrecy is a domain of cultural practice that has not seen sufficient ethnographic attention, perhaps because the cultures of secrecy are used by the strong and because the research itself may endanger the ethnographer. We have large, if understandable, lacunae in the ethnographic record: where is the ethnography of secret service cultures when we need it most? The cultural practices of such a culture is the model – and in some cases has even been the teacher – of the very terrorist agents we now fear. So I would argue that attention to the ambiguity and partial social legitimacy of secrecy can inform our understanding of the sleeper complex. An examination of the semantic reach of the term sleeper itself is a first step in this direction.

Sleep, Sleepers and Their Cultural Meanings

Sleepers come in many forms and reside in many contexts.[6] There are those who "sleep like a baby" in the midst of the noise or chaos that surrounds them. One observes with wonder how the pupil who has performed poorly for years "suddenly wakes up" and shows interest or talent. Financiers blame themselves for having "slept" through golden opportunities. There are a variety of creatures (such as owls or bats) whose propensity to spend the day asleep and to stir at night has kept them (at least at a time before zoos allowed us to see their harmless doings close-up) in the category of suspect or feared creatures, and the invisibility or stealth of other animal predators (such as foxes or wolves) have led humans to surround such creatures with a host of legends and beliefs associated with danger and evil. There are more curious associations as well: the edible or fat dormouse (*glis glis*) is known as the *Siebenschläfer* (lit. the 'seven-sleeper') in German, with a folk etymology of the term stating either that this creature sleeps seven months a year or that the name derives from the legend of seven persecuted Christian brothers who were walled in and only awoke 200 years later[7].

There are gloomier associations as well. Viruses are described as "sleepers" that awaken to attack biological systems at unpredictable times, the immunological discourse thereby permitting a comparison to be drawn between terrorist sleepers attacking the state and sleeping viruses attacking the body.[8] In the world of toys, we find the yoyo called the "Grim Sleeper"[9] which received its name due to the capacity of "all modern yoyos" to 'sleep', that is, to turn freely when the string is fully extended.[10] This allows for all kinds of spectacular tricks that are not possible with the "classic" yoyo. Special techniques can considerably prolong the usual yoyo sleep time of 1–2 seconds, but "a sleeping yoyo that cannot be woken up would be pointless. [Waking] occurs with a quick tug of the string or a slap on the hand."[11] Calling a material object in stasis that has a capacity to revert to sudden motion a sleeper is not that unusual, though some examples deserve the adjective "grim" rather more than does the yoyo: time bombs or landmines awoken from their sleep by being disturbed long after the time for their mission has passed. Their waking up is indeed pointless, as the hidden goal for which they were prepared – to serve as deterrents to action – is no longer viable.

Legendry knows of sleepers who are not feared but in whom great hopes rest such as King Barbarossa, said to be asleep in the Kyffhäuser mountain in Thuringia, Germany. In the war and starvation-torn time in which

the legend formed, the memory of his rule shone brightly, holding out the promise of sleep and awakening rather than death.[12] So many legends about powerful, righteous leaders asleep in a mountain or cliff exist in so many places, that a reference tool of the early 20th century even invented the term "translated-into-mountain" *(bergentrückt)* to describe the state these figures were in.[13] This religious meaning of "translation" – to convey to heaven or to a nontemporal condition without death – can be found in one of the legends surrounding Charlemagne, as he is to awake in time to fight the Anti-Christ. In the framework of Shiite Islam, of course, we also encounter the twelfth Imam, assumed to be removed but ready to reawaken (Halm 1994:41–50). All of these are figures who rest in secrecy and their awakening would bring justice, or a new golden age, or the world's end, or the entry to paradise. The assumption of such coming can serve as encouragement, but it can also be a means to keep a population in check.[14] The nearly magical disappearance of Osama bin Laden post-September 11 and of Saddam Hussein during the US attack on Irak in spring 2003 hold within them the potential of sleeper-legendry to come.

Once historical and comparative windows are opened, we can recognize that the term sleeper, with its related semantic field and associations, has been used for a great many phenomena other than Islamic fundamentalist terrorists. Not only fear of destruction but also hope for liberation is within the sleeper's semantic reach. All such associations refer back to the natural process we call sleep, and to understand the potency of the term as applied to secret agents, spies, moles, or terrorists, one needs to reflect on the phenomenon of sleep itself, and its elements of perceived secrecy or duplicity.[15]

Many expressions and traditional songs celebrate sweet and peaceful sleep, and thus honor the physiological need for rest and recovery that sleep grants. Yet some sleepers, breathing quietly and inaudibly, raise uncertainty and fear. It is not for nothing that "eternal sleep" is a metaphor for death, or that numerous traditional expressions point to the seeming proximity of sleeping and dying.[16] Sleep possesses us, much as death does, and our normal, communicative countenance is quiet.

Yet there is also a duality to sleep, since the sleeper is also communicating with an inner world closed to an onlooker. The sleeper's countenance reassures us that the conscious self is resting peacefully, yet the sleeping body and mind are simultaneously engaged in invisible activity. Dreams take the sleeper to an alternate world, closed to those with whom conscious life is shared. "Sleepwalking" or somnambulism is a striking phenomenon in this regard, fuelling the metaphoric use of "sleeper" as an externally controlled being or as possessing hidden identities. Psychological experiences in a sleep-dream state produce motor activity and can lead the sleeper to rise and move as if awake.[17] Outside of a context of medical explanation, such activity naturally raises suspicions and fear of the individual, or of the "unknown power" that seems to be controlling her. The German expression *mit schlaf-wandlerischer Sicherheit* (with the sureness of sleep-walking) furthers this mistaken impression. While medical advice urges family members to protect sleepwalkers precisely because their waking perception of danger is "asleep", the popular image of sleepwalkers – who often proceed in straightforward, seemingly determined fashion – emphasizes their uncanny directedness and certainty, and further recommends the term "sleeper" as a designation for an individual controlled by an invisible power.[18] A further, obvious component of sleep's semantic range is its normal context of night and darkness. Sight, one of our primary senses, is severely restricted, opening the door to real or imagined secrecy, for unlike the expression "the light of day," that alludes to openness, to say something occurs "under cover of darkness" hints at all kinds of illicit or subversive activity.

Democratic Rights and Secrecy's Role in (Multi-)Culture

Democracy grants each individual a measure of privacy, and while privacy itself is not declared "secret", this allows for a shielding from public gaze. Our religious preferences, food habits, personal finances, family and sexual relation-

ships are our own business, though they are subjected to greater or lesser degrees of social control. As long as what we do does not publicly harm others or threaten the safety of the social collective, it is acceptable, and as curious as we as humans are – the more sensationalist daily papers prove there is a very large market for satisfying what seems an incessant curiosity – we remain reluctant to peer in on our neighbors. We cherish the knowledge that others share in a reciprocal reluctance and in a common social and cultural context for privacy: it might be termed a democratic elaboration of secrecy's fundamental power.[19] Jan and Aleida Assmann have argued that "The invention of the secret is the founding act of culture. In the world of animals there is hiding and dissimulation, but no secret. … The secret is a prerequisite and characteristic mark of all civilized forms of human co-existence which we summarize under the term culture." (1997: 7).

Society, Georg Simmel claimed nearly a century ago, cannot do without secrecy, for some very basic aspects of personal freedom reside in privacy and thus secrecy. Simmel's observations focus largely on the microlevel of interpersonal behavior, where he discusses the fine-grained spectrum between full self-disclosure and lying. Concealing and deceiving assists members of a social group to create structures and hierarchies. The same mechanisms are employed when individuals evaluate particular relationships vis-à-vis others. Different levels of self-disclosure in the realm of friendship and love can be modified so as to achieve distance or intimacy (1999[1908]: 386–401).

To Simmel, these practices at the inter-personal level are fundamental ways to differentiate public from private spheres, and thus essential methods to structure society. Secrets are essentially hidden knowledge that gain their potency through differential access. The innermost sanctity of a religion may be the privilege of a select few who have earned the right through training, ritual, and devotion, to partake of its revelations, but also to control the access granted to others. For less devoted or skilled adherents, those secrets will remain hidden, and thus hierarchies arise, much as they did in secret societies such as the Illuminati or the Freemasons. The irony is that in the revolutionary era of the late 18th century, such secret societies had liberation and revelation as their goals (Schindler 1983; Berger and Grün, 2002).

Elias Canetti, in *Crowds and Power*, depicted the secret as the "innermost kernel of power."[20] He argued that "the doubts which one harbors against freer forms of governance …are con-nected with their dearth of secrets. Debates in parliament take place among hundreds of people; their actual purpose is to reside in the public sphere" (1992[1960], 339, my translation). Yet even if democratically elected parliaments were to make political processes transparent, governmental systems almost inevitably func-tion by using secrets: the examples of alliance formation or negotiating exclusion illustrate that governmental decisions are often based on only partly deploying or even completely withholding knowledge (Nedelmann 1985).

Culturally heterogeneous societies face the problem that their members partake of multiple notions of secrecy which have differing valence depending on the context within which a person acts or observes. In addition to cultural norms of secrecy there are also divergent norms in negotiating public and private spheres. This presents problems both on a group or social and political level as well as at the individual level of identification.

On the social level, the European discourse on integration expresses a concern that new immigrants learn to dissimulate their own norms so as to not to burden the existing norms of the host society, with the very term "assimi-lation" speaking to this desire.[21] Under the surface similarity, individuals would be granted the right to privately exercise their difference. Yet no matter how assimilated, a groups' otherness may still be feared, for under the smooth surface might slumber a raging danger. Each subgroup within a heterogeneous society is familiar with the workings of secrecy and the capacity of any social actor to be engaged in it. Thus, whether a group assimilates or whether it carries its ethnic differences visibly, the fears of secret practices and conspiratorial plots, hidden or asleep under a calm surface, can germinate in the host, majority society.[22] Alan Macfarlane would likely connect this mechanism

with what he perceives as a latent presence of the fear of evil among all members of a society (1985:58). And, again adapted to a culturally heterogeneous setting, what is considered "evil" may differ from one socio-cultural segment to the next.

Beyond the social level of the public, neighborly sphere there is, once again, the political level. All states have the propensity to protect themselves with the very mechanisms that are so feared at the neighborly level: secret services are part of any state apparatus. Their agents – who may be "sleepers" (programmed and waking up only once alerted), "moles" (actively digging for information under a surface of normalcy), or simple analysts (plowing through often public information and in the process extracting potential secrets…) – ideally never emerge as actors. Their working identity is to remain secret so as not to jeopardize the protective functions of the state, and the underlying purpose is to allow members of the polity to remain safe, even ignorant, of the threats to their normal lives.[23] In terms of the practices of secrecy, though, those active for the state and those active for a terrorist group employ much the same techniques of assimilation and dissimulation. Both aim to assert their legitimacy, the former by shoring up and asserting its power, the latter through provoking terror (Nedelmann 1999: 383).

It is only, and terribly, in these actions that reveal the ultimate goal of the terrorists that the difference emerges. The sleeper turned suicide bomber, or as Raphael Israeli (1997) puts it, the 'Islamikaze', reveals an identity and a cause. Israel takes issue with calling recent instances of Islamic "human bombs" suicide bombers, as he sees them as more akin to Japanese kamikaze fighters: devoted agents of a larger cause. From my point of view, however, individual Islamic terrorists likely diverge in their motivations, which stem in turn from the different ways individuals cope with beleaguered identification. Yet this coping response shows itself only in the narratives that unfold after sleepers have become revelatory actors.

Sleepers Awoken, Narratives Revealed

"We had no idea that…", or "I would never have suspected he would be capable of such acts" – these are the types of responses heard from neighbors, landladies, fellow students and professors of the 9/11 terrorists who once resided in the Hamburg area. Much the same was heard in the spring of 2002 when a student in Erfurt, Germany, shot and killed several teachers, fellow students, and himself. Family members and friends of young Palestinian suicide bombers have uttered similar sentiments. In the absence of precise knowledge and precisely because social life rests on the mutual respect of (albeit culturally differential degrees of) private realms, there is a customary assumption of peacefulness and normalcy. The burden of suspicion otherwise mounts intolerably, particularly in heterogeneous societies (and history provides countless examples for the violence that then ensues). Thus, the values of a shared humanity underlying cultural difference at the very least provide an ideal informing life within the same social space. Infractions of such values correspondingly lead to a sense of disappointment, self-doubt and fear echoed in such statements. The unwritten but presumed to be shared social or even familial contract is broken.

Only hindsight leads to a closer examination of possible signs of calamities to come, and to the tormenting recognition that a telling sentence or a new interest should have been recognized as "a sign" rather than fleeting thoughts or passing obsessions. The determination to commit a violent act had been hidden, slumbering within, or instilled by a "shadowy unknown" (such as a charismatic leader or a terrorist network) and the question that poses itself is what circumstances, internal and external, triggered the waking up.

Much effort is placed in socializing children to recognize if not learn to inhabit normative types. Dress, occupational choice, sexual preference, and the all-permeating standards of communication belong to the toolkit of fashioning and projecting a coherent self. Depending on personality, the different roles and identifications we have to enact or at least project in everyday life are integrated in better

or worse ways. For some personalities, representing an unambiguous and socially accepted type is of paramount importance, but for others the possibility to be more than one type may be just as important. The levels of social control in a given setting provide individuals with greater or lesser freedom for varying their public or visible personhood. It is hard to venture guesses on the benefits or drawbacks of a relatively homogeneous environment – for even in an ethnically homogeneous environment there is the possibility of socially unacceptable difference in the realm of sexuality, political ideology, and religion. Class further restricts social experience.

Some societies may have surpassed the zenith of identity politics; after the struggle for ascertaining recognition for one particular (ethnic, racial, sexual) identity, there is both play with and commodification of identities (Bendix 2000). Still, such culturally heterogeneous polities likely contain more cases where individuals struggle, in more or less dramatic ways, to integrate the expectations of host culture and class with those of the culture and class of origin. While there will be immigrants and second or third generation hyphenated ethnics who recognize but cope with this dilemma, for others, the tension is sufficient cause to seek a "narrow path", a singular identification.[24]

Here, the presentation of self in everyday life, to invoke Irving Goffman (1959), rests on a complicated, ever shifting script. Individuals cope in different ways, and those who show accomplishments in their new settings may be celebrated as examples of successful integration. Yet the psychological costs they pay, the regrets they suffer[25], and the distance they increasingly feel from those less well "integrated" are not digested equally readily. Somatic and psychological consequences are well known and may take some seemingly extreme forms, such as the case of a 19th century country girl sent as a servant to a new region: she ended up drowning a child and was diagnosed with severe homesickness (Jaspers 1909). Life led with culturally heterogeneous demands and differential class-based expectations can force aspects of identification into a state of "sleep" – either an instance of true psychological suppression or as a social experience of needing to dissimulate

and hide. Within this "sleep," nightmares of violent proportions may be dreamt in solitude or, as in terrorist groups, under the guidance of master ideologues.

Historically and cross-culturally, we can observe how societies have provided frameworks within which norms are lifted and hidden facets of personhood can manifest themselves. Carnival and other ritual moments within year and life cycles are moments of liminality rather than normality, where world, role, and gender reversals (or expansions) are allowed. They thus provide opportunities to briefly awaken aspects of the self that slumber during the course of the year. Immigrant societies, whether identified as such or not, struggle to bring culturally different norms into some kind of framework. Berlin's effort to harness this under the heading "Carnival of Cultures" is an interesting and typical example, as this event asks cultural groups to offer festive representations of their cultures within a fairly orderly framework, on the assumption that this provides a unique opportunity for expression.[26] Yet the place and function of this event hardly corresponds to the capacities of the carnivalesque observed in ritual scholarship. Rather, it is a consumer culture festivity, where cultures are "expressed" in order that others may witness them. True, the liberating potential inherent to carnival can be present in events of this sort – food and drink are flowing, and costuming abounds – but it is not clear that such events permit hidden facets of personhood or culture to be revealed. In fact, the very fact of putting on an outward, public face to one's culture may well hide away those aspects that are regarded as particularly important, whether within that culture itself or to the individuals who are culture-bearers.

This of course does not explain what makes a particular person develop hidden desires and aggressions. But to reduce an individual migrant's experiences to a singular identity suitable to be displayed in the context of numerous other migrant groups who are also putting a singular identity on display – particularly when that individual by the very fact of migration has added any number of additional facets to their identity – shows problem of utilizing a "holo-

cultural" framework. It points as well to the centuries-old yet escalating processes of commodifying fragments of culture.[27] These kinds of commodity-based attempts to achieve harmony among diverse cultures are almost a perfect example of the effect global capital flows can have on "cultural" integrity. Rather than harmony, they may instead fuel aggressive assertions of fundamental identity.

Conversely, and this needs to be stressed in the context of any "sleeper" discussion, there are individuals who awaken to lead and to liberate, be this in a political or a religious framework. Indeed, this is the perception that terrorist "martyrs" might well wish to engender amongst those for whose sake they see themselves engaged. The individual who is privy to hearing the demanding voice of God and acts upon it, who speaks in tongues, or whose "conscience" (the positive counter-term to hidden evil) wakes him into action, moving him to speak out against oppressive, totalitarian rule, can – depending on the historical moment and the sociocultural circumstance – be received as special, chosen, saintly, and a promise to humanity, or as dangerous, heretical, or (since the development of psychiatry) as ill. Joan of Arc's biography is a case in point: "hearing voices" at age 14 awoke her from her role as peasant daughter and transformed her into a spiritual and military leader in the war against France, dressed as a man and with the permission of Charles VII. Regarded as heroine, martyr, and saint by some (she was pronounced a saint only in 1920), she was nevertheless burnt at the stake as sorceress and heretic in 1431. Her biography sharply puts the point that one may be both saint and sinner, and that one can be "asleep" to one's talents as leader and visionary. Once awakened and aroused to action, one may then become too much of a danger.[28] Her late 20th century rebirth in the Japanese animé *Kamikaze Kaitou Jeanne* gives the awakened sleeper another unexpected twist.[29]

The awakened terrorist sleeper chooses to tell a story, for in acts of destruction, sleepers turned actors practice revelation. The complexity of multiple allegiance and troubled identification seems to be resolved into a single narrative and a single cause. When Susan Sonntag, in an outspoken first reaction to 911, chastised those who called the culprits "cowards", she stressed this agency and urge toward revelation: "If the word 'cowardly' is to be used, it might be more aptly applied to those who kill from beyond the range of retaliation, high in the sky, than to those willing to die themselves in order to kill others. In the matter of courage (a morally neutral virtue): whatever may be said of the perpetrators of Tuesday's slaughter, they were not cowards" (2001:32). There surely are worlds of difference between suicide bombers, Islamikaze or lone individuals deciding to create a bloodbath at their school, but the need to shape and enact a single story out of the profusion of potential offerings, demands, and expectations is surely revealed in their last acts.

Conclusion

Many sleepers deny their agency. But suicide bombers choose to lift their secret, and narrate through their acts that which has tormented them. Their deaths not only reveal their cause, but also free a path for their potential celebration as martyrs among like-minded individuals or groups. The glorious life in paradise and the promise of being remembered as a hero and a martyr appear to be motivating factors, judging by interviews with those who failed and were captured in Palestinian refugee camps. Given the context within which young suicide bombers are growing up, such promises may indeed hold greater appeal than life.

Exploring the frame of reference of the term "sleeper", its overt and latent meanings in discourse, its associations in legend, and its use in politics or in the secret services should assist us in understanding the potency of the term on the one hand, and its capacity to stir both hope and helplessness on the other. None of the legendary sleepers mentioned earlier have yet awakened to action, and the destructive sleeper's gift is to conceal his awakening until it is too late to stop him. But what interests a polity most urgently is that very moment of awakening – precisely so as to prevent it or diffuse its impact. When we recognize the profusion, indeed the very normalcy, of secret, hidden, or suppressed identifications in heterogeneous societies,

however, we should also acknowledge how impossible it is to provide easy toolkits for sleeper spotting.[30] Comparison through time and space at the very least lays bare the multiplicity of sleeper configurations and hopefully can inform social and political actors in such ways as to not react rashly or give in to hysteria, but rather seek to understand and address the pressures that force sleepers to abandon their secrets and explode themselves into revelation.

Notes

1. The level of "adjustment" has since been cause for public debate and was also discussed at our conference. There were ample signals of difference that Mohammed Atta and others in his cell displayed. Yet a heterogeneous host society intent on tolerating diversity (and guided by a few stereotypical elements of "Arab" cultures such as clothing, prayer, and gender relations) emphasized such signals only once the deed was done, and after the actors had revealed themselves to be suicide flyers.

2. Simmel's statement remains eminently worth consulting. His thoughts have been elaborated and critiqued in sociology (Hahn 1997, Nedelmann 1985 and 1995) as well as in social psychology and communication (Westerbarkey 1991). The conference proceedings published in 1997 by Alaida and Jan Assmann *(Schleier und Schwelle. Band 1. Geheimnis und Öffentlichkeit)* provide a particularly wide ranging discussion that goes far beyond Simmel. A more popular survey of secret codes and their use in politics has been offered by Simon Sing (1999).

3. In this work, Taussig also critically reexamines Julien Pitt-Rivers' *People of the Sierra* (1969) as one of the early ethnographic studies to address lying and dissimulation.

4. Roy Wagener 's work (1984) is an exception here.

5. Freemasons seem to have attracted the most attention (Berger and Grün 2002), but there are many wider investigations (see Reinalter 1983, Fischer 1982, Schreiber und Schreiber 1993).

6. The present assessment draws on English and German language use; further linguistic comparison would likely enrich the semantic scope.

7. See http://www.die-maus.de/sachgeschichten/siebenschlaefer/ (consulted September 2003) for the seven month assertion; for scientific information on the dormouse see http://www.glirarium.de/bilch/arten.html (consulted in September 2002). The Christian legend origin is given in the Duden, the standard German dictionary and source of German etymology.

8. See Martin (1993) and Sarasin (2002) for the discourse on illness, bacteria, immunity and the bodily defenses against it. I am indebted to Viola Armbrecht's seminar paper on "The Terror of Viruses" in my "Sleeper" seminar, held during the summer semester of 2002 in Göttingen.

9. This is advertised as: "Like the Cherry Bomb, the Grim Sleeper is equipped with a high-quality ABEC 3 ball bearing and an adjustable string gap enabling incredibly long sleep times or quick returns. Available in a deep purple color for only $14.99" ("Team Losi YoYo's" http://www.yoyopro.com/teamlosi.htm, consulted September 2002). The association with death (as in the 'Grim Reaper') may come about because earlier yoyos stopped spinning when they reached the end of their line…

10. Sleeper yoyos are not available in Europe and I only learned about them from a story (in the *Göttinger Tageblatt*, July 31, 2002, p. 6) about Dennis Schleußner, the only German to participate in the World Yoyo Championships in Orlando, Florida in 2002. Only fifty Germans "seriously" train with yoyos, a hidden – though not sinister – group of aficionados…

11. Source: "Das Freilauf Yoyo": http://www.andreas-gym.de/projekt/www/yoyo/freiyo.htm (consulted September 2003).

12. Originally, the legend featured Friedrich II, but as he had died abroad his death seemed uncertain. After a few centuries the legend inserted Friedrich I or Barbarossa in his stead; cf. "Kyffhäuser" http://roskothen.com/kyff/index1.htm (consulted August 2002). Koch's study contains many sources as well as poems and songs about Barbarossa's hoped-for return (1880). This theme persists in our time as well, as one can hear claims that John F. Kennedy never died; in 1998 I saw a newspaper headline in Vienna that proclaimed Rudolf von Habsburg, the Austro-Hungarian Crown Prince (around whom so much hope had gathered for a peaceful transformation of the decaying empire) was still living, some 109 years after his suicide.

13. Stammler, 1927. For a Charlemagne text, see Bechstein (1930), p. 635; on pp. 178–179 the same motif without royal association appears. A similar legend exists in Switzerland, surrounding the three Tells (for a representative text, see Bechstein (1930), p. 21, for commentary Schenda (1985)). King Arthur is another figure whose return was awaited (Brogsitter 1977:830). Van Gennep (1920: 189–200) treated the subject in more general terms.

14. In H.G. Wells's novel *The Sleeper Awakens* (1899), this theme is developed and shown to work against the sleeper himself, as his awakening disturbs the plans of those who rule in his stead.

15. Our conference discussion initially turned on the question of differentiating between harmless sleepers and not-so-harmless spies and terrorists in our vocabulary. Alas, that everyday discourse liberally brings these connotations together, relishing in mixing the harmless with the dangerous, rather complicates such an endeavor. The examples given here demonstrate the

constant potential of the dangerous inside the harmless, and the harmless inside the dangerous – which is how we address sleep itself as well.

16. The title of the successful Austrian novel *Schlafes Bruder* ("Brother of Sleep", Schneider, 1992) alludes to the popular equating of death with sleep; one English expression for sleep – "in the arms of Morpheus" – is a similar allusion.

17. See Schlafwandeln: http://www.medizinfo.de/kopfundseele/schlafen/schwandeln.htm (consulted September 2002). Stockinger (2003:130–131) reports on a violent variant of sleep-walking: some individuals who dream of imaginary monsters, wild animals, or powerful individuals in their everyday life may attack those nearest and dearest to them in their sleep, mistaking them for these sources of danger.

18. Vernacular narrative as well as science fiction give further shape to such suspicion and fear: the sleeper may be invaded by a ghostly or alien force and removed to another place and time; on awaking, she finds herself possessed by an alien force or even has alien implants. The X-Files TV series repeatedly offered such plots, but one can find themes of this kind in the type and motif registers of folk narrative research as well.

19. Sadly, one has to hasten to add that such rights to privacy often do not exist even in a democratic state's constitutional language; constitutions are rather at pains to spell out in which instances the representatives of a state have the right to invade our privacy.

20. Canetti's choice of locating secrets somatically links back to the topic of darkness and sleepers: "The mouth is dark, and gloomy are stomach and intestines. No one knows and no one thinks about what is happening, incessantly, in his innermost" (1992:335).

21. This is not the place to explore the different usage of terms such as assimilation, acculturation and integration in different disciplines and in different national discourses. For a cogent discussion on this, see Mintzel (1997). It is clear, however, that there is a spectrum of divergent expectations of what assimilation entails, with a one-sided model on one end (the immigrants assimilate completely to the receiver society) and a more interchangeable, mutual process of assimilating to each other between hosts and immigrants.

22. At the Reinhausen conference, Ned Lebow characterized the situation of Jews in Germany in these terms, with Fritz Kratochwil summarizing it as: "Damned if you do and damned if you don't".

23. "Men in Black", the secret agent movies of the present fin-de-siècle, exaggerate matters to the point where agents have the power to change the perceptions of those who know too much about the aliens among us back to a state of "not-knowing", thus permitting them to lead a life in ignorance again.

24. Marianne Gullestad's contribution to the Reinhausen meeting (published elsewhere, cf. Gullestad 2003) beautifully analysed precisely this dilemma as formulated by an Pashtun/Afghan woman residing in Norway.

25. The classic autobiography in this regard is Richard Rodriguez' *Hunger of Memory*, in which a Chicano immigrant son who becomes a university English professor laments what he has lost in terms of family and culture.

26. "Why a carnival of cultures in Berlin"? is answered at http://www.karneval-berlin.de/#text (for 2003) as: "It is a festival for all generations and social groups that is open to new trends and styles in youth and minority cultures. It demonstrates the overwhelming variety of traditional and modern cultures in our city. For many of the 440,000 migrants from 180 countries who live in Berlin, the carnival of cultures is a unique opportunity to express their cultural identity and show their colorful cultural presence through music and dance, and thereby allow Berlin to more consciously and deeply experience its internationalism."

27. On the notion of the "holocultural" and its critique, see Gingrich and Fox (2000:12), on the suggestion to abandon "singular identity" frameworks in the study of culture, see Bendix (2000).

28. This might be said of Hezbollah or other groups pursuing an agenda of liberation but using lethal methods that in turn incite others to try to get rid of them.

29. Cf.: http://victorian.fortunecity.com/literary/518/jeannetv.html (Aug. 26, 2002), or http://www.tcp.com/doi/jeanne/ (Aug. 26, 2002).

30. Germany revived Rasterfahndung soon after 911. This method, first developed during the days of the Red Army Faction in the 1970s, tries to systematically match different lists of data (say, one of foreign students studying engineering and another of Muslims living in Hamburg) to find potential sleepers (Graf 1997, Siebrecht 1997, Simon und Taeger, 1981). Wanner (1985) early on demonstrated the repressive potential of this type of prevention. That it infringes on democratic rights has also been amply evident in post 9/11 America. That it is a very fallible, imprecise tool with grave implications for the protection of individual rights, particularly in countries like Germany that have enacted stringent data privacy laws, goes without saying.

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